

NOTES OF A SHELTERED HOUSING CONSULTATION GROUP MEETING MONDAY 24 APRIL 2006

Present: -

Tony Bodgin	ECC	Mrs V Parr	Southlands
Steve Deakin	ECC	Mrs JE Welham	Aldens Road
Steve Warran	Head of Housing and Social Inclusion	Mrs Kirby	Aldens Road
		Mrs M Zelent	Aldens Road
Cathy Pelikan	Senior Voice	Mr P Tait	Grandisson Ct
Mrs B Staddon	Bodley Close	Mrs S Lancaster	Magdelen Gdns
Mrs J Smith	Rennes House	Mrs S Bath	Nelson Close
Mrs G Tyrrell	Globefield	Mrs B Clench	Faraday House
Mrs P Stoneman	Grandisson Ct	Mrs Winham	York House
D Rudge	Grandisson Ct	Mrs S McCleod	York House
Enza Ameroso	Toronto House	Mr K Murray	Grandisson Ct
Mrs Chisholm	Southlands	Mrs Browning	Flowerpots
Mrs Doyle	Southlands		

Guests: -

Pearl Williams	PLYMFED	EF Kemp	Plymouth
BL Clarke	Plymouth	LL Shepherd	Plymouth
Charles Kay	Plymouth	John Stuckley	Plymouth
George Skelly	Plymouth	Peggy Heron	Plymouth
Hannah Haines	Plymouth		

Introduction

Tony Bodgin opened the meeting with a general introduction and welcomed the delegation from Plymouth sheltered housing who were in attendance to observe the group in action and to see what happens at one of our meetings. He then went on to introduce Steve Warran – the Head of Housing and Social Inclusion and Cathy Pelikan from Senior Voice.

Steve Deakin

A brief overview and history of the Sheltered Housing Consultation Group was given by Steve Deakin for the benefit of the guest attendees from Plymouth and new member of the group.

Steve Warran – New Head of Housing and Social Inclusion

Business Plan

Our Business Plan covering the next 3 years, which sets out how Exeter City Council will meet the Decent Homes Standard, has been accepted as fit for standard and signed off by the Government Office South West.

The Action Plan

The Action Plan is due to be completed by July, which will be in time to bring along to the next meeting.

We are committed to providing an open and transparent service for tenants and leaseholders. To this end we intend to produce a quarterly booklet in which we will publish our PI's (Performance Indicators). The dates of the Tenant and Leaseholder Consultation Group and the Sheltered Housing Consultation Group have been changed to enable these reports to be presented at the meetings.

In March 2007 the contracts for both BEST and Signpost are up for renewal. Due to the improved performance of both the repairs contractors we are going to award them the contracts for the next 3 years with negotiation taking place with regard to price and levels of service they provide. The contracts will then be put up for tender after the 3 year period has lapsed. This will provide continuity of service and save on the expense of a full tender process at this time.

We intend to set up a Project Team, made up of Officers and tenants, to look at issues around price and levels of service. A Tenant Stakeholder Day will be held in order to brainstorm the current repairs service. The issues raised at the Stakeholder Day will then be taken up and developed by the Project Team.

Supporting People

Supporting People, who fund the sheltered housing service, recently reviewed the service provided by Exeter City Council. In order for them to continue to fund our service we need to achieve the level of 'C' rating across all 6 areas which they assess us on. We have currently achieved a 'C' for 3 of the service areas and aim to comply with the other 3 by June this year.

Supporting People are currently going through a Sectorial Review to look at how best to spend its funding. Sheltered Housing is very expensive and may not be the best way to provide the services with only certain properties good enough to meet the sheltered housing standard.

Joan Smith put herself forward for membership of the Repairs Project Team with Sally Lancaster as a 'possible'.

Senior Voice

Cathy Pelikan of Senior Voice addressed the meeting.

Senior Voice is the campaigning wing of Age Concern Exeter. Ideally they would like a membership of around 400 which currently stands at around 270 of its own membership.

Funding for Senior Voice comes from Health and Social services with some funding coming from Comic Relief.

The group agreed that an article from Senior Voice should be run in the next edition of CHATTERBOX.

Home Contents Insurance

The insurance company, which underwrites the Tenants Home Contents Insurance Scheme, has agreed to keep the premiums as they are for another year.

Resident Auditor Project

Sally Lancaster addressed the group with her experience as a member of the Tenant Auditor Group. The group has been set up to audit council services and report its findings back to the council. They will be able to highlight areas where improvements need to be made.

The methods used to carry out the audit will involve things like mystery shopping, telephone enquiries and reality checking.

A lot of time has been spent reading and training on reports carried out on other housing organisations.

Training is carried out every week and the group bonding really well and is already becoming self supporting.

Joan Smith also told the group about her experiences so far including carrying out mystery shopping at Devon and Cornwall Housing reception and our own Customer First reception along with another tenant.

Next Meeting: Monday 17 July Buckerell Lodge Hotel 2.00 pm start.

Anyone requiring a taxi should, as usual, phone ZCARS on Exeter 422888.

On the agenda next time: -

- Performance Indicators
- Participation & Involvement
- The Older Persons Strategy
- Repairs Performance
- Tenants Fun Day
- Resident Auditor Project
- If anyone has any issues they want raised at the next meeting please contact Steve Deakin on 265698, but make sure you allow enough time to organise a response.