

NOTES OF A SHELTERED HOUSING FORUM MEETING MONDAY 21 APRIL 2008

Present: -

Tony Bodgin	ECC	Viv Phelps	Shilhay
Steve Deakin	ECC	Josie Browning	Flowerpot
Juliet Lesser	ECC	Sheila Mcleod	York House
Yvonne Trude	Senior Warden	Ann Day	Flowerpot
Sheila Sowden	Warden	Philip Tait	Grandisson Ct
M Brady	Warden	Bet Sluman	Carpenter Clse
Tanya Mills	Digital UK	Josie Welham	Aldens
Mrs P Knight	Bodley Close	S Banwell	Southlands
Staddon	Bodley Close	Gladys Tyrrell	Globefield
J Laskey	Rennes House	Stella Bath	Nelson Close
Joan Smith	Rennes House		
Pat Brosnan	Payne Court		

Apologies: -

Teresa Burrow, Margaret Winham, Ann Sully, Jenny Berry

Introduction

The meeting was opened with a general introduction from Tony Bodgin

Digital Switchover – Tanya Mills – Digital UK

An article was placed in the last issue of 'INSIGHT' giving information regarding the forthcoming digital switchover.

Digital UK was set up by the government to oversee the switchover from the current analogue television signal, to the new digital signal. Exeter will be the first digital city. When on the 6 May 2009 the transmitter and at Stockland Hill, together with all its relays, will be switched over to digital TV signal, BBC2 will be the first channel to switch and if anyone loses their BBC2 picture at that time it is an indication that you have not converted your TV and should do so before May 20th 2009, when the remaining channels are switched from analogue to digital signals.

The council will be up-grading communal aerials to receive digital signals over the coming months for people living in sheltered accommodation with a communal aerial system. It is unlikely that people living in properties with individual aerials will need to replace their existing aerial, only about 10-% of the people throughout the Country will need to do so, the general rule is that if you receive a good signal now you will continue to do so after switchover.

Whilst some people may choose to purchase new televisions with a built-in digital tuner, or subscribe to a satellite or Freesat system with Sky, or a cable system from Virgin Media, **this is not necessary**. The vast majority of people can convert their existing televisions by attaching a digital tuner – sometimes referred to as a *Freeview* or *digibox*, which can be purchased from all major and local electrical retail outlets. If you do decide to buy a new television you should ensure it is digital ready. Equipment which has been approved by Digitaluk will carry the pink tick logo, indicating it is ready for use both before and after the switchover.

To find out which transmitter you receive your television signal from you can use the Postcode Checker on Digitaluk's website: on www.digitaluk.co.uk which also give further information about the quality of your picture and the number of channels you will receive.

When the switchover takes place you will need to re-tune your television set just as you did when you first bought it and set it up for the first time. The government will send out notification to all people who are eligible for the "Help scheme" approximately 6 – 8 months prior to switchover and those choosing to apply will be notified when an engineer is calling.

You will still be able to use your DVD recorders and Video recorders but you will only be able to record the same programme you are watching. You will need to purchase a twin-type tuner if you wish to continue recording a different programme at the same time as watching another.

BEWARE

Do not accept the word of someone cold calling at your home wanting to upgrade your equipment – particularly television aerials – no one legitimate will be offering this service.

Sheltered Housing Improvement Programme – Juliet Lesser

Amersham Court (including Malvern Gardens) and Payne Court will be the first properties to benefit from the sheltered housing improvement programme. At Amersham Court a platform lift is required to allow access the first floor. It will also be necessary to fit further stair lifts to allow access to other floors. The front door thresholds are too high to allow wheelchair access which means that all the front doors and frames on the first floor need to be replaced with low threshold doorframes.

We are looking to work on two or three flats at a time. The amount of work and the disruption involved will probably mean that it is necessary to move tenants temporarily into alternative accommodation.

Feedback from the survey was to keep communal areas. However, many of the communal rooms were described as not being inviting or comfortable. It is proposed to change the laundry room at Faraday House into an indoor scooter store with recharging facilities.

Contractors should be on site sometime in late summer. The process has been slow up to now but it is hoped that this will speed up when everything is in place.

Standards of care are being written into the contract. Several contractors have already been eliminated and the contractors' commitment to tenant consultation is at the forefront of the selection process but price is very important.

Two volunteers are needed for the final part of the process from an early stage once the contractor is confirmed. The volunteers will need to make decisions about temporary accommodation, the contact arrangements between contractor and tenants etc.

The first three sites will cost in the region of £500,000 and the overall spend is expected to be in the region of £4m.

In all five people put their names forward for involvement in the contractor selection process. They are: -

Viv Phelps (Shilhay)

Jackie Lasky (Rennes House)

Bet Sluman (Carpenters Court)

Gladys Tyrrell (Globefields)

Joan Smith (Rennes House)

A decision will be made after the financial information has been sent out to the contractors.

Older Persons Review

Steve Warran is meeting with Supporting People tomorrow. There is a lot of speculation. Supporting People want to supply support to where people live and not just to sheltered accommodation. Exeter City Council is interested in supplying that service and we will know more details after the meeting tomorrow.

The changes to support service delivery could have implications for sheltered accommodation but it could remain as older people's property.

Warden Service Review – Phil Mills and Yvonne Trude

There have been problems over the past few months but this has been mainly due to staff illness and holidays etc.

The problem would be greatly eased if we were allowed to rotate all the around all the sites to prevent having to resort bringing in retained wardens.

Articles for Newsletter

It was suggested that Chatterbox should run a feature spotlighting the various sheltered sites around the city.

If anyone has any articles they would like to see included in an edition of 'CHATTERBOX' or has any ideas for articles they would like to see included please get in touch with Steve Deakin on 265698.

Next Meeting: Monday 21 July 2008 - Buckerell Lodge Hotel - 2.00 pm start.

Anyone requiring a taxi should phone ZCARS on Exeter 422888

Agenda items to Steve Deakin on 265698