

CABINET (HOUSING) COMMITTEE

4 FEBRUARY 2015

REVIEW OF THE DESIGNATION OF SHELTERED HOUSING

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER)

Contact Officer: AMBER RUSSELL Tel No: 01962 848229

RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB2613 (HSG) - Options for the future management of Sheltered Housing, 1 October 2014

CAB2289 (HSG) - Review of Designation of Sheltered Housing, 1 February 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report recommends some changes to the current designation of the sheltered housing stock. It summarises the proposed classification of sheltered housing stock and provides details of the level of services and facilities pertinent to that category of scheme. It also recommends that where feasible, facilities at de-designated schemes be converted to provide additional units of Council housing and that communal services such as grounds maintenance are consistent with those at other general needs sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That the designation of properties as shown in Appendix 2 to the report be adopted.
- 2 That the recommended level of service at Bungalows/Over 60s Schemes and general needs schemes, as set out in the report, be approved.

- 3 That all future vacancies at general needs sites (including Monks Road, Bartholomew Close, and King Alfred Place, go immediately to general needs applicants.
- 4 That the programme to convert facilities at general needs sites, as shown in Appendix 3 to the report, be approved.
- 5 That the standard service for grounds maintenance, as currently delivered at general needs sites, be extended to all sites, as detailed in section 4 of the report.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines changes to the current sheltered housing classification following a review by officers as part of their wider brief to review the options for the management of sheltered housing as detailed in CAB2613(HSG) (1 October 2014).
- 1.2 The report CAB2613(HSG) set out the necessary changes to the management of sheltered housing services as a result of a loss of funding of £566,000 per annum to provide support services to persons living in sheltered housing. It has been necessary to review the current designation of sheltered housing whilst preparing for the changes to sheltered housing services as detailed in CAB2613 and agreed by Cabinet (Housing) Committee.
- 1.3 The report recommends some minor changes to the current classification which was agreed by Cabinet (Housing) Committee on 1 February 2012 (CAB2289 (HSG) refers). It also details proposed changes to schemes which are already de-designated so they are consistent with other general needs sites across the District.

2 Proposal for revised classification

- 2.1 From April 2015, the sheltered housing stock and associated services will be managed and delivered by 9 members of staff, a reduction of 17 full time posts. Changes to staffing and services have been necessary due to the loss of funding from Hampshire County Council.
- 2.2 Officers have had to consider what roles the new team can provide with the resources available to them. In order to deliver a high quality sheltered housing management service where staff will be present at the scheme for a minimum of a day and a half a week, it is proposed that the number of full sheltered housing schemes be reduced from 13 to 12.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 shows the current classification of sheltered housing as agreed on 1 February 2012 and Appendix 2 details the proposed classification. Under the proposed classification the sheltered housing stock is categorised into 3 groups:

- (i) Sheltered Housing Schemes – these 12 schemes are exclusively for persons aged 60 and over, and provide suitable accommodation for older people. They have the necessary facilities and enhanced housing management and estate services for this resident group and property type. This includes being connected to the Alarm Monitoring Service and having staff on site for 1½ days per week carrying out the following tasks: health and safety checks, monitoring standards of cleaning and grounds maintenance, holding surgeries in common rooms, referring and sign posting tenants to other services such as for health care and support needs, promoting social activities, and managing bookings for the common rooms and guestrooms.
 - (ii) Bungalow & Over 60s Schemes – these 14 schemes are exclusively for persons aged 60 and are connected to the Alarm Monitoring Service. However, they do not have the additional facilities and services of the Sheltered Housing Schemes (detailed above).
 - (iii) Extra Care Housing Schemes – these 2 schemes are exclusively for older people who have an assessed care need. These schemes have all the benefits of the Sheltered Housing Schemes but with the added benefit of a 24 hour on-site care team.
- 2.4 All former de-designated schemes are now classified as standard general needs sites, whereby any vacancy will be allocated to persons aged 18 and over. The services provided at these schemes will be the same as at any other general needs accommodation across the District. Former sheltered tenants at these sites are currently being visited by staff to discuss the changes to services and also to confirm whether they wish to continue to use the Alarm Monitoring Service.
- 2.5 Under the revised classification, Chester Court Central Winchester, Simonds Court Abbotts Barton and Spring House Close Colden Common will be included in category (ii) Bungalows and Over 60s Schemes.
- 2.6 The Chester Court and Simonds Court schemes already have Cabinet (Housing) approval to be opened up to general needs applicants if there is no demand from older people. The lettings performance over the previous 3 years has shown that there has been demand for these properties by over 60s when applicants are given the opportunity to opt out of standard sheltered support services. It is therefore recommended that these schemes continue to be restricted to persons aged 60 and over and that apart from the option of accessing the Alarm Service, residents will not receive the enhanced housing management and estate services provided at Sheltered Housing Schemes. However, it is proposed that the four units at Water Lane which currently form part of Chester Court, are not retained as part of the Chester Court over 60s scheme and are opened up to general needs applicants on re-letting.
- 2.7 Spring House Close Colden Common, like Chester Court and Simonds Court, has characteristics which make it less popular with older people, such as accessibility issues to some of the blocks of flats and the first floor flats. In

addition, its distance from Central Winchester is often a concern, with less services available in Colden Common than Winchester (shops etc.) and limited public transport. It is therefore proposed to continue with the current age restrictions but to remove the requirement to have the full suite of sheltered housing services. It is hoped this will help maintain the viability of this scheme, appealing to the more active and independent older person who would like the peace of mind of having immediate neighbours of a similar age group.

- 2.8 Under the revised classification, Monks Road, Bartholomew Close and King Alfred Place will remain as general needs sites. It is proposed that re-lets here will automatically go to general needs applicants rather than advertising to older persons in the first instance, which is consistent with the approach at other general needs schemes.

3 Proposal for facilities and services at General Needs sites

- 3.1 It is recommended that the former sheltered housing facilities, namely guestrooms and common rooms, which remain at a number of the general needs sites be removed, and that where it is structurally possible, they are converted into additional units of accommodation.
- 3.2 Appendix 3 gives further details of these sites, including the facilities currently available, the frequency of use by the remaining sheltered residents and the current levels of sheltered and general needs tenants. In the long term, the number of sheltered residents will decrease to zero, or, on sites which have bungalows where the age restriction will continue to apply, be significantly reduced. The viability of resourcing and maintaining these facilities must be balanced against the tenant make-up of the site and the current and future demand for them.
- 3.3 The former common room at Albert Court Central Winchester has already been successfully converted into a two bedroom flat and a similar conversion is currently under way at Lisle Court Stanmore. These conversions assist the Council in meeting its target to provide new Council homes and are in high demand from applicants on the Council's housing waiting list. Brief details of potential conversions in terms of the size of properties which could be created are given in Appendix 3.
- 3.4 A programme for possible conversions will be prepared and it is recommended that these are prioritised in accordance with their current popularity and use by residents.
- 3.5 It is also proposed that while these facilities remain in place, they are opened up to all residents of that site, regardless of whether they are sheltered or general needs tenants. General needs tenants currently pay towards the upkeep of these facilities through their service charges although on the majority of sites, they are not permitted to use the facilities unless invited by the sheltered residents. Opening up the facilities will allow officers to consider

whether these facilities have a potential future longer term benefit to the wider community.

4 Proposal for grounds maintenance services at General Needs sites

4.1 The general needs sites listed in Appendix 2 are currently receiving either an enhanced sheltered grounds maintenance service, which means they receive additional grass cuts, shrub and hedge maintenance, or the standard general needs service. All tenants on these sites, whether they be general needs or sheltered, pay the same charge for the grounds service delivered on their site through their service charges.

4.2 It is proposed that all sites will receive the general needs grounds maintenance service, in keeping with all other general needs sites throughout the District, thus ensuring consistency of standards. Tenants at these sites will see a reduction in their service charge for this service.

5 Informing residents of the changes

5.1 As this is a period of wider change for the sheltered housing service, the current Sheltered Housing team and the officer working group are in a period of heightened communication with sheltered tenants regarding the numerous changes to their services. It is proposed that the changes outlined in this paper will be communicated to tenants in conjunction with the ongoing discussions and notifications that are already taking place.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

6 COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

6.1 The provision of services to older people and vulnerable and socially excluded individuals are a key priority within the Active Communities element of the Community Strategy.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 This report highlights the loss of £406,000 of grant income, with potentially an additional £160,000 from tenants who pay directly, from the HRA each year from April 2015.

7.2 The service review is seeking to reduce and remodel current services, to achieve a reduction in costs along with an increase in income where this can be achieved. The proposed recommendations take into account these requirements.

8 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

8.1 The risks associated with the amendments to the overall sheltered housing service were set out in CAB2613(HSG) dated 1 October 2014. The reduced support available for older residents is partly offset by the new arrangements

for the Sheltered Housing team. However, capacity is not available to offer enhanced services to general needs schemes and so this clarification is considered essential. Residents who consider that a regular site presence is critical for their own welfare and well-being will be supported in requests to relocate to full sheltered housing schemes and the additional priority will be available through Hampshire Homechoice to assist with this.

- 8.2 There is a risk that by amending the classification of a scheme, the Council is increasing the risk of losing flats through the Right to Buy process. However, all schemes no longer classified as either sheltered or Over 60s schemes had already lost any protection from this as a result of previous decisions made in relation to letting to tenants under 60.

9. TACT COMMENT

- 9.1 The TACT Committee group have had the opportunity to consider this paper. The Committee are supportive of the recommendations for the proposed scheme classification and the minor changes to some schemes. The Committee would like the Council to retain where possible those common rooms that are used by the community and ask that residents are notified of the changes to their schemes.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Current Sheltered Housing Classification as agreed in CAB2289(HSG)

Appendix 2 – Proposed Revised Scheme Classifications

Appendix 3 - General Needs Scheme Facilities

Appendix 1 - Current Sheltered Housing Classification as agreed in CAB2289 (HSG) 01/02/2012

Total Units	No. Sheltered	FULL SHELTERED SCHEMES	Total Units	No < 60	GENERAL NEEDS
49	49	Richard Moss House	24	24	Albert Court
38	38	Hyde Lodge	21	18	Colson Close
36	35	Danemark Court #	39	29	Harwood Place
36	34	Godson House	37	23	Penton Place
34	34	Mildmay Court	29	13	Firmstone Road (Flats)
37	37	Normandy Court	8	5	Airlie Corner (Flats)
38	37	Greens Close (inc. Blanchard)	17	7	Lisle Court (Flats)
33	32	King Harold Court	37	21	The Valley
40+12(FW)	51	Makins Court	28	15	Drummond (Flats)
18	15	Hyde Gate	25	7	Chiltern Court
37	36	Spring House Close	2	1	St. John Street
36	31	Eastacre	35	0	Chester Court
19	18	White Wings House	8	0	Monks Road
37	36	Lawn House	13	0	Simonds Court (Flats)
<u>500</u>	<u>483</u>	<u>Total</u>	14	0	Bartholomew Close
483	Flats retained as sheltered		8	0	King Alfred Place
			<u>349</u>	<u>163</u>	<u>Total</u>
		BUNGALOWS	349		Flats made available to General Needs
25		Pine Road			
39		Springvale			
16		Stoney Lane			
27		Northfields			
18		Southbrook Cottages & Meadow View			
25		Wonston Close			
57		Bungalows Firmstone Airlie (10)			
		Drummond Lisle (5)			
		Simonds (17)			
207		Bungalows retained as sheltered			

Any vacancies to be advertised as per GN properties but stating in marketing text this was formally a sheltered housing scheme

Advertise as restricted to over 60s in the first instance but stating on the marketing text that 'This scheme is no longer a designated fully sheltered housing scheme & may have residents under the age of 60 in the future, if you require further information please contact us'. Do not tick the sheltered housing box on the advert & applicants have the option to opt in or out of support from the start but please put support charges on adverts

Now extra care housing scheme

The numbers of units and sheltered/general needs tenants is not the current figure

Revised Scheme Classifications

	No. Sheltered Units	No. Other Units	Property Type
Sheltered Housing Schemes			
Eastacre, Weeke	35	1	Flats & Bungalows
Godson House, Winchester	35	1	Flats
Greens Close/Blanchard Road, Bishops Waltham	37	1	Flats & Bungalows
Hyde Gate, Winchester	15	3	Flats
Hyde Lodge, Winchester	38	0	Flats
King Harold Court, Stanmore	33	0	Flats
Lawn House, Winchester	36	1	Flats
Makins Court, Alresford	52	0	Flats & Bungalows
Mildmay Court, Winchester	35	0	Flats
Normandy Court, Wickham	36	1	Flats
Richard Moss House, Winchester	49	0	Flats
White Wings (East Wing), Denmead	19	14	Flats
12 schemes	420	22	

	No. Sheltered Units	No. Other Units	Property Type
Bungalow/Over 60s Schemes			
Chester Court, Winchester	35	0	Flats
Simonds Court, Abbots Barton	29	1	Flats & Bungalows
Spring House Close, Colden Common	36	1	Flats
Airlie Corner, Stanmore	10	0	Bungalows
Drummond Close, Stanmore	9	0	Bungalows
Firmstone Road, Winnall	16	0	Bungalows
Lisle Court, Stanmore	5	0	Bungalows
Meadow View, Micheldever	8	0	Bungalows
Northfields, Twyford	27	0	Bungalows
Pine Road, Bishops Waltham	25	0	Bungalows
Springvale, Swanmore	39	0	Bungalows
Southbrook Cottages, Micheldever	9	0	Bungalows
Stoney Lane, Weeke	16	0	Bungalows
Wonston Close, Sutton Scotney	25	0	Bungalows
14 schemes	289	2	

	No. Sheltered Units	No. Other Units	
Extra Care Schemes			
Danemark Court, Winchester	36	0	Flats
Matilda Place, Winchester	20	0	Flats
2 schemes	56	0	

	No. Remaining Sheltered Units	No. General Needs Units	
General Needs Schemes			
Airlie Corner, Stanmore	3	5	Flats
Bartholomew Close, Winchester	12	2	Flats
Chiltern Court, Alresford	9	16	Flats
Colson Close, Winchester	2	19	Flats
Drummond Close, Stanmore	6	21	Flats
Firmstone Road, Winnall	11	19	Flats
Harwood Place, Kingsworthy	7	32	Flats
King Alfred Place, Winchester	7	1	Flats
Lisle Court, Stanmore	4	13	Flats
Monks Road, Winchester	6	1	Flats
Penton Place, Highcliffe	12	25	Flats
The Valley, Stanmore	11	26	Flats
Water Lane (Chester Court), Winchester	4	0	Flats
13 sites	94	180	

General Needs Scheme Facilities

General Needs Schemes	No. Remaining Sheltered Units	No. General Needs Units	Common Room	Guest Room	Current Use	Comments
Airlie Corner, Stanmore	3	5	Yes	No	Used occasionally by tenants	Possible conversion to a 1 bed flat
Bartholomew Close, Winchester	12	2	No	No	N/A	N/A
Chiltern Court, Alresford	9	16	Yes	No	Used by Age Concern for activities	Possible conversion to a 2 bed flat
Colson Close, Winchester	2	19	Yes	Yes	Used by the Night Shelter for storage	Possible conversion to a 3 bed flat
Drummond Close, Stanmore	6	21	Yes	Yes	Used twice a month by tenants	Possible conversion to a 3 bed flat
Firmstone Road, Winnall	11	19	Yes	Yes	2 common rooms, upper & lower. Upper not used, lower used regularly by tenants	Possible conversion to 1 bed flat (upper) & 3 bed flat (lower)
Harwood Place, Kingsworthy	7	32	Yes	Yes	Used occasionally by tenants	Possible conversion to a 3 bed flat
King Alfred Place, Winchester	7	1	No	No	N/A	N/A
Lisle Court, Stanmore	4	13	No	No	Currently being converted	Currently being converted
Monks Road, Winchester	6	1	No	No	N/A	N/A
Penton Place, Highcliffe	12	25	Yes	No	Used by Basics Bank	Possible conversion to a 2 bed flat
The Valley, Stanmore	11	26	Yes	No	Used regularly by tenants	Possible conversion
Water Lane (Chester Court), Winchester	4	0	No	No	N/A	N/A
13 sites	94	180				