



Chairman's Tenants Focus group on Sheltered Housing

**Presentation to
Councillor Maria Caulfield
20 August 2008**



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Sheltered Housing Policy

- That works for tenants, the council and staff.
- That is clear and transparent and easily understood and outlines future and strategic thinking.
- That provides consistency in service delivery.
- That has clear and consistent guidelines about “service charges”.
- That has clear and consistent guidelines / protocols/ agreements in place about the hiring of common rooms, across all schemes.



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Asset Management / procurement

Are there any plans to address the issue of shared facilities in sheltered housing?

If a scheme is under occupied - surely it is not Value for Money?

Some schemes have empty 2 bedroom flats is this loss of revenue?



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Common rooms

- Sometimes common areas are used for day centres / groups during the day, tenants recommend that protocols / policies / agreements be put in place e.g. a consistent charging policy in place for hiring of rooms.
- There may be a security risk as people have access to the whole buildings once they are in and some tenants may leave their front doors open especially if they have a carer / visitor arriving.



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- Tenants recommend that any income generated from room hire should go into the social fund.
- Tenants recommend that room hiring is monitored and agreed with tenants before hiring agreements take place.



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Budget

- In the past there was a specific budget for sheltered housing improvements. Tenants would like to know about any future investment plans.

Out of hours services

- Need to clarify the remit of care link services.
- Further discussions are needed regarding the use of electric doors and safety.



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Communication

All agreed that the issue of communication keeps being raised.

Need to be confident that everyone involved is kept up to date with any changes to avoid rumours and speculation and ensure that information is consistent.



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Service charges

General Principal – all tenants should be aware of what they have to pay for and how charges are broken down. The tenants recommend that information about service charges should:



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- Be clear and consistent detailing a breakdown of services charged for;
- A copy in large print, laminated should be put in communal areas;
- Information about service charges should be on the back of / attached to people's rent books;
- Information about service charges should be in an accessible format.



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Service Delivery / 24 hour cover

- Tenants would like to know when Job descriptions / scheme management processes were last reviewed and checked for consistency.
- There needs to be a balance between people's time and involvement in meetings due to the impact this may have on schemes.



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Involving tenants in recruitment

- Tenants stated that they would like to be more involved in staff recruitment.



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THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

– Allocations and Adult Social Care

- Tenants would like to know how allocations to sheltered housing fit in with the general allocation policy.
- Tenants recommend a robust assessment procedure looking at people's needs and their suitability for sheltered housing is the age limit of 60 always appropriate.



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- Tenants recommend looking at other local authorities housing and support models of delivery e.g. Extra Care Housing.
- Tenants recommend that people be given enough time to think about what they may or may not need in relation to a new property.
- Tenants recommend that they be involved in the advertising and viewings of schemes they represent.



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Supporting People

- Tenant representatives fed back their concerns about lack of consultation and how the proposals in the strategy development may impact on services.
- Tenant representatives fed back that people are very worried by rumours of some services being withdrawn and whether this will affect them.



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Adaptations

- There is a need to ensure that all the tenant focus groups work gets linked together.
- Need to make the best use of stock and resources- £750K Council housing adaptations budget.
- There are demand / cost implications for adaptations.



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- Councils must have an accessible housing register.
- Question – why is Occupational Therapist involvement always necessary? E.g. Minor Adaptations.
- Could the council bulk buy adaptations?