

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Housing Portfolio Holder

28 October 2005

AUTHOR/S: Sheltered Housing Review Group

REVIEW OF THE SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICE

Purpose

1. To set out progress to date in the review of the Sheltered Housing Service, to report on feedback from consultation with tenants and staff and to propose a vision statement for the future of the service.
2. To propose a number of key principles for the future development of the service and to highlight a number of key issues that will affect any reorganisation.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

3. Quality, Accessible Services	The Sheltered Housing Service is a valued Council service achieving high tenant satisfaction ratings.
Village Life	The service contributes to the local community by involving local people in events in the communal facilities.
Sustainability	Sheltered Housing helps to provide mixed sustainable communities.
Partnership	The Sheltered Housing Service works in partnership with other agencies to provide a coordinated service that meets tenants needs.

Background

4. Leader and Cabinet received a report on 9.12.04 advising them of the outcomes of the countywide Best Value Review of sheltered housing services. They noted the conclusions of the Review, endorsed the Vision Statement proposed by the Review and agreed to set up an advisory group to provide overall guidance on taking the Review's action plan forwards.

The advisory group consisted of 9 members and representatives from the PCT and Age Concern and met formally three times. In addition group members undertook study visits to sheltered housing services at Cambridge City Council and Hereward Housing Association, and received a presentation from the Supporting People Manager for Cambridgeshire. The Group received reports on:

- The Project Plan for the review
- The existing structure of the Sheltered Housing Service
- The implications of the countywide Best Value Review of Sheltered Housing
- The long-term viability of the sheltered schemes
- Details of workshops held with staff
- The village warden scheme
- Best practice in sheltered housing

5. Particular issues which were discussed by the Group included-
- The financial pressures on all sources of funding for sheltered housing services including income from Supporting People and subsidy from Council Tax and general rent income
 - The different staffing ratios for sheltered services existing in different landlords across the County
 - The commitment to reduce the numbers of general sheltered units and increase the number of extra care sheltered places, coupled with the relative unpopularity of bedsits and flats
 - The importance given by residents to contacts with Scheme Managers and the existence of a 24 hour emergency response
6. The last meeting of the advisory group (19.9.05) endorsed the proposals contained in this report which address the need to make savings but at the same time maintain the core elements of the service which tenants value and make real improvements to the nature of the out-of-hours emergency response.

Considerations

7. *Financial considerations*

- (i) The financial modelling undertaken through the Options Appraisal process identified the main pressures on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and on the Council's ability to maintain investment in the longer-term in its housing stock:
- The HRA will fall into deficit from 2007/8 unless savings of around £410,000 - £437,000 per annum are made from 2006/7 onwards
 - Capital investment required to maintain the Decent Homes Standard is projected to exceed available resources in 2012/13
- (ii) The current annual revenue cost of the Sheltered Housing Service (based upon budget estimates for 2005/6 and excluding capital expenditure) is just over £2.485 million. The majority of the cost (£1.5 million) is on salaries, with a further £0.67m in associated costs. Set against this is expected income from fees and charges of £1.255 million.
- (iii) The majority of income (£850,000) comes from Supporting People Grant, which contributes towards the cost of the housing-related support provided by the warden service. Further charges for housing management-related services (such as grass cutting, etc.) amount to around £390,000, with other small amounts making up the remainder.
- (iv) The current Supporting People charge to tenants and leaseholders is £13.99 per week. Tenants in residence prior to April 2003 are paying £9.50 per week and will each year receive a percentage increase until all tenants are paying the

same amount. This will be achieved by 2010. The weekly other (communal facilities etc) charge to tenants and leaseholders is £5.85 per week.

- (v) The deficit between costs and income is currently covered through a contribution to the cost of the service from the General Fund (£300,000) and the HRA (£900,000). The net effect is that both tenants and leaseholders are receiving a service that is heavily subsidised by other tenants and residents.
- (vi) Detailed financial analysis of the costs of the service and the split between housing support costs and other management costs has shown that the amount of subsidy varies from scheme to scheme, depending upon the number of properties on each scheme and the relative proportions of tenants and leaseholders. The table below, however, demonstrates the average level of weekly subsidy for the service:

		Average cost of service	Average actual charge	Average subsidy
Tenants	Support services	£18.95	£13.99	£4.96
	Management-related services	£10.15	£5.85	£4.30
Leaseholders	Support services	£18.31	£13.99	£4.32
	Management-related services	£9.85	£5.85	£4.00

The above are averages only – the actual range varies enormously on a scheme-by-scheme basis. Appendix 1 sets out some examples to demonstrate the effect on tenants and leaseholders of 5 schemes if the decision were made to increase the charges to fully cover the costs of the current service.

- (vii) The situation is further worsened by probable cuts in income stemming from a national reduction in actual funding for the Supporting People programme:
 - The Supporting People grant is to be cut by 15.9% (£2.1m) from the value of the grant received in 2004/5 (£13.3m)
 - 5.9% (£0.8m) has already been cut resulting in 2005/6 grant of £12.5m
 - 5% (£0.6m) is expected to be cut in 2006/7 and another 5% (0.6m) in 2007/8, resulting in 2007/8 grant of £11.2m
 - This is on top of no inflationary increase in grant from 2004/5 onwards
 - These cuts are likely to continue in subsequent years up to an estimated level of 36.4% (£4.6m) of the 2005/6 grant (£12.5m), resulting in a grant of £8m.

8. **Feedback from consultation with tenants**

1,369 sheltered housing surveys were delivered to tenants and leaseholders at the end of June. 904 were returned (66%), a pleasing result. 418 returnees expressed an interest in attending a coffee morning to discuss the outcomes of the survey and the future of sheltered housing at South Cambs. 10 sessions were held during the week 15th August and were attended by 159 tenants and equity share leaseholders.

The survey revealed a high level of satisfaction of residents with the service they received:

- 56% rated the service as Very Good
- 28% as Good
- 11% as Fair
- Only 2% rated the service as Poor and only 1% as Very Poor
- 3% did not respond to this question

In summary, 84% of residents said the service was at least Good and over half as Very Good. The 3% who rated the service as Poor or Very poor equates to just 22 residents.

Question 9 in the survey asked tenants to rank in order of importance the elements of the service that we provide, with three clear elements emerging as most important:

- 24 hour alarm service (29%)
- Daily contact (28%) and
- Security of living on sheltered housing scheme (26%)

These elements of the service were used as the focus of the discussion sessions.

The key conclusions were:

- Tenants were receptive to an out of hours service being provided by a partner agency
- The benefits of providing a consistent, flexible service across the district via a generic team clustered around a group of schemes was accepted by those taking part – in particular that they would be working from 9am to 5pm, social activities would be more evenly spread and that they would meet tenants from other schemes.
- Tenants were assured that teams would provide regular contact from a small group of Scheme Managers, i.e., they would see a regular face and 'know' who was calling on them.

A fuller breakdown of the results of the consultation with tenants is given at Appendix 2.

A letter was sent to all tenants and residents setting out the proposals endorsed by the advisory group on 19 September and inviting their response. There were 40 individual responses in all, together with three petitions. The major concern raised was that there would be no resident Scheme Manager under the proposals. A breakdown of the results is included as Appendix 5.

9. ***Feedback from consultation with applicants***

During July and August 2005 a postal questionnaire was sent to all applicants on the housing register where the applicant(s) was aged 60+. A total of 327 completed questionnaires were returned giving a response rate of 53%. The key findings of the questionnaire were:

- Nearly ¾ live in South Cambs with the majority of the others living outside Cambridgeshire
- The majority are owner occupiers (52%), followed by 29% social sector tenants and 9% in private rented homes
- The overwhelming majority are looking for bungalows rather than flats-60% want two bedroom bungalows and 20% want one bedroom bungalows
- The main reason people currently living in South Cambs want to move is health related (41%) but the main reason people outside Cambridgeshire want to come here is to be near family (78%)
- 65% of applicants want sheltered accommodation. Of those who don't want it, 40% cannot envisage any circumstances in the future when they might want it
- The most important features of sheltered housing for applicants wanting sheltered housing are:
 - 24 hr Alarm System (73%)
 - Will accept owner-occupiers (41%)
 - Communal activities (39%)
 - Neighbours of the same age (36%)
 - Visits from a Scheme Manager (32%)

10. ***Consultation with staff***

A previous report detailed the outcomes of the initial engagement with sheltered housing staff and the establishment of the Staff Working Group. A further meeting was held on 9th August, where the group discussed the next stage of tenant consultation and the structure of the discussion groups.

All sheltered housing staff were invited to a meeting on 6th September, with very high attendance. At the meeting there was a presentation setting out a vision for the service. All staff have been asked to feed in their views either individually, through their Trades Union representatives or through the Staff Working Group.

The responses are detailed below (Paragraph 20), as they have fed directly into the proposals on staffing structure and the Scheme Manager role.

11. ***Making use of learning***

Best practice emphasises the role sheltered housing has to play as one of the choices for older people and the need for flexibility and partnership in its provision.

The Best Value Review of Sheltered Housing put forward a number of proposals relating to future options. Of particular relevance to sheltered housing were:

- Greater integration with primary and social care staff

- Promotion of the community alarm service with effective response
- Making services in sheltered housing more widely available to the community

The meeting with Cambridge City was illuminating. The sheltered housing service there was reviewed, resulting in the move from resident wardens to a fully mobile service, operating across the city. The response from tenants was that whilst the service itself was acceptable, their main area of dissatisfaction was with the loss of regular contact with an identified and familiar staff member, with the feeling of security this engendered.

This led to a further review by the City Council, in consultation with its tenants, with the result that a move was made to Area Teams covering particular schemes, giving back this regular contact between the team and the tenants.

With the move away from resident wardens, the out-of-hours service at Cambridge City is now provided by the Primary Care Trust (PCT), consisting of trained care staff and with access to nursing assistance if required.

This was better meeting the expectations of the residents who made an emergency call, particularly in the ability to respond to falls, which were the most frequent reason for the emergency call. Care staff were able to make an appropriate response, including lifting if needed and an assessment of the need for emergency services.

An analysis of the reasons for emergency calls in South Cambs sheltered residents has shown that the majority are made due to falling, particularly at night.

The sheltered service at Hereward Housing is also currently under review – whilst Scheme Managers will remain resident, they have been formed into groups covering a number of schemes in the area to ensure a more even distribution of properties per manager. The feedback from their tenants has been that it is the familiarity and interaction with a known team and the fact that someone in that team is always available, that is more important than having a resident warden on site.

The service is provided during normal working hours only, with the out-of-hours service provided by Scheme Managers on a rota basis.

12. ***Re-organisation of the Housing Service***

The Sheltered Housing Review has coincided with the Council also reviewing its wider delivery of the Housing Service. This will combine Senior Management responsibility for Sheltered Housing and Housing Management, with the clear intention of better integration and co-ordination.

13. ***Primary Care Trust (PCT)***

The PCT, following the integration of Health and Social Care services for older people, is now organised into multi-disciplinary locality teams.

This gives the opportunity for greater co-operation in jointly developing services and in assisting sheltered tenants (e.g. better liaison on discharges, co-ordination of primary care activity to Sheltered Schemes, etc.) This has been identified as an area for improvement by both Sheltered Housing and PCT staff.

14. ***Lifeline Service***

Uptake of the Lifeline service has been increasing, with around 700 units now in operation outside of sheltered housing. At present, it can only be offered to individuals with identified keyholders as there is no response service available.

An opportunity in this area is the development of innovative technology associated with community alarms (such as falls monitors, vital signs monitors etc.) as well as assistive technology (such as automatic remote sensing and notification or cut-offs for gas, CO2, fire, etc.). These can form a vital part of a package aimed at promoting or maintaining independence. The current review offers the opportunity for Scheme Managers to take on the response role and to promote this valuable service in the wider community.

15. ***Difficult to let flats***

There are some flats in sheltered schemes that have in recent years become increasingly difficult to let, as they do not meet the requirements of applicants of those registered for sheltered housing who prefer two bedroom bungalows, or are unable to manage stairs.

It is proposed therefore that the flats should be redesignated for letting to older single applicants within the 40 to 60 age group, a policy which has already been followed successfully at Robinson Court, Gamlingay following redesignation in 2002.

The flats in question are:

- 27 – 32 Greenleas, Histon - 6 flats in total, all 1 bedroom
- 1 – 9 Fairview, Longstanton - 9 flats in total, 1 x 2 bedroom; 8 x 1 bedroom
- 1 and 1A Chapel Street, Waterbeach - 2 flats, both 1 bedroom
- 1 – 4 Chapel Close, Waterbeach - 4 flats, 1 x 2 bedroom; 3 x 1 bedroom

Options

16. What is not in doubt from the consultation with both tenants, applicants, staff and other agencies is the importance of the Sheltered Housing Service and the most important aspects of the service to tenants and applicants.
17. The key challenge is to maintain (and improve) on the current valued service within the financial and other constraints detailed above. All of the above have been taken into account in consideration by the Review Group of options for future delivery of the service.

Option 1 Retain the service in its present form

18. One option would be to retain the service in its present form. This would involve the increase of charges to both tenants and residents to remove the current subsidy and to build an additional increase against probable further cuts in Supporting People funding. This option is restricted due to:

- Charges to tenants will be limited by the rent convergence 'caps' until post 2011 and increases on leaseholders will be limited to a maximum of the costs rechargeable as under the terms of their lease.
- With no prospect of additional Supporting People funding, any increase in support charges would have to be paid by tenants and leaseholders direct.
- An increase in other (communal facilities etc) charges would in principle be eligible for HB payments if people qualify, however these could still be limited by the rent convergence 'caps'
- If other (communal facilities etc) charges were increased for leaseholders this would necessitate comprehensive record keeping and billing systems, which would add to administration costs

This option would also fail to address the non-financial considerations detailed above, particularly the aims within the Best Value Review of moving towards a more flexible service, better integrated with other services as part of a wider choice of options for older people to live independently in the community.

Option 2 – A new vision for the Sheltered Housing Service

19. Given all of the above, it is proposed that the Sheltered Housing Service in South Cambridgeshire be re-structured with the following vision:

“Our vision for the future is to develop a service that:

- Is financially sustainable
- provides a high quality, flexible, management and support service, tailored to the needs of our older residents
- encourages independence and allows dignity and quality of life and
- is integrated with other complementary services for older people”

20. The vision for the service is a long-term one and must be regarded as a direction of travel and certainly not one that will be achieved overnight. There are, however, a number of key principles, which, if agreed, will drive the first steps towards the long-term aims:

- A new role for Scheme Managers – so that they become the hub of housing support activity within their scheme:
 - Increased skills, including training on enhancing the support role
 - Closer working with Neighbourhood Managers
 - Closer working with PCT locality managers and teams
 - Able to respond to Lifeline calls
- Support based on a firm and familiar relationship between residents and staff:
 - A Team approach - schemes to be managed in groups which will reflect the dispersal of the schemes but with a dedicated team that will

- serve that locality. This will involve a move from scheme management – scheme managers will provide support to a number of residents, with a more equal distribution. There would be a lead manager for each property, with the ability to provide cover from within the team – meaning residents would see only familiar faces
- A 9 to 5 on-site service with no resident Scheme Manager
 - A small flexible team, but large enough to cover the scheme and to promote other activities, including social activities and promoting links between the schemes in that locality
 - Able to carry out other duties linked with Lifelines
- A fast and appropriate response to out of hours calls for assistance:
 - A night response service provided through the PCT
 - Able to assist with falls and to assess whether emergency services are required
 - Access to nursing help if needed
 - Guaranteed response times
 - Service to be offered to other Lifeline users (including private sector)
 - Promoting further use of communal facilities – the current provision differs across the schemes, this is an opportunity to ensure consistency of service:
 - Seen as a community resource – promoted by the Team
 - Increasing resident involvement in organising activities at the scheme and in the wider community
 - Increasing use by the wider community of the facilities and with other organisations
 - Possible base for delivery of health or care services

This is not to lose sight of the longer-term aim of developing a comprehensive range of housing, support and care options for maintaining independence, in which Sheltered Housing will continue to be a key component.

Following the meeting with staff on September 6, a number of responses have been made. Briefly, the comments focussed on a number of areas:

- General agreement with the movement of the service towards providing more support for tenants, including in the community
- Great interest around the organisation of the teams and their organisation/geography
- The need for a proper handover between the daytime staff and out-of-hours service
- Interest in having working patterns more flexible and whether the new structure could improve this
- Agreement with the need to maintain a close relationship between the Scheme Manager and the tenants and residents
- Support for better liaison with housing management and care/support staff from other agencies

- The suggestion that the weekend daytime service be provided in-house
- Making the daily visit optional – allowing more time with those who need the additional support
- The need for IT investment to support the service
- Generally – the overall comment that “We think that this could work”

All the staff will receive a more detailed response that will include answers to more employment and housing-related questions.

21. The above vision and responses from staff have been the key drivers in drawing up a proposed organisational model and staffing structure based upon the following main principles:

- Revision of the current Scheme Manager role to reflect more emphasis upon supporting the tenant, enabling greater use of facilities for social and community use and the provision of a service to Lifeline customers living outside of a sheltered scheme. In addition to current daily visits and the need to continue some elements of day-to-day management, the role could include, for example:
 - Assisting in assessing applications
 - Escorting prospective tenants around the schemes
 - Signing-up and induction of new tenants
 - Greater liaison with health and care agencies on packages of care and support
 - Promoting the use of communal facilities and activities to include older residents outside the scheme
 - Promoting healthy living through exercise, healthy eating, etc.
 - Working with health/care agencies on admissions and discharge from hospital/care
 - Acting as an advocate for residents with other agencies, including private sector agencies (e.g. utility companies)
 - Promoting residents involvement in organising activities themselves
 - Responding to lifeline responses from private sector users
 - Installing lifelines and other assistive technology

The list is not exhaustive and a revised job description will be developed in conjunction with Scheme Managers and their representatives.

- 3 Area Teams of non-resident Scheme Managers, based upon existing housing management and maintenance contract areas – West, East South. This will aid closer working between the managers in these sections and avoid the teams having different maintenance contracts running across their areas
- The staffing numbers are based upon a property ratio of 46 properties (by area) to one Scheme Manager, with additional staff in each team to ensure effective cover for sickness and leave. This therefore brings down the property-people ratio to below the 46-1.

- This would result in a total of 40 whole time equivalent (wte) posts in the Scheme Manager establishment – giving an average property to manager ratio of just over 34 – 1.
- Appendix 3 gives an example (for illustrative purposes only) of how the properties could be divided into areas and teams. A map is also included to show the spread of schemes covered by each team. The example is not fixed and further work will be carried out with the staff on this
- Each resident would have a lead manager, who would be their main contact for support. Properties would be more equally divided between managers to give fairer workloads. In the main, residents would see their regular manager, but the team approach would mean that cover could be supplied through the team, meaning the resident would see only one or two “familiar faces.”
- There would also be a designated lead manager for each of the communal facilities.
- Daily visits will continue to be made, but with the Scheme Manager no longer being resident and visits being made across the schemes in that area – this would mean the group members would get to better know the schemes and the tenants across their group or visits could be organised so that each tenant regularly saw only one or two of the group, with an occasional third when cover is necessary. Visits would not be organised on a one manager to one scheme basis.
- The out-of-hours response service will be provided by the PCT’s Short Term Assessment and Rehabilitation Team (START) on a contractual basis, with a guaranteed response time. The service would cover the hours of 5 pm to 9am on a daily basis every day and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at weekends and on Bank Holidays. START provide short-term social care and longer-term health care across Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, as well as working at Addenbrookes on hospital discharge and admission prevention. It is a 24-hour service with both planned calls and emergency calls day and night.
- There are currently 4 night time care staff and 4 nursing staff operating – the additional staffing increase to provide the out-of-hours service for South Cambs would be just over 4 whole time equivalents. START also work very closely with CAMDOC out-of-hours medical service and the Ambulance Trust.
- An analysis of out-of-hours calls over January – May 2005 showed that of 212 calls, 112 did not require a response and were dealt with by the call centre. The 100 calls that required a response from the Scheme Manager were for the following reasons:
 1. Falls – 20
 2. Repair – 16
 3. Falls requiring an ambulance – 14
 4. Smoke detector going off/fault – 12
 5. Illness – ambulance required – 11
 6. Resident needed physical assistance - 11
 7. Other (mainly false alarm, but also 1 death) – 10
 8. Illness – doctor called – 7

Assuming that the five months represent a typical call-out pattern, 240 call-outs requiring a response would be the annual total. However, as the above figures show, 72% of calls relate to a fall or need for medical treatment. Even these are relatively low, equating to around one call every two days. START could easily cope with this level of activity, especially as one of the teams will already be operating in the area.

Housing

22. Scheme Managers in the new structure would continue to occupy their current homes in the interim, but their work will not necessarily be based at that scheme and a move to alternative accommodation is not precluded. New employees would not be offered accommodation. Scheme Managers who retire will be offered alternative accommodation, wherever possible away from the scheme on which they were resident (there may be exceptions if there is a strong preference to remain on the scheme).

Should there be the need for redundancies, alternative accommodation would also be offered to Scheme Managers who are resident.

As properties become vacant, careful consideration will be given to each vacancy and its future use will depend very heavily on where it is in relationship to the scheme. In some instances, it will only be appropriate to use it as an additional sheltered unit, in others it may be possible to allocate it for general needs housing.

Financial Implications

23. The existing service currently amounts to £1.7m in salaries and associated costs. The proposed staffing structure (40 Sheltered Scheme Managers as Appendix 3) is estimated to cost £1.2m per annum. A contribution from the General Fund is required to reflect the cost of staff time spent on non-HRA activities. This is likely to be reduced from £300,000 to £230,000, as a consequence of the salary savings suggested in the proposal. Income will therefore decrease by £70,000 and the net saving to the HRA, as a result of the Sheltered Housing Review, will be approximately £388,000, including savings of £213,000 already achieved through natural wastage during the year. This is broken down in more detail at Appendix 4.

The pension and redundancy costs range from zero to £70,000 per person depending on individual circumstances, with an average cost of approximately £16,000 per person. If eighteen redundancies are considered, it is possible that costs could range from a total of £34,000 to £694,000 depending on the individuals concerned. With the most expensive scenario, where redundancy and costs of paying pension benefits early are £694,000, it would take almost two years for any net savings to be achieved. There could also be an ongoing cost to the Authority up to £20,000 per annum for compensatory added year (CAY) pension costs. The capital value of the Authority's liability for CAY, assuming an average life expectancy of 85 years, is estimated to range from zero to £290,000, depending on the individuals concerned.

There is the possibility of a reduction in service charge income as scheme costs are likely to reduce and it is not permissible, under the terms of the lease, to charge equity share holders more than the appropriate cost of their scheme.

The anticipated reduction in the Supporting People funding already highlighted earlier in the report will lead to an increase in net expenditure, which will to some extent counteract the level of net savings achievable.

Existing staff may eventually be re-housed; therefore, there is some potential for a saving on rent allowances within the next 2-3 years.

Legal Implications

24. The Council is required to consult and inform its secure tenants on any proposed changes in matters of housing management.

Staffing Implications

25. A reorganisation of the Sheltered Housing Service on these principles outlined above will result in the overall number of staff employed in the service.

Should redundancies be necessary, selection would be based upon the Council's Redundancy and Reorganisation policy, taking into account an individual's:

- Skills
- Experience
- Work performance
- Attendance record
- Disciplinary action
- Suitability for redeployment/retraining

Weightings would be attached to each of these criteria and applied objectively, fairly and consistently to every staff member affected in order to select the Scheme Managers for the re-organised service.

Risk Management Implications

26. Failure to address the organisation and funding of the service will jeopardise the Council's ability to provide a service to its tenants and to maintain the Decent Homes Standard target for its housing stock.

Consultations

27. Sheltered Housing tenants
Sheltered Housing applicants
Sheltered Housing staff
Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust
Age Concern Cambridgeshire

Conclusions/Summary

28. The central principle of current national policy in the delivery of services for older people is to move towards maintaining independence in their home and in providing a range of housing, care and support options to facilitate this. Sheltered Housing is one of these options, highly valued by tenants and residents.

The Best Value Review highlighted high staffing levels and costs with the provision of a low level of support, with a need for improvements, especially in the out-of-hours response service.

The service is currently heavily subsidised by tenants and residents outside of sheltered housing and the Council needs to make considerable savings to its HRA to meet the Decent Homes Standard and avoid deficit. At the same time, subsidy for the service from Supporting People is likely to reduce.

Consultation with tenants and applicants has highlighted that the most important aspects of the service are a 24-hour response, daily contact and the security of living on a sheltered scheme. The experience of review at Cambridge City backs this up, particularly the importance of residents knowing their scheme management team.

Re-structuring of the service offers great opportunities for closer working with neighbourhood management and other public services, and in enhancing the service supplied to Lifeline customers.

The vision for the service is a long-term one, but with some key principles that will drive short-term actions. These will also implement two of the Best Value recommendations to which the Council has already committed – better integration of community alarm, sheltered housing and primary and social care staff; and promoting the availability of community alarms for all older people.

Recommendations

29. That Cabinet endorses the vision for the Sheltered Housing Service as set out in Paragraph 19 and the key principles set out at Paragraph 20 and agree the outline staffing structure set out at Appendix 3, subject to further consultation with staff on the final composition of the teams.
30. That work continues with staff, stakeholders and residents on the long-term vision for housing for older people, to be incorporated in a South Cambridgeshire Strategy for Older People.
31. That the Difficult to Let flats detailed at Paragraph 15 be re-designated as non-sheltered properties for letting to single people in the 40 to 60 age group.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

South Cambridgeshire District Council – file: Review of Sheltered Housing
Cambridgeshire Supporting People: Best Value Review of Sheltered Housing

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