

# REVIEW OF REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL'S SHELTERED HOUSING STOCK FURTHER TO COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

The Older Persons' Housing and Support Strategy and its Action Plan were approved by Full Council on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 subject to Community Consultation. That consultation has now been carried out and this is the first report being brought back to Councillors for further approval.

This report addresses objectives 2 and 3 of the Action Plan's first priority which are:

- **Housing designated for Older People meets the defined level of standards and meets their needs.**
- **Review Housing designated for Older People that do not meet a defined level of standards**

The defined level of Standards can be found at Appendix 7

### Consultation

Consultation on this specific objective and other areas of the Action Plan was commenced in September, 2009 with staff and public conferences. Workshops were held at schemes during October, 2009 where the standards and Action Plan objectives were discussed. Various other events were held to ensure all members of the Community were included. A Residents Group was formed to allow members of the public to work with officers. Home Support Officers visited service users to clarify and answer queries or concerns. Full details can be found at appendix 1.

### Desired Outcomes

The Older Persons' Housing and Support Strategy Action Plan outcomes in relation to these priorities are:

- To ensure that existing Council Housing meets Older Peoples expressed needs including those of security, comfort and mobility
- Fewer void properties in Older Persons' Schemes
- Increased numbers of accommodation for general letting

### Review of the Sheltered Stock

All the Council's Sheltered Housing Stock has been inspected and measured against the defined standards (app. 7). Of the 1169 units of accommodation currently held, 608 units with communal facilities or bungalows with appropriate access were considered suitable for proposed Category A.

There are a further 141 units which were considered to be reasonable and with potential to either meet Disability Discrimination Act 1995 regulations in the future with some investment or are reasonable and in high demand now, these would be suitable for proposed Category B.

A further 215 units of either communal accommodation or bungalows with access problems were considered suitable for Over 50's without mobility issues.

### Proposed Revised Categories

### **Category A - Older Persons Supported Housing**

Communal Accommodation - Aged 65 and over with a support need  
Bungalows – aged 60 and over or other adults with severe mobility issues  
(Priority given to those with an assessed support need).

### **Category B – Older Persons Housing**

Communal Accommodation – Aged 60 and over with or without a support need

### **Category C – Over 50's Housing**

Communal or bungalow accommodation for persons aged 50 and over with or without a support need. Not suitable for those with mobility issues.

**Full details can be found at page 11 of Appendix 2 and these are assuming recommendations for essential works are approved (see below and Appendix 4).**

## **Essential Works Required**

Officers have identified improvement works that would allow a scheme to remain in our proposed Older Persons Housing Categories. Where it was felt that standards had not been fully reached but could be reached within a reasonable period of time, approximate costs have been included at Appendix 4. If the costs are not approved the proposed category may have to be reconsidered. After consultation with residents other costs have been included for works that have been classed as desirable or relate to fixtures and fittings.

## **Properties not deemed suitable as Older Persons' Housing**

There are 201 units of accommodation over 12 schemes that have been deemed unsuitable as Older Persons' Housing. Councillors are being asked to approve that some of these schemes are returned to general let. Further information including the options to be considered and approved can be found at Section 6 of Appendix 2.

## **Change Management Process**

The Change Management Process which can be found at Appendix 16 was approved along with the Older Persons' Housing and Support Strategy last year. In order to effectively manage the outcomes of decisions reached and to continue to implement and review the Action Plan officers are asking for approval for an additional temporary member of staff to facilitate this process (see Appendix 5).

## **Conclusion**

In summary, Officers are proposing revised categories for Older Persons Council Housing in Redditch and recommending which schemes are appropriate for inclusion in those categories (see pages 21-24 of Appendix 2). Research and consultation has informed our proposals and several property inspections have been carried out, Councillors and residents were invited to inspections. Where properties have been deemed unsuitable for Older People, officers have provided recommendations for consideration where appropriate. A full change management programme is planned and in order to carry this out sensitively approval is sought for a temporary member of staff. The 'My Home, My Future, My Choice Residents Group' will continue to meet to ensure Residents, Councillors and Officers work together.

The benefits of approving proposals will ensure the desired outcomes are achieved and the Council are compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. It will improve the lifestyle and standard of accommodation for Older People living in Redditch and provide opportunities for the Council to provide housing to other client groups. The allocation process and demand for Older Persons' Housing will be reviewed annually in line with the Action Plan and the need for reviews on this scale will be minimised in the future.