



Report to Customers and Communities Committee

11 September 2014

Title: Sheltered Housing Service – Annual Update 2013/14

Report of: Director of Customers and Communities

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with an update on activity, performance and customer satisfaction for the Sheltered Housing Service for 2013/14

Background

2. Gateshead is characterised by an increasingly ageing population, which means there is a need for housing providers to deliver responsive, needs led services. To do this the dedicated Sheltered Housing team regularly consult with and involve older tenants to capture their views and ideas and to fulfil the desire many of them have, which is to play a meaningful and active role within their sheltered schemes and local communities.
3. The remit of the Sheltered Housing team is to work closely with our partners to provide housing services for older people which are effective, accessible, and appropriate to their needs.
4. In April 2010, the Board received a report which detailed the outcomes of the sheltered housing service's accreditation by the CHS Code of practice. There are a number of benefits the Code of Practice brings to our customers mainly offering them a chance to give their real voice in shaping the services that they receive. The Nationally recognised quality mark also demonstrates that sheltered housing related support services in Gateshead are of the highest standard, delivered consistently and are person centred.
5. The accreditation is a rolling process and has been subject to an annual review since it was initially awarded. The Sheltered Accreditation working group has been ensuring compliance with the standard and identifying opportunities for improvement for nearly 5 years. This year they have successfully completed the continuous improvement plan which was a mandatory element of the Code and requires us to demonstrate what we need to do to improve services for older persons in Gateshead.

6. The re-assessment process was carried out during the first quarter of this financial year and we are currently waiting for formal notification of what the assessors report includes but initial feedback is very positive.

Summary

Estate Tours

7. During the last year we adapted our approach to conducting estate tours to further demonstrate that we provide a responsive service to older persons. As well as reporting issues via log sheets available on notice boards; with staff in the communal lounges and on-line, we now offer a home visit service while the Sheltered Estate Officers are on site in each of the schemes. This means that customers can report issues within the comfort of their own home and has been particularly well received in the winter months. This has had a positive impact on customer involvement with a 3% increase on last year's result with 149 (90%) tours complete with customer involvement.
8. Appendix 1 shows a breakdown of the performance data on Sheltered Estate Tours in 2013/14.

Drop-ins

9. 574 customers accessed the face to face drop-in sessions the Sheltered Estate Officers (SEOs) held in sheltered communal lounges last year. The outcomes for customers from these sessions were wide ranging including having their say on local issues such as parking and grounds maintenance and receiving information and advice on repairs and estate improvements. Appendix 2 summarises the types of query picked up during the year. Those schemes which were scheduled to be decommissioned received more frequent, fortnightly meetings so information and advice on rehousing options could be provided.

Home welcome visits

10. Moving into sheltered accommodation can be a big adjustment for older people so the Home Welcome Visit (HWV) is vital to ensure they have settled into their new home and are accessing the right support to enable them to continue to live independently.
11. To ensure we consistently achieve strong performance in this area we work closely with the council's sheltered scheme officers (SSO's) and customers' family/advocates to gain access. This year performance on completing visits within the six week target increased by 6% with 141 HWV's complete during 2013/14; 92% within target timescales.
12. Where we are unable to complete any visits within the target time, it is likely to be due to the vulnerable nature and availability of some customers. Appointments are often re-arranged around medical needs, hospital visits etc.

Neighbourhood Pride

13. Through the Neighbourhood Pride budget we have been able to deliver a variety of projects in 2013/14 which enhance the local environment within our sheltered schemes. A summary of the activity taken place is found in Appendix 3. Work

has primarily focused on developing safe and accessible outdoor areas for older people to enjoy. We have supported a number of gardening projects which have been very well received and help tackle issues of health inequalities as well as social isolation. Giving older people an opportunity to remain active within the scheme promotes a sense of community and is recognised as contributing to improved wellbeing.

Improving the quality and choice of housing

14. In September 2011, Cabinet recommended that de-commissioning programmes were approved for schemes at; Victoria House, Derwentside, Sunhill, and West Park. We have worked closely with customers and their families to ensure appropriate support is provided around re-housing options throughout the last four years.
15. Victoria House closed last year after 21 tenants were rehoused to new homes in areas of their choice. The majority of customers transferred into other council owned homes and some moved in to local accommodation which specialises in elderly and nursing care.
16. We supported moves for the majority of our tenants in Derwentside last year as there was an opportunity for six applicants to move to the neighbouring Two Castles sheltered scheme. 12 of the remaining customers decided to move to other sheltered schemes owned by the Council. We expect that the scheme will close before the end of the year.
17. The new sheltered housing development, Sunhill Court built by The Thirteen Group opened in January 2014 providing modern older persons' accommodation in place of the old Sunhill sheltered scheme. We supported 17 customers from the old scheme to move into the new development.
18. Sunhill Court is owned by The Thirteen Group, and is managed by The Gateshead Housing Company through a Management Agreement. Support services are provided by Gateshead Council's Care Call service, via a Service Level Agreement. Care call provide a mobile scheme officer service and each property is linked to Care Call's 24/7 emergency response service. This has been critical in providing continuity for the residents moving to the new scheme and has greatly assisted in the transition.
19. Sunhill Court has been developed to meet the needs and aspirations of older people (over 55 years) and those with disabilities or specific needs. There are 28 self-contained two-bed flats over three floors and facilities include: 28 – two bed roomed apartments with fitted kitchens, level access bathrooms, a communal lounge and communal kitchen. 24 homes are for rent and 4 for shared ownership.
20. 21 of the new tenants living in Sunhill Court completed satisfaction surveys after they moved in and 95% said that they were very satisfied with their new home with one person stating they were fairly satisfied. Further detail on this is in appendix 4.
21. In Dunston, work is well underway by Thirteen Housing Group to build a new older persons scheme on the Ravensworth Road site which is scheduled for completion in spring 2015 and is in close proximity to the West Park scheme.

This scheme will provide 47 one and two-bed apartments for people over 55. Fourteen of these properties will also be for shared ownership.

22. There are currently eight customers remaining in West Park and seven have expressed an interest to move to the new Ravensworth Road development. The sheltered estate officer is holding fortnightly drop in's at the scheme to provide additional support for customers.

Investment Works

23. During 2013/14, 12 sheltered schemes were programmed to receive Equality Act works and all works had been completed at the year end. These works have primarily improved entranceways and toilet facilities, promoting increased use of communal lounges. 8 further schemes are due to receive works this financial year and are currently being delivered.
24. Tunstall Carecall Scheme – Works to upgrade the system in 389 properties were completed by September 2013. A further £250k worth of upgrades will be delivered during the current year.
25. Following on from the completion of Fire Safety Works at Multi Story blocks, similar works were carried out to Sheltered Housing schemes during 2013/14. The works included compartmentation and upgrades to fire doors all of which was completed by the end of March. There was some residual fire safety signage and completion of electrical upgrades that was concluded in the first quarter of this year.

Digital Inclusion

26. Since September 2009, Age UK Gateshead has contributed to Gateshead Housing Company and Gateshead Council's Community Empowerment through Digital Inclusion Project. This aims to reduce digital exclusion of our customers and provide opportunities and support.
27. Age UK have devised and delivered a successful support and training programme, based on their experience delivering specialist training for older people, to enable residents to use this new resource.
28. Throughout 2013/14, 11 Sheltered Schemes have benefited from this project and 71 customers attended sessions held in communal lounges receiving a total of 260 hours of training.
29. The project has changed significantly since it started. Initially the majority of residents who attended the courses were complete beginners who did not have access to computers or the internet. The lessons were very basic and residents were taught how to switch on a laptop, how to close down correctly, how to use a mouse and keyboard and how to do very basic internet searching. As the projects have continued the training has become bespoke and the residents that have attended have had specific training requests.
30. This year we have had residents wanting more in depth knowledge of internet security and how to install virus protection programs. We have worked on the 'windows 8 platform' which is very different to previous windows platforms. We have worked on tablets and Ipads. During the courses we have set up banking

online, set up shopping accounts, have bought our weekly shopping, have connected laptops to televisions, have downloaded photos and music, and arranged our files into folders. Many residents have used emails, 'Facebook' and 'Skype' to contact family.

Customer Involvement

Older Persons Service Improvement Group

31. The Older Persons Service Improvement Group provides residents with an opportunity to get more involved in shaping and improving services they need. Last year customers told us that they would like meeting to focus on more wide ranging issues impacting on older people covering key topics such as health, wellbeing and support services.
32. During 2013/14, the Older Persons Service Improvement Groups activity included:-
 - Scrutiny of the Adult Social Care service Standards
 - Reviewing a customer guide on combi boiler systems being installed within council properties
 - Shared ideas on how to support Older Persons Day on 1st October 2014
 - Reviewed the tenant led budget terms of reference
 - Develop procedures on dealing with untidy gardens to suit the needs of vulnerable customers
 - Input into Gateshead public health initiatives on healthy lifestyles
 - Redesign the format of the sheltered and carecall's satisfaction surveys
 - Information, advice and awareness raising on Dementia awareness.

Annual Scheme Meetings

33. Annual scheme meetings have been carried out in sheltered schemes since 2005 to cover a range of topics with customers;
 - To review achievements and outline plans for the future
 - To Deliver performance information
 - To carry out annual satisfaction surveys to discuss any issues about schemes and suggestions for improvement
 - To review scheme activities
34. This year, 318 customers attended the Annual Scheme Meetings and 334 took part in the satisfaction survey. Results are found in Appendix 5; in summary:
 - 311 (96%) were satisfied with the services provided by sheltered Estate Officer
 - 300 (92%) of customers were overall satisfied with living in a sheltered scheme
35. We collated a lot of positive feedback and comments from customers attending these events and every customer who expressed areas of dissatisfaction were contacted to provide feedback and inform the following improvements:

- Identified a number of potential neighbourhood pride applications for example sustainable gardens and raised bedding areas for the community to maintain in the future
 - Addressed local issues affecting the community such as parking and grounds maintenance
 - Developed information, training and advice on condensation in properties
 - Establishing links with local providers of older persons activities such as Rookie golf, improving the accessibility of communal areas, installing patio doors and upgrading communal areas
 - Identifying good news stories and best practice to share with neighbouring schemes
36. This year we are trying out a new approach to the annual scheme meetings. Instead of just one meeting each year, we would like to keep in touch with customers more often by combining this with the drop in sessions we hold every three months.
37. In the new 'Here & Now' roadshows we will look at four different themes across the year starting with Customer Service in the spring meeting, followed by other themes around involvement and support, the local environment and living in sheltered schemes.
38. This means we can give customers more regular and detailed information and feedback about our services, our performance and the improvements we're planning. This will also give customers the opportunity to talk to us in person about any suggestions or concerns they might have.
39. Having listened to customer feedback about the length of surveys, a short snappy satisfaction survey of no more than 4/5 questions will be carried out at each session with questions based on the theme of the discussion. The older persons Service Improvement group will receive regular feedback on the outcomes of the sessions at their bi monthly meetings with information on satisfaction data and customers comments. This will allow the SIG to be involved in identifying and developing service improvements which we can then share with customers at future roadshows.

Link to Values

40. This report relates to the following Company values: -
- Being a listening and learning organisation;
 - Being customer focussed, innovative and professional
 - Caring and respecting
 - Embracing equality

Impact on tenants

41. The provision of the dedicated Sheltered Housing Management Team enables us to tailor housing services, responding more effectively to the needs of older and vulnerable persons. We have registered several compliments this year in recognition of this.

Risk Management Implications

42. By providing a dedicated service to older people and working in partnership with other services we can provide tailored services to the most vulnerable customers to deliver high quality housing services and maintaining high levels of satisfaction.
43. Without this dedicated support there would be a risk of vulnerable customers not having an opportunity to live independently, not getting access to the support services they need and a risk of them becoming socially excluded.

Financial Implications

44. We have worked with Age UK to deliver the digital inclusion project since 2009. The annual cost of the programme in 2013/14 was £8,495 and we contribute 50% of the funding through current budgets.

Equality and Diversity Implications

45. Older persons services are continually reviewed to ensure our services are as accessible as possible. Customers are involved in shaping service delivery and the needs of older customers are taken into account.
46. Equality Impact Assessments are carried out when developing new projects or schemes to ensure that there is equal opportunity and good quality services for all older people.

Value for Money Implications

47. The CHS accreditation provides an external review of how well services are delivered. It enables us to demonstrate self awareness and the ability to challenge how the service is delivered in an efficient manner with the involvement of service users.
48. Improving services and working in partnership with the council and other agencies ensures we provide high quality services and contributes towards tenancy sustainability, allowing elderly people to remain independent for longer and reduces pressure on adult social care budgets.
49. Investing into our existing sheltered accommodation in a planned way, supports our long term vision to allow older people to remain living in their own homes for longer.

Health Implications

50. Evidence shows us that the longer people remain physically and mentally active, their health and well-being is improved. Enabling people to live independently for longer in their home will support healthy communities in Gateshead.

Environmental Implications

51. There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report. However older persons are engaged in ensuring the environment around their schemes is safe and well maintained.

Consultation carried out

52. As referenced throughout this report due to the complex needs and vulnerable nature of this particular customer group we aim to ensure that customers are consulted as a matter of routine.

Recommendation

53. The views of the committee are sought on whether it is satisfied with the annual update on the Sheltered Housing Service for 2013/14.

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Appendix 1: Estate Tours Performance Data 2013/14

Sheltered Estate Tour - Borough Performance

Qtr	Number Due	Carried out on time		With Residents	
		Number	%	Number	%
1	42	41	98%	38	90%
2	42	42	100%	41	98%
3	41	39	95%	37	90%
4	41	41	100%	33	81%
Total	166	163	98%	149	90%

Sheltered Estate Tour Performance - Neighbourhood Totals

Area	Qtr	Number Due	Carried out on time		With Residents	
			Number	%	Number	%
Central & Inner West	1	11	12	109%	11	100%
	2	11	12	109%	12	109%
	3	11	9	82%	11	100%
	4	11	11	100%	11	100%
	Total	44	44	100%	45	100%
East & South	1	17	17	100%	17	100%
	2	17	17	100%	17	100%
	3	17	17	100%	17	100%
	4	17	17	100%	17	100%
	Total	68	68	100%	68	100%
West	1	13	13	100%	10	77%
	2	13	13	100%	12	92%
	3	13	13	100%	9	69%
	4	13	13	100%	5	38%
	Total	52	52	100%	36	69%

Appendix 2: Drop in Issues 2013/14

Nature Of Issue	Number of Enquiries
Repairs	32
Housing Management	36
LES	7
Dog Fouling	3
Grounds Maintenance	18
Request	6
Handyman/Small Task	5
CareCall	1
Pest Control	1
Compliment	2
Home Visit	1
Complaint	1
Parking	1
Social Services	1
Highways	4
NP application	2
Investment Team	2
h&S	1
EO	1
Decommission	1
Other	3
Home improvement	1
Total Number of Issues	130
Total Number of Drops Ins	163
Total Number attendees	574

Neighbourhood Pride Projects 2013/14

Scheme	Project Description	Impact on tenants
Mulgrave Villas	Improvements to customer car park area- removal of two unsightly boulders and replacement planters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve pride in the scheme by enhancing the local environment • local residents feel that we listen and understand their views • Design out inappropriate landscaping to the small car park area
Pleasant Place 1-23	Compliment a new park bench in the locality by adding a new handrail to provide customers with easier access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a safer more accessible community for residents living in Pleasant place 1-23, 24-48 and Mount Pleasant - particularly in icy conditions • Reduce the risk of falls in the neighbourhood
Pleasant Place 24-48	Installation of a communal park bench and extend the existing paving slabs to join the paved area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local residents feel that we listen and understand their views • Provide a safer more accessible outside seating area for customers • Provide attractive street furniture • support active older peoples active lifestyles
Pleasant place 1-23 & Birtley Villas & Square Houses	Installation of communal park benches –specifically designed for older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safer more accessible outside seating area for customers • Provide attractive street furniture • Engage with older people’s views and support active lifestyles
Kays Cottages	Supply materials and equipment for tenants to maintain their allotments including a new shed, seats , repairs to an existing greenhouse and seed supply’s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities to address health inequalities by promoting an active and healthy lifestyle for tenants who participate in gardening • Improve pride in the sheltered scheme and enhance the local environment • Understand the needs to tenants and provide a local response

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the risk of social isolation for older people
Kays Cottages	Planting ground cover shrubs and 5 flower beds in the communal garden and install a park bench	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer satisfaction from volunteering to maintain the flower beds and communal gardens • Promote active and healthy lifestyles for tenants • Reduce risk of social isolation for older people
Wood Green	Improvements to the access road into the scheme by removing curb and small section of grass edging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local residents feel that we listen and understand their views and respond to local issues • Greatly enhance the appearance of the scheme by designing out the mess caused by vehicles driving on the grass
South Lea, Hole in the wall	Level patio area and install handrails to create an outside area for customers to use tables and chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the communal environment within the scheme • Create an accessible safe environment for older people to socialise in and enjoy
Rectory Hall, Glebe Estate	A new patio area with raised tub planters and secure wooden benches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce risk of social isolation and encourage tenants to use the communal lounge • Enhance the local environment and make the sheltered scheme more welcoming and attractive

Sunhill Court Satisfaction results Feb - April 2014

- 21 (**100%**) said they are **Very Satisfied** overall with the advice and support offered during the move to Sun Hill Court
- 20 out of 21 (**95%**) tenants are **Very Satisfied** with their new home and 1 out of 21 (**5%**) tenants are **Fairly Satisfied** with their new home
- 21 out of 21 (**100%**) tenants are **Very Satisfied** with the information they were given when they signed for their tenancy
- 20 out of 21 (**95%**) tenants were **Very Satisfied** with the information pack and leaflets they were provided with about moving into their new home and 1 out of 21 (**5%**) tenants were **Fairly Satisfied**
- 20 out of 21 (**95%**) tenants said they were **Very Satisfied** with the information they were given at the visit to the property and 1 out of 21 (**5%**) said they were **Fairly Satisfied**
- 21 out of 21 (**100%**) tenants were **Very Satisfied** with the property viewing

Appendix 5: Satisfaction Results 2013/14

Satisfaction with services provided by Sheltered Estate officer		
Answer Description	No. of Responses	%
Very Satisfied	243	73%
Fairly Satisfied	68	20%
Very Dissatisfied	9	3%
Fairly Dissatisfied	5	1%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	7	2%
Total	332	100%
Combined Very & Fairly Satisfied	311	94%

Satisfaction with the Care Call service		
Answer Description	No. of Responses	%
Very Satisfied	245	73%
Fairly Satisfied	55	16%
Very Dissatisfied	3	1%
Fairly Dissatisfied	5	1%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	18	5%
Total	326	100%
Combined Very & Fairly Satisfied	300	92%

Satisfaction with services provided by sheltered scheme officer		
Answer Description	No. of Responses	%
Very Satisfied	252	75%
Fairly Satisfied	59	18%
Very Dissatisfied	4	1%
Fairly Dissatisfied	3	1%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	7	2%
Total	325	100%
Combined Very & Fairly Satisfied	311	96%

Satisfaction with social activities		
Answer Description	No. of Responses	%
Very Satisfied	191	57%
Fairly Satisfied	70	21%
Very Dissatisfied	7	2%
Fairly Dissatisfied	4	1%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	44	13%
Total	316	100%
Combined Very & Fairly Satisfied	261	83%

Satisfaction with standard of cleaning		
Answer Description	No. of Responses	%
Very Satisfied	223	67%
Fairly Satisfied	62	19%
Very Dissatisfied	3	1%
Fairly Dissatisfied	6	2%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	15	4%
Total	309	100%
Combined Very & Fairly Satisfied	285	92%

Overall satisfaction with living in a sheltered scheme		
Answer Description	No. of Responses	%
Very Satisfied	245	73%
Fairly Satisfied	55	16%
Very Dissatisfied	8	2%
Fairly Dissatisfied	7	2%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	5	1%
Total	320	100%
Combined Very & Fairly Satisfied	300	92%