

## Housing & Care21 Extracare Schemes

### REPORT OF THE HEAD OF INTEGRATED COMMISSIONING

#### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report provides an update on current issues in relation to Housing & Care21 Extracare Schemes with a focus on Beckwith Mews, Bramble Hollow and Woodridge Gardens.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The first extra care scheme, Beckwith Mews, opened in March 2009 providing 40 two bedroomed apartments for rent or sale.
- 2.2 The number of extra care mixed tenure properties in the city has grown significantly with a vast majority of the schemes being provided in the city by Housing & Care21.
- 2.3 Sunderland City Council does not contract the care and support service in the Housing & Care21 extra care schemes.
- 2.4 Extra care is defined by having a 24 hour care presence in the building to meet the care and housing support needs to tenants in the scheme.

#### 3. Extracare

- 3.1 The extra care service itself is made up of several distinct component parts that demonstrate how the core and planned support elements are now being funded:
- 3.2 **Housing/Property support:** Provided by the Court Manager and funded through a service charge to each tenant.
- 3.3 **Core Support:** Flexible background property, housing and care related support provided by support workers day and night. The workers are not allocated to any individual resident on a permanent basis. The core support service is delivered by Integrated Property, Housing and Care Support Workers.
- 3.4 Each resident is required to fund the core support service as an intrinsic part of the extra care model offered by Housing & Care21. Eligibility for the charge is means tested.
- 3.5 **Planned Support:** Flexible housing and care support time is defined through individual support plans with resources allocated specifically to the individual.

- 3.6** Housing & Care21 provide their own care and support provision on an individual basis that is micro commissioned by individuals living in the scheme. Each person is assessed for a personal budget and where eligible their payment is provided via a managed budget arrangement through the local authority..

#### **4. Charges**

- 4.1** In April 2014 Housing & Care21 increased the charge rate to £11.35 per hour. This applies to all new and existing Housing & Care21 owned and managed extra care schemes and services. Housing & Care21 reserve the right to review the rate on an annual basis.
- 4.2** From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 it was proposed that all new residents that move into Beckwith Mews, Woodridge Gardens and Bramble Hollow have to sign an agreement to confirm their personal responsibility for meeting the Core Support Charge.
- 4.3** Existing residents at Beckwith Mews, Bramble Hollow and Woodridge Gardens transferred into the core and planned support funding model on 1st April 2015 without appropriate formal consultation with the residents. This has been challenged by residents and plans to introduce the new proposals have been put on hold.
- 4.4** Residents that are eligible for funding from Sunderland City Council receive a Personal Budget (PB) allocation that includes the cost of the Core Support Service.
- 4.5** Those residents assessed as being ineligible for funding from Sunderland City Council self-fund the Core Support Service.
- 4.6** There were a number of self-funders who previously did not contribute to the core support service cost however as of 1st April 2015 under the new proposals self-funders would be required to contribute to the Property Management element of the core support charge, which equates to £8.00 per week.
- 4.7** Sunderland City Council however fund the care element to ensure that living in extra care remains affordable for these individuals.

#### **5. Resident concerns**

- 5.1** Existing residents at the three schemes referred to in 4.2 have become increasingly concerned about the introduction of charges and at a resident meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015 a number of issues were raised by residents and family members.
- 5.1.1** Residents are unclear about the core charges and questioned why this information has not been provided or included on the Housing & Care21 website.

Four previous meetings have been held with residents and Housing & Care21 and the responses to questions raised have still not been addressed to residents' satisfaction.

Formal complaints have been made by some residents.

Residents are stressed with the worry of the finances and not being able to sell their properties which they feel is as a consequence of the charges and number of schemes being built.

Housing & Care21 have a number of properties that are shared ownership. Residents have questioned why they are being charged 100% service charges when the apartment is shared ownership (50%).

The lease does not include details of charges that are still incurred upon death and continue until the point of resale. Some residents shared that the properties have remained unsold after a period of 15 months.

**5.2** Suggestions put forward to Housing & Care21 by residents included:

Review the £32.10 core charge to see whether this could be reduced.

With immediate effect initiate a 6 month freeze on charges while the review is being undertaken.

Reduce or remove the service charges and % reduction.

Carry out an independent audit of charges.

Look at option for sub-letting of property until a re-sale is made

Housing and Care21 could provide more support to sell property

Housing and Care21 buy back the properties

**5.3** Discussions are currently ongoing between Housing and Care21, the residents and local authority to agree a way forward.

**6. Gentoo Extracare Schemes**

**6.1** Gentoo also provide extra care schemes, Cherry Tree Gardens (Houghton) and Haddington Vale (Doxford Park).

**6.2** Prior to any residents moving into Gentoo Extracare schemes assessments are carried out in the home of the resident with family members present. Discussions include a full explanation of what Extracare means, rent and service charge costs, assessed care

eligibility and details of the tenancy agreement. There have been no issues with the charges at either of the two schemes.

- 6.3** Unlike Housing & Care21 the care provision is provided by an external organisation, Sunderland Home Care Associates.

## **7 Next Steps**

- 7.1** Housing & Care 21 have agreed to provide residents with the following information:

**7.1.1 By the end of May:**

An indication of whether a 6 month freeze on charges can be put in place.

An itemised breakdown of where changes to charges have been made.

An interim response will be provided in relation to a Stage 2 complaint that was received by Housing & Care21.

Feedback to residents will be made via Court Managers and resident representatives.

**7.1.2 By end of June:**

Clear information about core costs will be provided to residents in all schemes and will be shared at resident meetings to be held in each of the three schemes.

The Leasehold booklet and terms and conditions will be looked at in terms of what the costs cover.

**7.1.3 No timescale:**

An independent audit of charges has been agreed in private discussion with a resident.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1** Scrutiny members are requested to receive this briefing note for information.

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