The Trust

Sheltered Housing for older people Policy

Housing Services

Draft: Final

Effective Date: March 2011

Affected Teams: All
1. Introduction and Aim

1.1 Cheshire Peaks & Plains Housing Trust (the Trust) recognises that sheltered housing can meet the housing needs of older people, and provide a setting for the delivery of care and other services to vulnerable elderly people.

1.2 It will achieve this by the direct provision of the highest possible standard of sheltered housing and related services, and by working with Cheshire East Council and Cheshire – East Council Social Services, in building and maintaining partnerships with other agencies in the promotion of continued independent living.

1.3 The aim of this service is to contribute to care of elderly and vulnerable persons in the community and prolonging independent living within their home environment.

1.4 The Trust has used the definition of a vulnerable adult from the Law Commission Report, 1997. A Vulnerable Adult is a person aged 18 or over, "who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is, or maybe unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation "

2. Other Policies Relating to Sheltered Housing

2.1 This policy relates only to the special aspects of management of sheltered schemes, and thus the document needs to be read in conjunction with other policy statements on Neighbourhood Management.

3. Sheltered Housing Schemes Facilities

3.1 All of the Trust’s schemes are provided with an emergency alarm system (for which a charge will be made), linked to a control centre service, which is manned 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and which provides a response to any calls for help to the TrustLink service. This service is also available, on the payment of a charge, to other providers of social housing and private sector residents in the borough of Macclesfield.

3.2 The Trust offers its customers in its older person’s flats and bungalows a tiered support service to allow tenants to use the service according to their needs. It will also include an additional tier to provide more intensive support when additional visits are required at times of illness or convalescence or when a permanent carer is absent.
3.3 The Trust provides sheltered housing schemes for those people over the age of fifty-five who qualify or those with support needs. Tenants will be supported in their homes by regular visits from Trustlink Officers who provide housing management support and monitoring.

3.4 A number of sheltered housing schemes have communal rooms, guest room and laundry facilities available for residents’ use.

3.5 The Trust is committed to maintaining or improving the communal facilities and services provided to its tenants to ensure that our accommodation is brought up to a modern Standard. All properties have now been brought up to the Decent Homes standard.

3.6 The Trust identified a clear need for a full comprehensive assessment of the previously known Community Support Service which has been rebranded as TrustLink Services in order to meet the Offer document promises and in order to increase choice to customers and provide value for money. The review was completed July 2007 and recommendations from the review have been implemented as part of our commitment to continually improve.

3.7 The Trust will ensure, where practical, that all of its sheltered housing stock provide the following features which would make them high quality, attractive and safe:

- All flats would have their own bathroom and adequately sized kitchen.
- Tenants would have a choice of a bath or walk-in shower when bathroom replacement programmes are carried out
- All flats provided with double glazing
- All sheltered schemes to have good levels of security including modern security doors and door entry systems
- Well decorated communal lounges and corridors
- Smoke alarms in individual homes.

4 Internal decoration

4.1 All lounges and communal areas in sheltered schemes will be redecorated and have new furniture within the first five years after transfer.

4.2 A decorating service – has been developed in consultation with tenants to enable all elderly tenants to decorate their property at a reasonable cost. The service commenced in April 2010 and is available to customers of pensionable age, disabled & vulnerable tenants referred via a third party.
5 Gardening services

5.1 A landscaped external environment continues to be maintained for the sheltered schemes and where appropriate additional gardening activities have been developed in consultation with customers to improve the external environment.

5.2 The Trust has developed a gardening service for older and vulnerable people in the dispersed bungalows and flats which can be accessed by contacting the Trust directly.

5.3 The Trust had developed via Trustfix a free DIY service to help customers carry out small jobs.

6 Role of Trustlink Officers --

6.1 Trustlink Officers will check on their residents’ well-being and provide housing-related support to them in accordance with their chosen tier level unless alternative arrangements have been agreed. The Trustlink Officer will, according to the chosen tier level, respond to the customers’ alarm calls to assess the situation and take appropriate action.

6.2 The role of Trustlink staff will be developed in response to tenant's desires and will include increased Trustlink staff presence and additional scheme activities.

6.3 Trustlink staff will not provide care services to their tenants, which is the responsibility of social services and other agencies but will act as an advocate on the tenant’s behalf if required and refer to the appropriate agency.

7 Assessment of Housing and Care Needs

7.1 Sheltered housing is one of a growing number of housing and care options for older and vulnerable people.

7.2 The Trust will work with Cheshire East Council, Social Services and other agencies to review the effectiveness of the Housing Register as the primary source for applications for sheltered housing accommodation, and for measuring housing and care need.

7.3 The Trust has developed a sub-regional choice-based lettings scheme with partners across Cheshire which went live in 2010 which transformed the application and lettings process to the benefit of our customers. The Trust has ensured that sufficient support is provided to elderly and vulnerable customers and additional assistance is provided for those wishing to access accommodation by working with our partners across East Cheshire to ensure vulnerable groups are reached.
8Frail Elderly Persons and Extra-Care

8.1 The Trust recognises the preference of many of its sheltered tenants to remain in their own homes for as long as possible.

8.2 It will work with Cheshire East Council, Social Services and other agencies to plan and where appropriate, provide additional housing related services.

8.3 The Trust will examine housing and care initiatives for an increasing number of frail elderly people, including the provision of a number of extra care sheltered housing units, within its existing sheltered housing stock. Early recommendations from the Trust’s Sheltered Housing Review suggests that we should cautiously pursue Extra Care in partnership or as a joint venture with other partners, and to monitor market and government funding for such schemes over the next 10 years.

8.4 Extra-Care housing will offer the opportunity for enhanced care provision, within a sheltered housing environment. The Trust will aim to provide enhanced communal facilities, such as treatment rooms, to help with the provision of extra services. The Trust will form constructive working partnerships with any agency that can assist with providing appropriate care, support and services. In particular, the Trust plans to link with:

- Cheshire East Social Services
- Primary Care Trusts
- Specialist liaison and care providers
- Voluntary sector agencies
- Other statutory agencies
- Welfare advice agencies

8.5 Where appropriate, the Trust will encourage its partners to operate their services within its sheltered housing premises, where this would be of benefit and convenience for its tenants.

8.6 In those sheltered schemes where extra-care units are provided, properties would usually include:

- Flats adapted to disability standards, suitable for standard wheelchair use.
- Modern alarm-call systems which are compatible with tele-care equipment
- Provision of safe flooring (when carrying out major refurbishment)

8.7 The Trust will consult with Cheshire East Council Social Services when re-letting any vacant extra-care housing flats, to ensure they are offered to residents who have appropriate care needs.
9 The Professional Development of Trustlink Staff

9.1 The Trust recognises the complementary role of sheltered housing to the services of other care agencies for older and vulnerable people, and the crucial part played by Trustlink Officers in adapting to new approaches. This will apply, in particular, to where extra-care housing units and services are introduced.

9.2 It is committed to the continuing professional development of its Trustlink staff, so that its service makes a positive contribution to future housing and care choices for older people.

10 Sheltered Housing as a Community Resource

10.1 Where the Trust has provided communal facilities, such as a residents lounge, priority for use of such facilities will be given to the permanent residents of the scheme.

10.2 If following consultation with sheltered tenants, the Trust considers that sheltered communal facilities should be used for the maximum benefit of the wider community; the Trust will work with its partners including Social Services, the PCT and the third sector to identify wider community needs.

10.3 The Trust will also work with the Cheshire East Council, Social Services and the other agencies to explore the potential for meeting these needs, including the use of its communal facilities in sheltered schemes as day centres and resource centres.

11 Standards of Service

11.1 The Trust is committed to providing a professional, caring and responsive service to its sheltered housing tenants. It has adopted Service Standards, which tenants can access, which sets out the standard of service tenants can expect.

11.2 At Trustlink Services, we will

- Give fair treatment to all residents without discrimination due to your race, gender, disability, religion, age or sexuality
- Respect and safeguard your individual and personal rights
- Maintain high standards of personal conduct and professional relationships with residents
• Ensure that procedures and agreed obligations of the supported housing service are maintained

• Listen and respond to customers needs. Agreeing an appropriate level of support to meet individual requirements

• Respond quickly and effectively to customer’s requests for assistance

• Wear uniform and show identification when visiting

12 Consultation

12.1 As part of its commitment to involving customers, the Trust holds a Supported & Sheltered Housing Forum. This is a group of representatives from supported & sheltered housing schemes who meet with Trust staff to discuss improving services, solving problems and scrutinising service plans

13 Monitoring and Performance

13.1 The Trust will ensure its sheltered housing meets the Supporting People contract conditions and complies with the Tenant Services Authority.

13.2 Sheltered housing services performance will be monitored by the Board and the following indicators will be will be provided to alternate monthly meetings:-

- Percentage of calls responded to in 60 seconds
- Customer Satisfaction emergency response
- Customer Satisfaction New Customers

13.3 This will include an appropriate range of management performance indicators recorded monthly to monitor performance.

14 Responsibility

14.1 Responsibility for managing and monitoring the service will rest with the Director of Operations

15 Equality and Diversity Implications

15.1 The Trust is keen to ensure that customers from all backgrounds are able to enjoy high quality and culturally sensitive services. The Trust will therefore seek
to develop services that are responsive to the needs of the community that it serves.

16 Review

16.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Board in conjunction with customers.

17. Associated Documents

Customer Care Policy
Tenant Selection, Allocation and Transfer Policy
Tenants’ Handbook
Vulnerable Tenants and Communities Policy
Asset Management Strategy
Community Support Review
Sheltered Housing Review

POLICY INFORMATION

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