

SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEME MANAGEMENT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is to advise Members of the results of the interim survey of tenants in Sheltered Accommodation to ascertain their views on the revised management arrangements.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In March 2003 a twelve-month trial period started to review the management of Sheltered Housing Schemes in the District. It was agreed that midway through the trial period a survey would be carried out for tenants to give their views of the trial scheme before final management decisions were taken. This outcome of the survey would allow staff to fine-tune the service according to any emerging findings.
- 2.2 The survey form also gave indicative costs of different levels of service ranging from a wholly Central Control Service up to a fully wardened 24 hour service On-site Management Model.

3 SURVEY

- 3.1 The survey was delivered to all 465 tenants in Sheltered Accommodation and at the time of drafting this report 307 have been returned, representing a sample of 66%. The initial results have proved encouraging with tenants being positive about the new management model. 66% of respondents expressed that they were entirely happy with the service they receive, whilst only 16% expressed some level of dissatisfaction with the overall service.
- 3.2 When asked the question, “taking everything into consideration, how would you rate the overall service”, 90% of the tenants rated the support provided at Sheltered Schemes as either ‘good’ or ‘very good’.
- 3.3 Tenants were also asked to indicate their preferences about the level of service received and whether they would like more or less cover. 40% indicated that they felt there should be more cover and 60% indicated that they would be happy with less cover.
- 3.4 There were diverse answers for the question “If you could change one thing for the better, what would it be?” A selection of answers is reproduced below:-
- Move the earth around so that the sun shines in my windows.
 - No scheme managers, employ a caretaker whose duties would include cleaning, gardening and minor repairs etc.

- I need a man to help with the little jobs I cannot do myself.
- The Government.
- Quieter fire alarms.
- I wish for a quiet person to move in upstairs.
- I would like to live happy and have my health.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 In view of the generally positive response from the tenants and in keeping with the original intentions of the Best Value Review, the remainder of the trial period should continue as programmed, with only minor amendments to the current service delivery model. This includes the out-of-office hours service provided by Basildon Careline Central Control. The only minor amendment to the trial is that, where possible, the day-time wardens should focus their time between only two sites to give continuity of cover.
- 4.2 Following the trial period it will be necessary to conduct a final survey to establish tenants wishes. These results will guide the Council towards the delivery model for the future. This could mean that over time staffing levels might reduce to reflect the impact of Central Control and the cover required. Any reductions in cost would be reflected in a reduction of the service charge element of tenant's rent.
- 4.3 Generally speaking, a long-term change to a more modern service delivery model would bring Rochford into line with other local authorities and social housing providers in the County.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) That interim management arrangements continue, with scheme managers working a 37-hour week supervising paired schemes.
 - (2) That 'Out of hours' calls continue to be referred to Basildon Careline.
 - (3) That new working arrangements be finalised following the survey at the trial period and a report back to this Committee in April 2004.

Steve Clarkson

Head of Revenue and Housing Management

Background Papers:

Tenant satisfaction survey.

For further information please contact Steve Clarkson on:-

Tel:- 01702 318005

E-Mail:- steve.Clarkson@rochford.gov.uk