



**Minutes of Sheltered Housing Forum held at Hall Close Bourn  
on the 19th April 2018**

**Attendees (Tenants/Leaseholders)**

Wendy Head (Chair)(WH)	Balsham	Jacqui Rolfe (JR)	Bourn
Monica Connolly (MC)	Cottenham - Stevens	Les Rolfe (LR)	Bourn
Patti Hall (PH)	Cottenham - Franklin	Maureen Saunter	Cottenham
Annette Tite (AT)	Longstanton	Adrian Prentice (AP)	Cottenham - Stevens
Cyril Tite (CT)	Longstanton	Derek Gulliver (DG)	Cottenham - Stevens
Helen Chapman (HC)	Cottenham - Franklin	Mary Skeates (MS)	Stapleford
Barbara Wood (BW)	Girton - Orchard	Jan Bilton (JB)	Gt Shelford
Shirley Chapman (SC)	Girton - Orchard	Ellen Mynott (EM)	Bourn
Trevor Ayres(TA)	Girton - Orchard	Kevin Neville (KN)	Bourn
Anthony Archibald(AA)	Orwell - Lordship	Celeste Berndt (CB)	Orwell - Lordship
Joyce Howlett (JH)	Grantchester	June Loosley (JL)	Grantchester
Julia Mantos (JM)	Grantchester	Betty Martin (BM)	Grantchester
Bob Barnes (BB)	Comberton	Carol Greensmith (CG)	Comberton
Penny Cook (PC)	Balsham		

**Attendees (South Cambridgeshire District Council Representatives)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position in Council</b>
Helen Pagram (HP)	Resident Involvement Officer
Peter Moston (PM)	Resident Involvement Team Leader
Geoff Clark (GC)	Neighbourhood Services Manager
Kate Swan (KS)	Leaseholder Co - Coordinator

**Guest**

Angela Lewell (AL) TPG/Sheltered Housing Forum Secretary

No	Topic	Actions
1.	<p><b>Apologies</b> - Mike Stratford - Pat Collier - Kay Green - Julia Hovells - Martin Lee - Mark Gibbs</p> <p>Mark cannot spare the time but will come to next meeting, Julia &amp; Martin have a number of staff off sick and deadlines to meeting. Will come to next meeting if you so wish.</p> <p>Please advise Wendy Head (Chair) on 01223 894394 or e-mail:- wendymhead@yahoo.co.uk if you are unable to attend the next meeting or if there is any particular subject you would like to see on the agenda in future.</p>	All

2.	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b> The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read, agreed as a true record, and signed by the Chair.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Matters arising</b> None</p>	
4.	<p><b>Peter Moston - Resident Involvement Team Leader</b> PM handed out copies of Housing Revenue Account, Budget Setting Report (HRA BSR) for 2018/19 to everyone present. He then went through the report.</p> <p>The <b>HRA BSR</b> allows reviews of financial assumptions included in the Midterm Financial Statement (MTFS) and consideration for any change in the external economic environment or in national or local housing policy. It allows proposals to bid for new services and savings, present updated financial plans and forecasts, allows approval of rents and service charges and recommend a budget for the coming year.</p> <p><b>National Housing Policy Update</b> In April 2016 central government introduced a 1% reduction in rents for 4 years (2016 to 2019). Rents from 2020 will be calculated on inflation plus a 1% increase. 2 years ago proposed to sell off higher value voids, but this has not been implemented yet, but still have to budget for it. Because of brexit this has been put on the back burner.</p> <p>Tenancies are now given for between 2 and 10 years. 5 years (General rather than sheltered) then reviewed. Can then offer a new secure tenancy in another dwelling or seek possession and offer no alternative accommodation. Over 10 years can be given where children under 9 live in the property and will expire when the child is 19. Sheltered is 12 months then a secure tenancy. Hoping to continue to do this. This is all extra administration which has not been formally recognised, so still waiting for detailed regulations.</p> <p>GC said used to give lifetime tenancy, this is no more. fixed term tenancy is relative new and we are exploring with 10 year fixed tenancies. This is so tenants can plan ahead. If imposed 5 years, tenant won't have security of length of time or tenancy.</p> <p>Supported housing is still under consultation . From October 2018 Universal Credit will be rolled out. This replaces all other benefits for working age only at the moment. This will affect South Cambs. In other areas rent arrears have gone up quite a lot as it is paid over a 4 week period.</p> <p><b>2018/19 Budget</b> Rent varies, depending on when you move in. New tenancy is at an affordable rent, but will be higher than those who have been in several years. Re-lets at affordable still need to reduce rent by 1% next April Each year get 25/30 requests for right to buy.</p>	

<p>HDA staff have now gone their own way. Promote self building in the area. have to keep a list and help people to achieve this. 100 plots in South Cambs with 700 people interested. Each plot sold at 200 to 250 thousand. Above 13 sold allowed to keep money. May have to sell voids in future but don't know when. Was asked to explain what a void is. PM said there are about 300 a year, when tenants leave and place has to be re-let. This is about 4 weeks which is a loss of income. If voids are sold in the future we need the money, otherwise lose income and rent. Could be up to 100 properties a year. At present just beginning to increase stock. LR asked about the acquisition of 16 in Abington. PM said developed from the onset. If we didn't spend money within 3 years (from sales of right to buy), have to pay back to government plus 4%. Will do anything to stop this. LR said buying some in Bourn next week, prevent having right to buy.</p> <p>Full report can be found on South Cambs Web-site.</p> <p><b>Calculation of Sheltered Housing Service Charges</b>  PM also gave everyone present a copy of Calculation of Sheltered Housing Service Charges. The annual budget (April to March) is agreed by full Council in February each year. Sheltered Housing service charge is calculated by taking the whole cost of delivering the service and dividing it across all the schemes.</p> <p>MS said the Annual Report says how much comes in and the leaseholders is on it, what about tenants? PM said there are 41 sheltered communal rooms. 5/6 of these have no income at all and about 4/5 get £2,500 to £3,000 a year. WH said the income should be shown in the communal room so everyone knows. Balsham got £412. WH will speak to her sheltered officer about this.</p> <p>PH asked why leaseholders pay more than tenants? KS said tenant's pay these elements in their rents. Everything is broken down. PH said breakdown has been asked for several times to see what tenants pay and it has never been given. GC said there were 20/30 internal repairs last year which were several thousand pounds for bathroom/kitchens etc. Enough to cover the cost is collected via rents. KS added exterior of properties and cost is recovered from service charge. PH get sundry bill with estimated costs, then cost increases but has received a separate bill for over £250. KS will take this back to see if it is for external work which should be every 5 years not 3 years. AP said section 20, should get a letter saying what is to be done and what you will have to pay. Had no section 20. Every time service charge comes up, told it is in the rent. This is not good enough, tenants should know what they are paying for. Peter will take this back as a very different agreement. WH said we have a right to know, there are things we don't need.</p> <p>LR said can only own 75% of bungalow, we are responsible for inside and South Cambs outside. Pay for what we are not responsible for. KS said first introduced in 1980. schemes where we can sell on a lease basis and keep affordable. Buy at 75% of properties value with a 125</p>	<p>KS</p> <p>PM</p>
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	<p>year lease. Service charge includes interim responsibility to maintain outside. For an older market keep exterior up to date. there is a program of works to maintain exterior of properties. Government legislation says we have to re-coup. LR said but not everyone purchases 75%. KS said where less is brought, there is a rental element (government guidelines). this is different to tenants rent. Rent for share, not purchase. Will find out more from Julia. WH said will get her to come to next forum . PH said they ask frequently for someone in senior management to come from accounts to these meetings. Where do you get these prices from? GC said a trade person would have cheaper prices than a major contractor who would have more overheads. Mears have additional costs.</p> <p>LR said the income for the communal rooms should show who uses it and what they pay and should be put on the notice board. There are a lot of grey areas surrounding this. It was stated that rent goes down but service charge goes up and this tenant didn't realise this, so said get rid of the communal rooms.</p> <p>PC said on the 1st January service charges were £225 - 04, then on the 1st April it was £344 - 02. That is an increase of £8 - 96 a week. Basic statement says 1% decrease, nothing about an increase. Was advised to take individual issues back to the office.</p> <p>PH said miscalculated 2 years ago, got discount, but not this year. Lack of communication. PM replied due to legislation, leaseholders charges go up and down. Swavesey had leaseholder meeting and this was explained at the meetings.</p>	WH
5.	<p><b>Kate Swan - Leaseholder Co - Coordinator</b>  KS introduced herself by saying she is the leaseholder co-ordinator along with Rebecca Gain. She is also leading the Communal Room Review Project, which she is going to speak about today.</p> <p>From feedback the council has received from you, a project has been set up to look at each individual scheme. There is a lot of discontent around the communal rooms and the lack of use of them. A small team looking at individual rooms, why used, why not used. You all pay for these rooms and we could not blindly carry on keeping them as they are if you are dissatisfied with them. There will be an open day for your scheme, which you will be invited to. There will be quite a few staff there and we will let you know the date for your meeting.</p> <p>Have already been to the 2 schemes at Fulbourn and 2 at Bassingbourn. A letter and questionnaire was sent to all the residents at these schemes and then a meeting was held at each scheme. At present in the process of acknowledging the feedback. As each scheme is so different we need to move forward by getting feedback from all residents and go round the district scheme by scheme. There are no pre-conceived answers . We need an insight into how your room is used and if under used can we give support to use it. We do not want to put</p>	

	<p>an impact on loneliness. There is no easy answer and we are listening to you. Chaplin's at Fulbourn is well used and the other one is not. Could be the geography of the scheme which makes a difference. St Vigor's/Holman's used to be a bungalow and may be able to convert it back. Fulbourn also has facilities in the village which residents can attend. We have no agenda, this is all a learning curb in partnership with you. If we take it away, what do we do with it. Need to look at the options. Will let residents know what is happening. Will not rush the process as only doing this once and want to make sure what is right for each scheme. Still in consultation with Fulbourn and Bassingbourn. Will send you a letter when coming out. If you cannot make meeting we can arrange to meet you or telephone you. Want to get in touch with everybody.</p> <p>AP asked about the 2 Wardens houses on his scheme, do they pay service charges. KS said she did not know, but would find out. GC said could have gone back into general stock. Very disappointed senior member not turned up to meeting.</p> <p>KS was asked about the washing machines/dryers. She said these are pivotal to the review. Was also asked about having coin machines. PM said everyone was sent a survey, 50% were returned and said keep washing machines as they are. Review is ongoing and this is being picked up.</p> <p>Was asked if camera's could be put in at Over as a strange man had been accosted there. Was told to speak with Estate Officer (Julie Webster).</p> <p>BW asked what about people coming into the schemes. KS said this is at the fore front of our minds. Won't be getting rid of rooms if can make use of them. Make decision with existing residence. Find out what they have access to in their village. This is all such an individual thing. GC said new people will be made aware, make decision at time.</p> <p>Someone said not sheltered housing anymore. KS replied that a legal team in a case Oxford versus Basey said there should be 6 features present to make it sheltered housing. They are:- self contained, grouped together on a site, for the elderly, emergency alarm, communal room and warden. Court rejected argument saying it only needed some of these features.</p> <p>KS was asked if Holman's is a no - no, can it be sold off privately. She replied that other options would be looked at.</p> <p>Swavesey have a Village Warden paid for by the Parish Council and Age UK. Other elderly people in the village attend events at Swavesey Sheltered scheme . Perhaps South Cambs could get involved in something like this.</p>	KS
6.	<p><b>AOB</b> As time had run out GC will come to the next meeting to explain the</p>	

	Estate officers role, as had been asked what do they do. There should be a rota on site saying when they will be at the scheme and they test alarms every 3 months. there is going to be a review of the estate officers role and this will be the main thing to discuss at the next meeting.	
7.	<b>Date of the Next Meeting</b> Thursday 12th July 2018, 10:00 - 12:00 Chalklands Linton CB21 4JH	

