

**Housing Related Support:
Proposal to cease funding of ineligible tasks for older people**

Appendix 2

Resident Consultation Findings

1. Consultation approach

1.1 All residents of sheltered housing and community good neighbour schemes were invited to meetings held in 23 sheltered schemes and 2 community good neighbour across the Borough. Residents were able to attend any meeting; carers and relatives were provided with opportunities to attend. Meetings were held from 22nd August – 3rd October 2012.

1.2 In total 381 people attended the meetings as follows:

Residents of sheltered schemes	Residents of community good neighbour schemes	Relatives and carers
298	68	15

1.3 1,283 Frequently Asked Question Information Sheets and questionnaires were hand delivered to all residents.

1.4 A presentation and question and answer session about the proposals, attended by 26 residents' representatives, was given at a Supported Housing Residents Panel meeting held on 12 September.

1.5 Cllr Bevan, Cabinet Member for Housing, distributed a briefing to all Councillors on 30 August which included an invitation to attend any of the scheme meetings.

2. Scheme meetings

2.1 The purpose of the meeting was to give residents feedback on the outcomes of the Housing Related Support (HRS) Review of the older persons supported housing service undertaken during April and May 2012; and to outline the changes being proposed.

2.2 The common themes that emerged from the HRS Review were explained as follows:

- residents would like scheme managers to spend more time with them
- residents would like more activities, and more variety in the activities on offer
- support plans are lengthy and time consuming to complete

- support plans were not up to date and not carried out consistently
- a large number of people living in sheltered and community good neighbour schemes need very little/no support
- reporting repairs and chasing up repairs was time consuming for residents and scheme managers
- HRS was funding inappropriate tasks eg undertaking cleaning and laundry for individual residents.

2.3 The proposed changes being recommended to address the above issues were explained as follows:

- simplifying the support plans so that scheme managers spend less time on paperwork and more time with residents
- increasing the number of staff working on activities
- increasing the management resources to ensure that scheme managers get the support they need to deliver consistent high performing services across all schemes
- working with Homes for Haringey to improve the repairs reporting process so that scheme managers have more time to spend with residents
- stop funding some of the work carried out by Scheme Support Assistants (SSA), like personal housework and laundry, because there are other more appropriate sources of funding for this type of support

2.4 In order to assist residents currently receiving personal SSA support, and to ensure continuity of support the following help would be offered:

- Residents currently in receipt of a care package will have their care reviewed to assess whether housework/laundry could be incorporated into an existing care package.
- Residents who are not in receipt of Disability Living Allowance/Attendance Allowance, a Government Welfare Benefit, will be helped to apply, and appeal if necessary, with assistance.

2.5 Residents were given the opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns and issues, and comment on the proposals.

2.6 The main issues and comments raised by residents at the meetings are set out below.

- (a) The SSA provides an additional resource within sheltered housing schemes beyond cleaning, acting as “eyes and ears” of the scheme manager and giving early warnings of poor health or welfare concerns. The SSA provides an additional presence, particularly for security in some schemes.
- (b) The impact on maintaining the cleanliness of facilities within the scheme by having an increase in the number of people using the

laundry and other communal facilities. This was seen as a particular issue with the use of the communal laundry, and the potential for abuse by agency staff and/or insufficient time for residents to do their own washing.

- (c) Concern about the safety and security of residents with more people visiting the scheme. Although residents are aware that they can use the control centre in an emergency, some residents considered the response was not quick enough.
- (d) Residents who have a short term support need, i.e. upon discharge from hospital, can currently get immediate assistance from the SSA for a short period of time and there was concern that this short term need would not longer be available when SSA numbers are reduced. Similarly, SSAs provide interim support whilst awaiting a social work assessment.
- (e) There was concern that the standards of cleanliness and maintenance of the communal areas would deteriorate. This would have an impact on the attractiveness of the scheme for prospective residents and increase the potential for infestations.
- (f) Concern was expressed about the quality of agency staff; punctuality, attendance, competence, not staying for the prescribed time and safety. Some residents considered that previous experience of complaining had been unsuccessful, and residents questioned how the new arrangements would be monitored.
- (g) Some residents felt concern about responsibility for finding reliable, safe and trustworthy alternative help.
- (h) The impact on the service of the other work carried out by SSAs; helping with refreshments at coffee mornings, escorting residents to meetings, shopping, changing light bulbs, curtain hanging, and prescription collection.
- (i) Concern that the introduction of Personal Independence Payment to replace the Disability Living Allowance would mean that residents will receive less money to pay for support.
- (j) Residents believed that they already paid for SSAs in the service charge and rent should be reduced.
- (k) Some residents felt that savings could be achieved in the short term, but more residents are likely to need more costly residential care, if they do not get the help they need.
- (l) It was clear from the meetings that residents valued the relationship with the SSA and wanted to retain the services of their individual

SSA. There was concern about the potential impact on staff that may lose their jobs.

3. Questionnaires

3.1 As at 31 October, 394 questionnaires had been returned as follows:

Resident	369
Carer/Relative	12
Unknown	13
	394

3.2 Currently, 350 residents receive help from Scheme Support Assistants (SSA) either with housework or laundry. Of the people who responded 127 (32%) confirmed that they received support from the SSA.

3.3 Of those receiving assistance from the scheme support assistant, 39 would like help to apply for either Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance.

3.4 A further 33 residents, not currently in receipt of help from a SSA, requested assistance applying for Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance.

3.5 95% of those who responded confirmed that they understood the proposed changes.

159 respondents made comments on the proposals and of these 126 objected to the proposals. The main reasons given for the objections are set out below (note residents referred to more than one reason for objecting to the proposals):

Objection/Issue	Number
Reducing the number of SSA will mean that the communal areas of the scheme will not be cleaned as frequently. There will be an overall deterioration in the public areas of schemes.	68
Individual residents were concerned that they cannot carry out housework and laundry and need the help of an SSA.	14
General objections to the proposal and support to retain SSAs	96
Concern about the standard of care, training, supervision of agency staff undertaking the work presently carried out by SSA and security implications of numerous people undertaking housework/laundry.	70
Suggestion to increase the service charge/rent in order to retain the services of scheme support assistants	69
Without SSA support wheelchair users and severely disabled people will not be able to participate in coffee mornings and other activities	68

- 3.6 Responses to the questionnaires have been analysed against the protected characteristics. In summary this analysis did not produce any surprising results. In comparison with the population of the schemes as a whole:
- A slightly higher proportion of older (65+) residents responded;
 - More Black/Black British people responded;
 - More women than men responded;
 - A higher proportion of residents who have physical disabilities responded;
 - Muslims are under-represented among the respondents.

This analysis is available in detail.

4. Written representations

- 4.1 Four residents and one relative submitted individual written representations regarding the proposals. In general these submissions made the same points that were made in resident meetings and in questionnaire responses. Detailed responses and explanations were sent to each individual.
- 4.2 3 petitions were received. In general these petitions expressed similar objections and concerns to that received during consultation. The petitions were as follows:
- (a) Latimer House Sheltered Housing Scheme submitted a petition with 27 signatories expressing support for the SSA and asking for him to be retained. Concerns were expressed that the service was being removed without proper consultation.
 - (b) The Priory Sheltered Housing Scheme submitted a petition with 48 signatories stating *“With dismay, residents hear that there is a plan to reduce the number of SSA’s in Haringey, from 24 to 8 next year. This is a cut back of about 70%. It will have serious consequences, residents feel it is simply too drastic a cut to make to the supported housing services. Please seriously reconsider these proposals”*. Residents proposed that other staff should be cut instead of the SSA and that less money should be sent on glossy booklets.
 - (c) Keynes Close Sheltered Housing Scheme submitted a petition signed by 26 residents opposing the proposal to remove the SSA and asking for her to be retained and that the tasks she performs ultimately saves the Council money.

Detailed responses have been sent to the petitioners.