

Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions

News

News

Release

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12 February 2001

Government acts to protect sheltered housing tenants

Housing Minister, Nick Raynsford, has announced that the Government will make additional resources available to local authorities as part of the new Supporting People grant, enabling them to hold down charges local authority sheltered housing tenants pay for their warden services, community alarms, and other support services.

The new measures will also apply to former local authority sheltered housing that has been transferred to a new landlord as part of a Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT).

In a written answer to a Parliamentary Question from Stephen Pound MP (Ealing North), Mr Raynsford said:

"Many local authority and large scale voluntary transfer (LSVT) landlords cross subsidise the costs of support services for their tenants, such as warden services in sheltered housing, from their general rent income. This practice will stop when the Supporting People policy is implemented in April 2003. However, I am pleased to say that the Government will be making additional provision available through the new Supporting People grant in 2003/04 to cover these costs in full."

"In the light of this, there will be no need for local authority or LSVT landlords to increase charges to tenants, either now or in 2003/04 when Supporting People is introduced. Draft guidance will shortly be circulated to local authority and LSVT landlords setting out how these cross subsidies should be identified and recommending that these particular landlords

freeze the amounts that sheltered housing tenants pay for their support services at 2000/01 levels in real terms."

"When Supporting People starts funding these services in April 2003, the local authority and LSVT landlords concerned will retain the savings they make by ending cross subsidies. As a condition of paying the additional Supporting People grant, we will expect these landlords to demonstrate how they will make effective use of these resources to deliver the government's housing policy objectives more fully and more quickly, for example by improving the condition of their housing stock and the quality of their housing management services."

Notes to editors

The exact amount of the additional resources that will be made available to local authorities is not yet known, but could be as much as £100m. The guidance being issued to local housing authorities and LSVT landlords will ask them to identify the amount of their rent income currently being spent on subsidising the provision of support services to their tenants. The information they collect will be used to establish the additional resources that will be required.

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ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Meeting with Sheltered Housing Tenants at Melbourne **COMMITTEE/**
WORKING PANEL

DATE Thursday, 16 August 2001

TIME - COMMENCED 2.00pm A.M./P.M.

TERMINATED 3.20pm A.M./P.M.

J Bircher	M.G. SEVENSON	E.M. Hinkley,
J Bircher	et. Hicelli.	J. Craven.
J. Roberts	J. Cooper	V. Lennachie
J. Roberts	E. Foster	R. Rudge
K. Roberts	B. Elliott	D. Simpson -
K. Roberts	M. Smith	
P. Edwards	Vera Shaw, Chair, Weston - on Seat P.C.	
A. J. Day	M. Wright	K. Burtan
N. Porter	V.M. Wright	J. Clark.
P. Porter	A. Wright	M. Holmes
F. Peafitt	M. Butler	L. Dennis
B. J. Peds.	F. O'Keefe	J. Johnson
L. Keenan	Remin Kobayashi	D. Johnson
E. H. Taylor	Mrs H.A. Tully	A. Szymanski
M. Taylor	J. Tomlin	
J. Bewick	J.W. Tomlin	
M. Bewick	G. Walker	
M. Bewick	J. Walker	
E. Edwards	Tom Tomlin	
E. Bye	J. Tomlin	
E. J. Bye	P.S. Sarge	

NOTES OF A MEETING HELD WITH SHELTERED HOUSING TENANTS FROM MELBOURNE, SHARDOW, ASTON-ON-TRENT AND WESTON-ON-TRENT AT MELBOURNE LEISURE CENTRE ON THURSDAY, 16 AUGUST 2001

Present: Attendance Register attached.

Apologies: Councillor R Bell

Councillor Southern opened the meeting by reading out a statement of the intention of the meeting, which was to obtain tenants views on the proposed changes to the delivery of the sheltered housing scheme. He then asked tenants for their views.

Councillor Brooks read out a letter from a Mrs B Hunter, an ex warden, which urged the Council to take care of the elderly, as they deserved first class treatment.

Councillor Southern agreed with the sentiments of the letter but reported to the meeting that the delivery of the service would have to change due to Government legislation. At present, the Council subsidised the service to the sum of £347,000 from the housing revenue account. However, from 2003 this would not be allowed under the new legislation. This therefore had financial implications, as the shortfall would need to be made up from the Council's General Fund. However, in the long term the General Fund would not be able to sustain the funding required to deliver the service. The Council was already committed to paying off loans from previous years which had been used to modernise properties. He advised that it was the Council's intention to supply the best service it could. The service had recently undergone a Best Value inspection, which had identified a number of areas that had to be improved. One of those areas was the inconsistency of the service provided throughout the district. Some schemes had been identified as receiving a high standard of service whereas others were poor. The Council's aim was that every scheme would receive the same level of service. A number of proposals were therefore being considered to achieve this. Proposals had been received from officers, wardens, the Union and staff at Central Control. All those involved in providing the service agreed that the service had to change. He pointed out that those schemes receiving a top-level service might have to come down in order to bring those receiving a poor service up to a required standard so that everyone received the same standard of service.

A resident expressed concern that from the letter received it appeared that a decision had already been made.

Councillor Southern advised that no decision had been made. However, he could understand how this might appear from the original letter. Officers without councillors' prior knowledge had sent out this letter. A further letter had therefore been sent out to clarify the situation.

Councillor Southern emphasised that the Council had to tackle the inconsistency of how many units each warden looked after. At present some wardens only looked after 40 units whereas others could have 70 or over 100. There were also different rates of pay scales in operation. It was important to obtain a standardised service delivery with wardens provided with job descriptions and all receiving the same rate of pay.

Councillor Harrison asked which sheltered schemes were represented at the meeting today. He was advised that representatives were present from Melbourne, Shardlow, Aston-on-Trent and Weston-on-Trent.

Councillor Brooks emphasised that it needed to be made clear that the required changes had arisen from a recent Best Value inspection. The findings had been audited by an outside auditor and recommendations had highlighted where improvements were required. Their findings had shown that the service was badly organised and that it was in need of modernisation. The Council was now required to find an acceptable solution and to implement it within a set timescale.

A resident referred to a previous meeting where they had been advised that there would be various levels of service regarding calls depending on how ill people were. He enquired as to what would happen if no one answered. At present if Central Control call in the morning and receive no reply, they try again at about 4.00pm. He referred to a recent incident where a resident had died suddenly in the morning but no one was aware until later in the day.

Councillor Southern considered that if Central Control telephoned through and received no reply that they should send someone out straight away rather than calling back later. However, residents would have to work with Central Control and remember to notify the warden or Central Control if they were going out.

A resident pointed out that the downside to this was that people could be in the bathroom or in the garden and unable to get back in time to answer the call.

Councillor Southern also advised that in cases where people were vulnerable ie prone to falls or lived alone, they could register to be supplied with a neck pendant which would allow them to contact Central Control. There was no cost to the resident for the pendant.

He also reported that residents' concerns about the locks on their properties had been noted. Arrangements were in hand to change the locks to a five-bar system, which would enable wardens to be given a master key to enter the properties.

A resident asked whether neighbours would be able to enter each other's property if they all had the same locks. Councillor Southern advised that this would not be the case. It would only be the master key that could gain access.

Councillor Harrison referred to the point made earlier that not all schemes received the same standard of service. He considered that residents should be afforded the opportunity to see the proposals being put forward so that they could compare the old with the new.

Councillor Southern advised that the Scrutiny Panel had interviewed officers and members and would consider the recommendations put forward:

One option that would be considered was a proposal for 10 wardens each to look after 116 properties plus two relief wardens who would cover holidays etc. Central Control would be manned separately.

Councillor Southern advised that not everyone on the sheltered housing scheme required a personal visit as some had indicated they preferred a telephone call. The intention would be to divide the areas equally among the wardens and that they would all receive the same salary. This would bring consistency to the service so that the same warden visited residents each time.

A resident expressed concern that if the warden had a large amount of properties to visit that she would not be able to spend time with each person.

Councillor Southern advised that the warden would be able to spend approximately 10 minutes at each property. Visits would also be alternated between mornings and afternoons. It was also the

intention to keep wardens local so that they were only travelling a reasonable distance between the schemes they were looking after.

Councillor Southern also advised that partnership working with other agencies such as the Social Services, Age Concern and CVS would need to be improved to support the service ie bingo's, outings, dinner clubs etc. He reported that members were concerned that in some cases sheltered housing schemes were being used to keep people in the community who would probably be better placed in residential homes. Social Services endeavoured to keep people in the community and provided support for a short time and then expected the warden service to step in. However, the warden service was not there for that purpose. It was there to help residents maintain their independence whilst having some support.

A resident asked what would happen if the warden did not make a visit. Councillor Southern advised that they would still receive a telephone call from Central Control as at present. The people who would benefit were those who do not get a high standard of service at present. These residents were paying exactly the same money as the residents who received a high standard of service. The aim was to ensure that all schemes received the same standard of service.

Some residents from Weston-on-Trent expressed concern that due to the extra workload that their warden would not be able to fetch their medication from the doctor's surgery at Aston-on-Trent. They were in the situation where there was no chemist and medicines were dispensed from the surgery. Councillor Southern considered that this would not be a problem but undertook to take into account that Weston-on-Trent did not have the facility of a chemist delivery service which was in operation in other parts of the district.

The Chair of Weston-on-Trent Parish Council expressed concern that people from outlying areas could not get to the meetings to express their views. She was also concerned that parish councils had not been notified about the meetings and the proposed changes to the sheltered housing scheme. She asked whether parish councils could be made aware of what was happening.

Councillor Southern advised that he was aware that transport was a problem for people in outlying areas but that he was prepared to hold meetings in outlying areas if he received enough requests.

A resident considered that something needed to be put in place to ensure that people could get to meetings and that the parish council should be kept informed.

Councillor Southern agreed that, in this instance, there had been a lack of communication.

Councillor Harrison asked if residents had received a letter informing them of today's meeting. Councillor Southern stated that every warden had been given leaflets to distribute to residents on their scheme advising them of the meetings.

Councillor Southern also reported that when the new scheme was in place, it was hoped that a list of social activities would be circulated to everyone advising of what was available on the different schemes. This would enable everyone to participate in bingo, dinner clubs etc if they so wished. With regard to transporting residents to different schemes, it was hoped that arrangements could possibly be made through community transport at a reasonable charge.

A resident commented that people were being asked to pass an opinion on a report that they had never seen. He considered that once a decision had been taken, a simplified version should be made available to residents

A resident expressed concern that wardens would not be able to cope with travelling to more schemes.

Councillor Southern reported that wardens would need to be flexible. One warden was already covering Hartshorne, Ticknall, Netherseal, Lullington, Coton in the Elms and working at Central Control. Under the proposed new system, wardens would look after schemes which were closer together to cut down on travelling.

Councillor Harrison asked Councillor Southern to explain about the charge for the warden service and the changes which would come into effect in 2003.

Councillor Southern reported that the Council over a number of years had included the charge for the warden service in with the rent. This allowed a number of people who would have been just outside the benefit system to claim housing benefit. However, from 2003 the Council would not be allowed to do this. The rent charge and the warden charge would have to be itemised separately.

He further reported that the Scrutiny Committee had requested that officers at the Council identify the exact cost of the warden service.

A resident asked if under this new legislation, they would have to find the cost of the warden charge if they were not in the benefits system. Councillor Southern advised that residents would have to pay the charge if this was the case. Councillor Harrison re-iterated that residents would have to pay the charge out of their own income.

Councillor Southern referred to the government initiative of 'Supporting People' which would come into operation in 2003. This initiative would help with the financial costs for the first two years. After that time, the Council hoped to be in a financial position where it could help. It was the Council's aim to provide an improved service year on year.

A resident considered that wardens should be given a defined job description so that they knew exactly what was required. Councillor Southern confirmed that wardens would be given a job description and would also receive training in first aid and fire drills.

Councillor Carroll emphasised that the Council's aim was to provide the same level of support service to everyone. She stated that the "Supported Living" initiative, which would be introduced in 2003, would encourage people to work together. The District Council's main concern was that residents were provided with good, safe and warm housing. Hopefully it would be able to provide more than that. She considered it was important for wardens to be local to the schemes they were looking after as they acted in the role of a good neighbour. However, wardens would not be available all the time as their hours of work were 9.00am to 5.00pm. After these hours, Central Control was available and this needed to be well serviced to ensure adequate cover.

Councillor Carroll advised that because of the new legislation coming into effect in 2003 and the way in which rents were calculated, there would be a shortfall in the monies which the Council would have to pay.

Councillor Southern reported that the Council would be able to cover any extra costs for the period 2003/4.

A resident expressed concern that they would lose their concessionary TV licence rate if there was no resident warden.

Councillor Southern reported that the local MP had advised that legislation had gone through Parliament recently stating that people would still be entitled to the concessionary rate if they were in receipt of a warden service. This being the case, it would not affect residents. However, Councillor Southern undertook to make enquiries to ensure that the legislation had been passed.

One resident from Weston-on-Trent informed the meeting that not all residents at Weston-on-Trent who were on a warden scheme qualified for the concessionary rate. Councillor Robbins undertook to look into this issue and to report her findings to the Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Robbins expressed concern that some residents had also lost their "meals on wheels" service through changes at Social Services. She suggested that residents might wish to contact their district councillor if this was the case as the District Council paid £30,000 a year towards the service. This would allow councillors to look into what was happening.

Residents again asked if they could have a copy of the decision once it had been made. Councillor Southern undertook to arrange for the relevant information to be sent out to residents.

Councillor Robbins again emphasised that it was important that everyone in sheltered housing received the same standard of service.

Councillor Harrison thanked everyone who had signed the petition regarding the warden service and reported that this had been influential in making councillors aware of residents' concerns.

Councillor Southern undertook to take residents comments into account and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting terminated at 3.20pm.

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Meeting with Sheltered Housing Tenants at COMMITTEE/
Granville Court WORKING PANEL

DATE Tuesday, 14 August 2001.....

TIME - COMMENCED 2.00 A.M./P.M.

TERMINATED 3.00 A.M./P.M.

R. South
L. L. Ball
A. Hammett
Mrs. G. Richards
Mr. K. Chapman
Mrs. C. Sampson
MR. A. James
P. Be...
E. Stone
M. Brown
R. Rowley
P. Burton
G. Parker
J. Hardy
F. Wilson
V. Barnett
G. Whotton
S. Bircher
U. White

NOTES OF A MEETING HELD WITH SHELTERED HOUSING TENANTS FROM SWADLINCOTE AT GRANVILLE COURT, SWADLINCOTE ON TUESDAY, 14 AUGUST 2001

Present: Attendance Register attached.

Apologies: None

Councillor Southern opened the meeting by reading out a statement of the intention of the meeting, which was to obtain tenants views on the proposed changes to the delivery of the sheltered housing scheme. He then asked tenants for their views.

A resident considered that it was important for them to have the stability of a warden visiting whether they were able bodied or disabled as for some it was the only contact they had with another person. It was also considered that residents well being could be better identified from a visit rather than a telephone call from Granville Court.

A resident also expressed concern regarding on call wardens living too far away. There had been an instance where the on call warden was required and she had to travel from Marston on Dove.

Concern was also expressed concerning loss of personal contact with wardens, as they would not know who was coming to visit. The warden would also be disadvantaged because of not knowing the personal circumstances of the residents being visited.

Councillor Southern advised that it was the Council's intention to supply the best service it could. At present the service was being subsidised by the Council to the sum of £347,000. Unfortunately, under new legislation, which would take effect in 2003, the Government would not allow the service to be subsidised. This therefore had financial implications and the provision of the service was therefore being reviewed.

At present the cost of the warden service together with charges for communal facilities was added into the rent. Approximately 60% to 70% of residents benefited from this because it allowed them to claim housing benefit.

Councillor Southern also advised that officers had been requested to identify the costs of running the warden service. He also reported that the biggest problem the Council had to tackle was the inconsistency of the service provided throughout the district. Some wardens only looked after small schemes of approximately 40 residents whereas others had as many as 100 residents. There were also a number of different pay scales in operation. Through the review, the Council hoped to achieve a situation where wardens were looking after the same number of residents and were paid the same salary.

The Council would be considering a number of proposals concerning the operation of the warden scheme which had been put forward by officers, the Union, some of the wardens and staff at Central Control. Tenants views would also be taken into consideration. To date, all those involved in the provision of the service had agreed that changes were required.

Councillor Southern emphasised that when the subsidy ceased in 2003, the shortfall would need to be made up from the Council's General Fund. However, in the long term the General Fund would not be able to sustain the funding required to run the service. He advised that councillors were concerned that residents had not been given the opportunity to say if they would be prepared to pay any extra towards the service.

He also pointed out that it had been noted that older people did not want to be housed in second floor flats and that shared bathrooms were not acceptable. These facts were being addressed.

A resident referred to people waiting to be dressed in the mornings and undressed at night. Councillor Southern pointed out that this was not part of the warden service. The care service was provided by Social Services.

It was also suggested that it would be useful if wardens were trained in first aid.

Councillor Southern advised that it was the intention to train wardens in first aid and also to hold fire drills.

A resident expressed concern that some wardens would be made redundant. Councillor Southern advised that all wardens had been served with a Section 188 notice, which advised that their jobs were "at risk". No one had been asked to take early retirement or had been advised that they would be made redundant at this stage as no decision has been taken. However, under the new scheme, wardens would have to re-apply for their jobs as the job specification and rate of pay would be different.

Councillor Southern advised that a number of schemes do not receive a personal visit from a warden each day. Usually they receive two visits and Central Control telephone through on the other days.

A resident expressed concern regarding what would happen if they had sustained a fall and couldn't answer the door or get to the pull cord to call for help.

Councillor Southern advised that this was an area, which would have to be considered, but at present the warden should have a master key to gain entry to the property.

Councillor Southern also advised that some schemes were involved in social activities, which had been organised by their warden whereas others were not so fortunate. He emphasised that organising social activities was not part of the warden's job and that this was a bonus for residents who were fortunate enough to have a warden who was prepared to do this. He added that a proposal had been put forward to identify which schemes had certain functions and on what days in order that the details could be circulated to all schemes. This would then allow residents from any scheme to join in.

The Council also hoped to get other outside agencies on board to help with events such as Age Concern and the CVS.

Residents also expressed concern that young people were being housed in sheltered schemes and that this could cause problems.

Councillor Southern advised that the Council were aware that this was not an ideal situation but were criticised by Government if properties were left unoccupied because of the loss of rent revenue.

Residents also expressed concern about the poor state of the locks on the door. Councillor Southern advised that the Council was in the process of changing the locks to properties through planned maintenance.

Councillor Bell asked if residents had been consulted about the proposals to change the provision of the warden service prior to today's meeting. It was noted that some residents had attended a meeting a short time ago.

Councillor Harrington advised that there was a need to separate the cost of the warden service charge from the rent. He asked for residents' views on being asked to pay additional costs.

Residents stated that they were on a limited income and that it would depend on how much they were asked to pay. They were currently unaware of how much they were paying as it was included in the rent but they were happy with the service provided.

Councillor Southern reported that a new rent structure would be put in place over the next few years, which would have implications for rent assessment. This structure will look at a number of factors including the valuation of the property and average wage in the area. He considered that residents would be better off financially as at present people who were in one bedroom flats or bungalows were paying the same rent as someone in a three bedroom house.

With regard to the warden's visit, a resident suggested a rota system be put in place to alternate the days of the visit as his warden visited on the days he was always out.

It was also noted that some residents had experienced problems with wardens knocking on the door and leaving before they had time to answer.

Councillor Southern undertook to take residents comments into account and thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting terminated at 3.00pm

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Meeting with Sheltered Housing Tenants at Kendricks **COMMITTEE/**

Close

WORKING PANEL

DATE ...Wednesday...15...August...2001.

TIME - COMMENCED 2.30 pm AM/P.M.

TERMINATED 3.40 pm AM/P.M.

Mrs Woodhouse	Shelley Woodhouse
Wynned Mappin	
Patricia Smith	
Georgina P. Lapp	
Robert Peck	
Rosa Thomas	
Elive Bagnall	
M. W. [unclear]	
[unclear]	
H. Joe Roon	
[unclear]	
P. A. Cox	
Terrey Whetton	
Christine Whetton	
[unclear]	
M. A. Silverwood	
[unclear]	
[unclear]	
[unclear]	
[unclear]	
[unclear]	
[unclear]	
[unclear]	

**NOTES OF A MEETING HELD WITH SHELTERED HOUSING TENANTS FROM
HARTSHORNE AND TICKNALL AT KENDRICKS CLOSE, HARTSHORNE ON
WEDNESDAY, 15 AUGUST 2001**

Present: Attendance Register attached.

Apologies: Mrs K Bloor
Mr R D Jackson
Mrs G Smith
Mr and Mrs J Thrupp

Councillor Southern opened the meeting by reading out a statement of the intention of the meeting, which was to obtain tenants views on the proposed changes to the delivery of the sheltered housing scheme. He then asked tenants for their views.

A spokesperson for the residents of the Brook Street scheme reported that they would like the service to remain the same. A number of residents were elderly and depended on the staff who lived locally.

Councillor Southern reported to the meeting that the delivery of the service would have to change due to Government legislation. At present, the Council subsidised the service to the sum of £347,000 from the housing revenue account. However, from 2003 this would not be allowed under the new legislation. This therefore had financial implications, as the shortfall would need to be made up from the Council's General Fund. However, in the long term the General Fund would not be able to sustain the funding required to deliver the service. He advised that it was the Council's intention to supply the best service it could. The service had recently undergone a Best Value inspection which had identified a number of areas which had to be improved. One of those areas was the inconsistency of the service provided throughout the district. Some schemes had been identified as receiving a high standard of service whereas others were poor. The Council's aim was that every scheme would receive the same level of service. A number of proposals were therefore being considered to achieve this. Proposals had been received from officers, wardens, the Union and staff at Central Control. All those involved in providing the service agreed that the service had to change. He pointed out that those schemes receiving a top-level service might have to come down in order to bring those receiving a poor service up to a required standard so that everyone received the same standard of service.

Councillor Southern also emphasised that the Council had to tackle the inconsistency of how many units each warden looked after. At present some wardens only looked after 40 units whereas others could have 70 or over 100. There were also different rates of pay scales in operation.

Councillor Bell advised that wardens would need to be flexible and prepared to cover a number of schemes. Currently some wardens were also covering Central Control. However, under the new scheme these would be separate jobs.

Councillor Southern advised that councillors would like to keep the wardens local so that they were only travelling a reasonable distance in-between the schemes they were looking after. He reported that one proposal was that 10 wardens would each look after 116 units.

A resident asked whether wardens would be made redundant and then reappointed. Councillor Southern advised that it was the Council's intention to ensure that wardens all had the same job description and received the same salary.

resident queried whether 10 wardens would be able to physically look after 116 units each.

Councillor Southern advised that not all residents required a personal visit. There were a number who preferred to receive a telephone call so out of the 116 there could possibly be 30 who did not require a visit.

A resident expressed concern about outside bodies using the community room and asked who would be cleaning the room.

Councillor Southern advised that arrangements would be made to employ cleaners to undertake this work.

A resident expressed concern that they would lose their concessionary TV licence rate if there was no resident warden.

Councillor Southern reported that the local MP had advised that legislation had gone through Parliament recently stating that people would still be entitled to the concessionary rate if they were in receipt of a warden service. This being the case, it would not affect residents. However, Councillor Southern undertook to make enquiries to ensure that the legislation had been passed.

A resident expressed concern regarding what would happen if they had already received a call from Central Control and then sustained a fall and was unable to reach the pull cord to summon help.

It was pointed out that in cases where people were vulnerable, they could register to be supplied with the neck pendant which would allow them to contact Central Control. There was no cost to the resident for the pendant.

Councillor Southern reported that members were concerned that in some cases sheltered housing schemes were being used to keep people in the community who would probably be better placed in residential homes. Social Services endeavoured to keep people in the community and provided support for a short time and then expected the warden service to step in. The warden service was not there for that purpose. It was their to help people maintain their independence whilst having some support. He advised that it was important for partnership working and that Social Services, Age Concern and the CVS would need to be more involved in sheltered housing schemes.

A resident expressed concern regarding the proposal to cut down the amount of contact calls and visits. Councillor Bell advised that currently the system allows for Central Control to make contact on the days that the warden does not visit. A proposal had been made to reduce the warden's visit to one per week and two calls from Central Control. However, taking into account the number of calls which would need to be made, it appeared that the present arrangement was more satisfactory.

Councillor Southern considered that if Central Control telephoned through and received no reply that they should send someone out straight away rather than calling back later.

A resident pointed out that for this to work people would have to remember to notify the warden or Central Control if they were going out.

A resident stated that if someone was feeling ill, they might not necessarily advise Central Control when they telephoned where as a warden visiting was more likely to identify if there was a problem.

Councillor Southern reported that councillors were looking to get wardens closer to the schemes they were covering and to maintain consistency so that a personal relationship could be built.

A resident commented that the Government criticise the system and want to change how it works but the Council have to work with what money they have.

Councillor Southern advised that the Council hoped to continually improve the service to sheltered housing tenants.

Councillor Bell asked if residents had been consulted about the proposals to change the delivery of the warden service prior to today's meeting. It was noted that residents had not been consulted. The majority had read about the proposal in the local newspaper.

Councillor Southern advised that councillors were concerned that residents had not been given the opportunity to say if they would be prepared to pay extra towards the cost of running the service. He further advised that over the next few years there would be a major rent review. At present residents who lived in a one bedroom flat or bungalow were paying the same rent as those in a three bedroom house. Under the new system this would be addressed taking into account a number of factors one of which would be the valuation of the property.

A resident suggested that more partnership working between the County and District Councils was required.

A resident enquired when a decision would be taken. Councillor Southern advised that at present they were still gathering information and that councillors would not be rushed into making a decision. A preliminary meeting was scheduled for two weeks time but even if a decision were taken at that meeting it would still have to be ratified before the full Council.

Councillor Bell reported that there would be no change to the service in the meantime and even when a decision had been made it would be phased in. The wardens would need to be given new contacts, trained in first aid etc and it would all take time.

Councillor Southern undertook to take residents comments into account and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting terminated at 3.40pm.

SHELTERED HOUSING BEST VALUE REVIEWCONSULTATION MEETING WITH TENANTS13th August 2001PRESENT:-District Council Representatives

Councillors Southern (Chair) and Councillors Bell, Evens, Hood, Lemmon, Stone, Mrs. Walton and Mrs. Wheeler.

Tenants

M. Bower, H. Bower, M. Reeve, H. Taylor, J. Partridge, M. Thompson, J. Brooks, J.W. Ault, J. Ault, M. Ross, S. Avery, E. Thacker, Mr. and Mrs. Brassington and Mr. Procter.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES RAISED AND PROPOSALS SUBMITTED

Following introductions the Chair explained the purpose of this consultation meeting as part of the Best Value Review of Sheltered Housing. He read a prepared statement to set the scene for the Meeting and sought the views and suggestions of those present on the proposed review of the Sheltered Housing Service.

A tenant of Fisher Close, Repton understood that the resident warden for this Scheme was retiring and questioned whether she was likely to be replaced. The Chair confirmed that this would need to be considered as part of the overall review and no final decisions had been taken at this time.

There was a discussion on the additional charges paid by tenants on sheltered housing schemes and the communal facilities available. Should resident wardens be removed, it was questioned who would manage these facilities. Tenants also asked if they would be able to "opt out" of some or all services with a corresponding reduction in the level of rent paid. This element would need to be researched further.

The Chair spoke about the current subsidy arrangements for Sheltered Housing which amounted to some £300,000 each year. He explained that the arrangements were to be reviewed by Government in 2003 and it was anticipated that such subsidy would not continue.

An opinion was voiced that the Council had already determined this issue and their warden was on notice of redundancy. The Chair refuted this comment explaining that consultation was still being undertaken and the Council would consider all options before reaching its decision. He explained that this process was being considered by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees and indeed the final decision would likely be referred through to the Council Meeting itself.

The Chair explained that the quality of service provided varied in different sheltered housing schemes. There was a wish to improve and standardise the overall quality of the service provided. It was noted that some of the roles performed by resident wardens previously should have been undertaken by other agencies. As part of this review those additional services should be discontinued. A review of the rent structure would also be undertaken

shortly and the Chair felt that tenants in flat accommodation should see a reduction in the level of their weekly rent over the coming years.

A question was submitted about the installation of fire alarms in sheltered housing schemes and the advice that should be provided to tenants. The Chair explained the current round of improvements which was underway and felt there was a role for wardens to provide training and advice to tenants. It was requested that the keys to fire alarms be left on-site as currently the mobile warden had to visit the sheltered housing scheme and this could cause problems if the alarm became activated accidentally. A request was also submitted that the electricity and gas meter cupboard doors have glass panels installed in order that tenants could check their respective meter readings.

There was a general discussion about the allocation of units on sheltered housing schemes. In some instances it was felt that tenants needed a level of assistance more usually associated with residential care. There were also problems associated with the allocation of units to younger persons with mental and physical disabilities. A number of speakers expressed their views on the objectives of the sheltered housing scheme and those persons who should be eligible to reside in such schemes.

A Member commented on the telephone contact service provided by a neighbouring authority when it removed its resident wardens and it was understood that a similar service was available currently in South Derbyshire. Following a request about community policing, the Chair agreed to pursue this with Inspector Whetton.

Tenants were anxious to see this review completed at the earliest possible date, but the Chair stated that Members would not make a hasty decision until they were satisfied that the best option had been selected. He spoke about the role of Age Concern and felt this organisation could have a large input into providing recreational services for tenants. Their representatives present at the Meeting were asked to contact the Council to pursue this idea. The Chair of the Council's Overview Committee was also present and he explained its input into scrutinising the Sheltered Housing Service Review.

Tenants felt the need for openness was essential to prevent mistrust and rumours. Reference was made to a previous tenants' circular which, it was felt, implied that a decision had already been made. The Chair thanked those present for their attendance and input and brought the Meeting to a close.

R.W. SOUTHERN

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 2.55 p.m.

ANNEXE H

**ALTERNATIVE MODELS FOR
SERVICE PROVISION,
INCLUDING
OPTIONS PUT FORWARD AS PART OF THE
CONSULTATION**

Annexe H

Alternative Models For Service Provision, Including Options Put Forward As Part Of The Consultation

	Model	Overall Ongoing Financial Implications of Staffing £,000	Overall Ongoing Financial Implications (incl. Cleansing Contract) £,000	Effect on Warden Charge per Person per Week £
1	Existing consultation model	(30)	20	0.33
2	Reinstate previous structure based on 18 Residential Wardens	76	126	2.08
3	Residential Warden model based on existing highest ratio provision	349	399	6.58
4	Community Wardens integrated into combined service unit with housing advice and liaison	(2)	48	0.79
5	Model submitted by a Residential Warden	(1)	49	0.81
6	Unison model	14	64	1.06
7	Model submitted by a Control Operator/Warden	12	62	1.02

() = saving

Each model is considered below against the following:

- A) Meeting objectives of review i.e.
- Meeting a vision for the service
 - building a service based on best practice
 - ensuring consistency and equality in the standards and the delivery of the SH service
 - engaging partner agencies and service users
 - bringing the costs of the service into balance with income in advance of the implementation of Supporting People in April 2003
- B) Implications to Tenants
 C) Implications to Staff
 D) Implications to Council

Model 1 – Existing Consultation Model

Meeting objectives	Yes – with some reduction of subsidy
Implications to Tenants	Removes most residential wardens Reduced number of daily visits for some tenants, increased for others Offers two Residential schemes for more frail elderly Improved Tenancy Liaison and housing advice service

Implications to Staff	<p>Requirement to work as part of a team to clearly set out job descriptions and tasks</p> <p>Jobs clearly defined and paid at appropriate rates</p> <p>Improved management and support</p> <p>Closer working between SHELTERED HOUSING and other housing services</p>
Implications to Council	<p>Public concern about removal of Residential Wardens and level of visit service provided</p> <p>Starts preparing for Supporting People</p> <p>Deals with many of the concerns highlighted by the Best Value review</p> <p>Strengthens the overall housing service</p>
Average number of Sheltered Housing units per full time equivalent operational Sheltered Housing officer	146

Model 2 – Reinstate Previous Structure with 18 Residential Wardens

Residential wardens based at 18 schemes supported by 3 Assistant Wardens. Other residents receive service from team of three mobile wardens who also deliver out of hour's emergency service and Lifeline service. Existing management structure

Meeting objectives	<p>Different levels of service still exist between tenants supported by Residential and Mobile Wardens</p> <p>Limited capacity to monitor and support consistency/equality of service delivery or develop/deliver partnership working</p> <p>Increases personal support costs so subsidy position made worse</p>
Implications to Tenants	<p>More tenants supported by Residential Wardens</p> <p>Continues the inequity of service provision</p> <p>Higher costs</p>
Implications to Staff	<p>Protects Residential Wardens</p> <p>Limited management support available</p>
Implications to Council	<p>Less flexibility to direct staff to areas of greatest need</p> <p>Does not deal with the management issues, partnership working or the integration of Sheltered Housing with housing allocations and advice</p>

	Avoids the removal of existing Residential Wardens Continues different levels of service provision to tenants with/without Residential Wardens
Average number of Sheltered Housing units per full time equivalent operational officer	52

Model 3 – Introduce Residential Wardens across the District Based on the Existing Highest Staffing Ratio (Linton)

Introduce Residential Wardens on a ratio of one warden for every 30 tenants. Emergency out of hour's service provided by Residential Wardens to tenants on their schemes or by an out of hour's rota. Existing management structure

Meeting objectives	High level of service consistently available to all tenants Increases personal support costs so subsidy position made worse
Implications to Tenants	Residential Wardens available to all tenants Higher costs High ratio of staff available to deliver services
Implications to Staff	Protects and increase Residential Wardens Staff will be able to carry out far wider range of support services for tenants Limited management support available
Implications to Council	Emergency out of hour's service relies on Residential Wardens being available to respond. Otherwise increased costs for an emergency response team/rota will be needed Does not deal with the management issues, partnership working or the integration of Sheltered Housing with housing allocations and advice Staff may be delivering service which are the responsibility of other agencies e.g. SS
Average number of Sheltered Housing units per full time equivalent operational officer	30

Model 4 – Community Warden Model

Ten Community Wardens based at Sheltered Housing Schemes across the District. Each Community Warden responsible for delivering services based on needs to all tenants in their area. Five Relief staff available to support/cover the work of the Community wardens and the Central Control Unit.

Emergency out of hour's service provided by Community wardens working on a rota basis. Integrate Sheltered Housing with advice, liaison and allocations services under one manager.

Visits to tenants would include some afternoon visits.

Social activities would be co-ordinated across all schemes by the Sheltered Housing Teamleader, working with Sheltered Housing staff and the voluntary sector

Meeting objectives	Yes – with some reduction of subsidy
Implications to Tenants	<p>Every tenant receives service from their Community Warden who may continue to live on a scheme</p> <p>Consistency of services, with flexibility for increased levels of visits if needs change</p> <p>Removes Residential Wardens</p> <p>Reduced number of daily visits for some tenants, increased for others</p> <p>Improved Tenancy Liaison and Housing Advice service</p>
Implications to Staff	<p>Clearly set out job descriptions and tasks</p> <p>Jobs clearly defined and paid at appropriate rates</p> <p>Improved management and support</p> <p>Closer working between Sheltered Housing and other housing services</p> <p>Ability to develop close links with tenants and other service providers in their area</p>
Implications to Council	<p>Maximises number of Community Wardens</p> <p>Avoids need to increase charges</p> <p>Starts preparing for Supporting People</p> <p>Deals with many of the concerns highlighted by the Best Value review</p> <p>Strengthens the overall housing service</p> <p>Effective management structure to drive service improvements</p>

Average number of Sheltered Housing units per full time equivalent operational officer	97
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Model 5 - Model submitted by a Residential Warden

Sheltered Housing properties rented/leased by the Sheltered Housing service from the Housing Division at the current basic rent

District split into 8 areas with 9 Residential Wardens and 11 part time Assistant Wardens delivering service to tenants, including out of hours calls

Control Room staffed on double rota system of 48 hours one week and 36 hours the second week

Meeting objectives	<p>Limited capacity to monitor and support consistency/equality of service delivery or develop/deliver partnership working</p> <p>Increases personal support costs so subsidy position made worse</p>
Implications to Tenants	<p>Tenants supported by Residential Wardens</p> <p>Higher costs</p> <p>Limited capacity for joint working protocols with SS/health etc to be developed</p>
Implications to Staff	<p>Residential Wardens paid scale 3 and part time wardens scale 1 although duties appear similar</p> <p>Central Control Unit and Assistant Wardens staff paid scale1 which is below market testing (including Single Status authorities) grade</p> <p>Reduced grade, and therefore responsibilities, for Manager, with no strengthening of management structure elsewhere</p> <p>Shift working patterns for Central Control Unit may make posts unattractive</p> <p>Limited management support available</p>
Implications to Council	<p>Less flexibility to direct staff to areas of greatest need</p> <p>Avoids the removal of existing Residential Wardens</p> <p>Does not deal with the management issues, partnership working or the integration of Sheltered Housing with housing allocations and advice</p>

	Effectiveness of emergency out of hours service not clear
Average number of Sheltered Housing units per full time equivalent operational officer	78

Model 6 – Unison Model

Remove the Managers post and have a Sheltered Housing service comprising a Central Control Unit Teamleader, a Sheltered Housing Teamleader and Retain 10 Resident Wardens and 2 Mobile Wardens and as staff leave replace Resident wardens with Community Wardens or have 2 Resident Wardens and 10 Community Wardens

	10 Resident Wardens & 2 Community Wardens	2 Resident Wardens and 10 Community Wardens
Meeting objectives	Limited capacity to monitor and support consistency/equality of service delivery or develop/deliver partnership working	Limited capacity to monitor and support consistency/equality of service delivery or develop/deliver partnership working
Implications to Tenants	Tenants with resident Wardens would receive higher level of service Higher costs Limited capacity for joint working protocols with SS/health etc to be developed Ongoing changes as Residential Wardens leave and are replaced by Community Wardens	Removes most residential wardens Offers two Residential schemes for more frail elderly Higher costs Limited capacity for joint working protocols with SS/health etc to be developed
Implications to Staff	Protects Resident Wardens Improved management and support at operational team level	Improved management and support at operational team level
Implications to Council	Less flexibility to direct staff to areas of greatest need Avoids the removal of existing Residential Wardens immediately, but possibility of ongoing public concerns as they are removed over time Does not deal with the wider management issues, partnership working or the integration of Sheltered Housing with housing allocations and advice	Does not deal with the wider management issues, partnership working or the integration of Sheltered Housing with housing allocations and advice

Average number of Sheltered Housing units per full time equivalent operational officer	97	97
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Model 7 Model submitted by a Control Operator/Warden

8 Sheltered Housing officers plus one Relief who visit tenants in the mornings and afternoons with visit patterns based on existing work practices carried out by staff visiting from the Mobile/Control Team

Out of hours-emergency service provided through Central Control Unit with double staffing in Central Control Unit outside of normal working week. 11 Central Control Unit staff

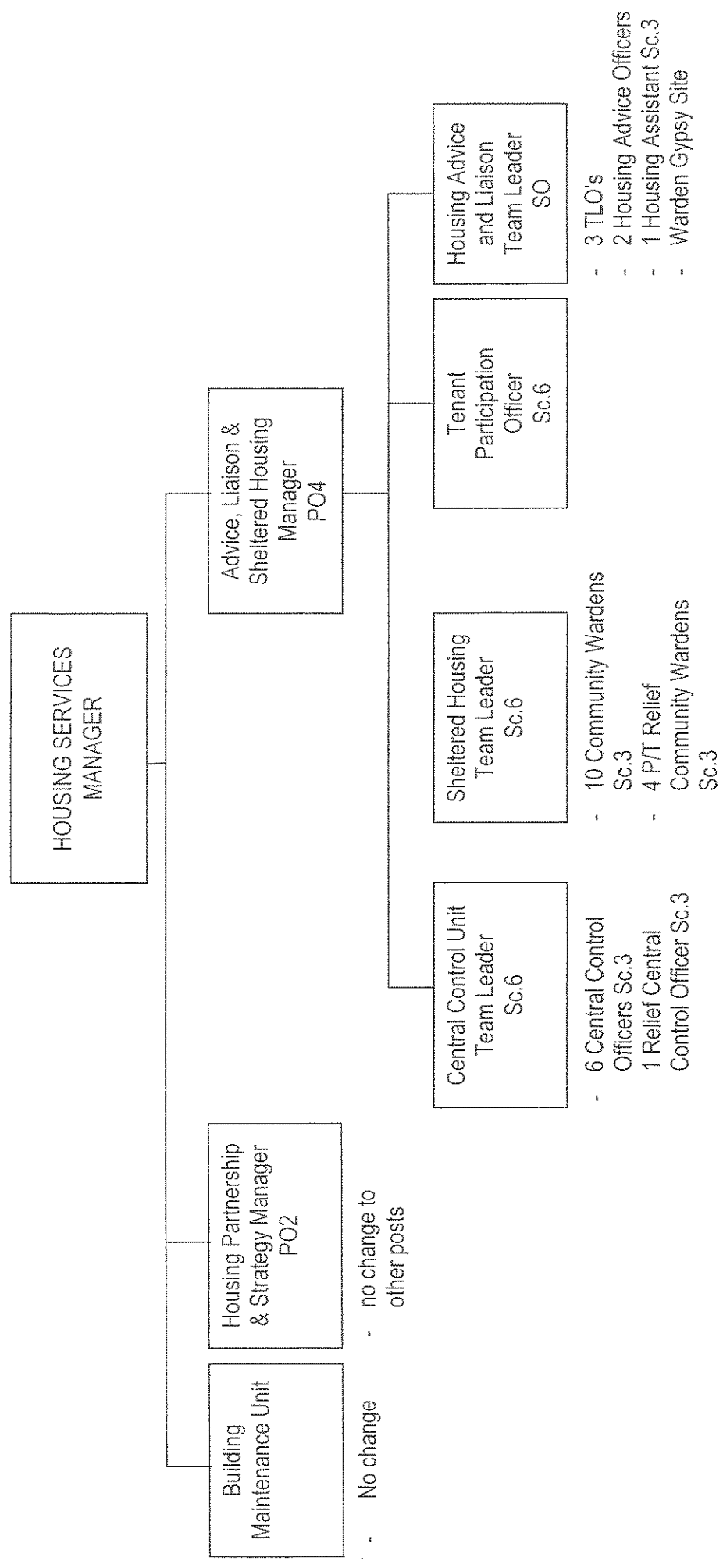
Meeting objectives	Yes
Implications to Tenants	<p>Removes most residential wardens</p> <p>Allows for four visits per week to each tenant, with alternating morning and afternoon visits</p> <p>Offers two Residential schemes for more frail elderly</p> <p>Improved Tenancy Liaison and housing advice service</p>
Implications to Staff	<p>Requirement to work as part of a team to clearly set out job descriptions and tasks</p> <p>Clear and stretching targets for staff visits</p> <p>Risk that staff in Central Control Unit at night may not be fully occupied</p> <p>High level of visits required, by focussing on assessing the needs of tenants and not carrying out extended visits unless needs demand.</p> <p>Jobs clearly defined and paid at appropriate rates</p> <p>Improved management and support</p> <p>Closer working between Sheltered Housing and other housing services</p>

<p>Implications to Council</p>	<p>Public concern about removal of Residential Wardens and level of visit service provided</p> <p>Starts preparing for Supporting People</p> <p>Deals with many of the concerns highlighted by the Best Value review</p> <p>Strengthens the overall housing service</p> <p>Most effective out of hours service</p> <p>Sets clear and challenging targets for staff performance</p>
<p>Average number of Sheltered Housing units per full time equivalent operational officer</p>	<p>130</p>

ANNEXE I

PROPOSED STAFFING STRUCTURE

Proposed Staffing Structure



ANNEXE J

COMMUNITY WARDEN AREAS

ANNEXE J

COMMUNITY WARDEN AREAS

If each community is split each into two the following visiting arrangements can apply:-

			Week 1	Week 2		
		Part A of scheme	3 visits	2 visits		
		Part B of scheme	2 visits	3 visits		
Scheme No.	Village	Location	Common Room	No. of Units	Sub Total	Total No. in Scheme
1A	Castle Gresley	Bass's Crescent	Yes	26		
	Castle Gresley	Castle Road		9		
	Castle Gresley	Princess Street		11	46	
B	Linton	Greenfield Drive		4		
	Linton	High Street		2		
	Linton	Main Street		14		
	Linton	Patrick Close	Yes	22		
	Linton	Winchester Drive		4	46	92
2A	Melbourne	Castle Street		16		
	Melbourne	Jubilee Close		22		
	Ticknall	Chapel Street		9	47	
B	Melbourne	Penn Lane		13		
	Melbourne	Moirra Street		3		
	Melbourne	Orchard Close		11		
	Melbourne	Peniston Court		3		
	Melbourne	Peniston Rise		25		
	Melbourne	Selina Street		11	66	113
3A	Church Gresley	Gresley Woodlands		30		
	Church Gresley	Newlands Close	Yes	30	60	
B	Church Gresley	George Street		4		
	Church Gresley	Gresley Wood Road		5		
	Church Gresley	Hall Street		8		
	Church Gresley	Church Street	Yes	27		
	Church Gresley	Unity Close		22	66	126
4A	Netherseal	Clifton Road		4		
	Netherseal	Croft Close		13		
	Netherseal	Hunts Lane		8		
	Overseal	Bailey Avenue		25		
	Overseal	Main Street		1		
	Overseal	Valley Road		10	61	
B	Coton in the Elms	New Road		4		
	Lullington	Colville Close		4		
	Walton on Trent	Bells End Road		25		
	Walton on Trent	Harbin Road		8		
	Walton on Trent	Rosliston Road		4	45	106

5	A	Etwall	Belfield Court		10		
		Etwall	Belfield Terrace		10		
		Etwall	Pear Tree Court	Yes	22		
		Etwall	Alms Houses		10		
		Hilton	Bloomfield Close		20	72	
B	Hatton	Field Avenue		15			
	Hatton	Foston Close		16			
	Hatton	Scropton road		5			
	Hatton	Station Road		3			
	Hilton	Percy Wood Close	Yes	22	61	133	
6	A	Shardlow	Ambaston Lane		5		
		Shardlow	Cavendish Close		9		
		Shardlow	Clover Court		20		
		Shardlow	Glenn Way		4		
		Weston on Trent	Park Lane		5	43	
B	Weston on Trent	Wilmot Avenue		18			
	Willington	Ivy Close	Yes	16			
	Findern	Brook Close	Yes	18	52	95	
7	A	Swadlincote	Pennine Way		20		
		Swadlincote	Cleveland Close		24		
		Swadlincote	Coniston Court		21	65	
	B	Swadlincote	Belfield Road		18		
		Swadlincote	Dominion Road		4		
		Swadlincote	Coppice Side		4		
		Swadlincote	Hill Street		16		
Swadlincote	Resthaven		16	58	123		
8	A	Midway	Beards Road		4		
		Midway	Belvoir Crescent		30		
		Newhall	Meadow Lane		7		
		Newhall	Meadow Way		23	64	
	B	Newhall	Four Lane Ends		12		
		Newhall	Honeysuckle Close		16		
		Newhall	Park Street		9		
Newhall	Pine Grove		32	69	133		
9	A	Midway	Elmsleigh Green		6		
		Midway	The Knoll		10		
		Swadlincote	Granville Court	Yes	6		
		Swadlincote	Granville Court (Respite)		4		
		Swadlincote	Drayton Street		32	58	
	B	Swadlincote	Widshaft		18		
		Swadlincote	Hall Farm Close		18		
		Swadlincote	Hall Farm Road		17		
Swadlincote	Willoughby House	Yes	20	73	131		

10	A	Repton	Fisher Close	Yes	20		
		Repton	Springfield Road		8		
		Hartshorne	Brook Street		18		
		Hartshorne	Kendricks Close	Yes	14	60	
	B	Woodville	Smallthorn Place	Yes	25		
		Woodville	Blacksmiths Lane		16		
		Woodville	Princess Close		22	63	123
TOTAL					1175	1175	1175

NB: Not all units of accommodation currently receive visits. Some tenants are ineligible for visits or have chosen not to have visits.

