

## Sheerwater Design Workshop - Elderly Accommodation

10am on Thursday 13th November 2014

### Woodlands House

The purpose of this design workshop was partly to give residents who had visited Oak Tree House in Dee Park Reading the opportunity to share their views on what they'd seen with other residents who had not been there. It was also an opportunity for all residents to see where the elderly accommodation is located in the latest version of the Masterplan and to discuss and comment on this and other issues presented to them during the workshop. .

### ATTENDEES

#### New Vision Homes

Andrew Enerva -	Project Architect HTA
Gelina Menville -	NVH
Susan Hayter -	Balfour Beatty
Pamela Kovachich -	HTA

#### Residents

Bunyard Drive	9
Woodlands House	8
Blackmore Crescent	1

The following subjects were discussed.

Notes:

#### A) Review of visit to Oak Tree House

- Feedback regarding the visit to Oak Tree House was overwhelmingly positive. Residents loved the size of the rooms, especially the kitchens and bedrooms which they say are too small at Woodlands. Comments included: 'loved it, didn't want to come back home' and 'I couldn't find fault with it'.
- Photos were passed around and residents who hadn't been on the visit were able to see what the others were talking about. They too were positive and reassured - '*After this morning, seeing the pictures makes you feel better.*' '*It's very nice*' '*I'm less worried now.*'
- Andrew highlighted the benefits of modern design for the elderly and vulnerable residents, particularly supporting people as their care needs increase to include use of wheelchairs etc.
- A resident from Bunyard Drive who is 48 asked whether he would be eligible for the new elderly accommodation that is being proposed.
- Miss Baltic handed the team a petition to the council and was told that as such we couldn't accept it and she should send it to the council.

#### ➤ Action for the Team

1. Check if entry requirements to the new facility have been decided - i.e. will younger residents already living in Sheerwater in supported accommodation be accepted.

#### B) Current masterplan

- The Masterplan has been updated since previous consultation events but the location of the Older Person's Housing and Health Centre have not changed.

- It was explained that previous comments for the facility have been taken onboard and that the new facility has been located close to the Health Centre and the proposed bus stop and overlooks the open space.
- Residents liked being near the health centre but queried why the accommodation is not near the shops. Andrew reinforced the positive concept of the “green link” providing a safe and healthy walking area for residents who are able to walk to the shops. Some residents noted that they would not be able to walk the proposed distance to the shops.
- Residents queried the possible height of the building. Andrew confirmed that it will probably be 4 storeys high like Oak Tree House and none of the residents seemed concerned by this.
- The inclusion of a lift was seen to be positive as it provides additional security by restricting access to residential floors to those with fobs or access codes.

➤ Action for the Design Team

1. Consider access to shops for frailer residents.

**C) Introducing the Ten Components of design**

HTA will follow the HAPPI Principles - a government backed initiative to improve the quality of housing for Older Persons.

1. **Generous internal space standards** accommodate flexible layouts
  - all flats will be wheelchair accessible
  - Kitchens are typically adapted in height for wheelchair users but could be standard if this isn't required.
  - Bathrooms are fitted with accessible showers as standard and have all necessary grab rails and seats to aid movement.
  - Communal, assisted bathrooms can be provided for residents who like to have a bath.
  - Some residents prefer baths but accepted the idea of having a shower in their flat and access to a shared bath.
  - They liked the Oak Tree option of an additional door linking the shower room directly with the bedroom.
2. **Care is taken in the design of homes and shared spaces** to allow daylight into circulation spaces
  - good quality lighting is important to the residents, especially those with poor vision.
  - At Oak Tree House all corridors have been designed with a window to provide natural light.
3. **Building layouts maximise natural light and ventilation**
  - Residents liked having a window in the kitchen even if only onto the corridor.
  - Oak Tree House has large balconies and residents loved these.
4. **Homes are designed to be ‘care ready’** so that new and emerging technologies, such as telecare and community equipment, can be readily installed
  - residents said that they want internet connectivity.
5. **Building layouts promote and offer connections to the wider context** encouraging interaction, supporting interdependence and avoiding an ‘institutional feel’
  - the location of the entrance will be positioned to create best possible links within the building and with the surrounding area and the community facilities.
  - some residents still concerned about the distance from the shops.
6. **Multi-purpose space is available for residents to meet** with facilities designed to support an appropriate range of activities.
  - Residents liked the idea of a lounge on each floor and one space big enough for all residents on the ground floor - *'saves sitting on your own and being lonely' 'a good reason to move around'*.
  - They also liked incidental seating saying that they were *'good to watch the world go by'*

- Residents liked the cafe and hairdresser's/ therapy room at Oak Tree House but want to ensure that facilities don't add to the cost for residents.
- 7. **Design measures ensure that homes engage positively with the street** and that the natural environment is nurtured through new trees and hedges and the preservation of mature planting, and providing wildlife habitats as well as colour, shade and shelter
  - Residents want to engage with the community, they *'don't want to be segregated from the rest of the world'*.
  - If possible the new building will be positioned to retain existing mature tree/s.
- 8. **Homes are energy-efficient and well insulated** but also well ventilated and able to avoid overheating
  - Residents loved the under floor heating at Oak Tree *'it was lovely and warm'* and also pointed out that without radiators on the wall there is more room for furniture.
  - They asked about payment for heating but were told that this level of detail not been decided yet.
- 9. **Adequate storage is available** outside the home together with provision for cycles and mobility aids, and inside the home storage provision meets the needs of the occupier
- 10. **Shared external surfaces** such as 'home zones' that give priority to pedestrians rather than cars. These are proving successful in other countries and take due regard to the kinds of navigation difficulties that some visually impaired people may experience in such environments.

➤ Action for the Design Team

1. Follow the Happi Principals
2. Look at ways of maximising connections within the facility and the wider community.
3. Seek creative solutions to support less mobile residents engage with the wider community.

**D) Questions**

- Residents asked when they would be likely to move and were told that it would be at least 2.5 years even if the current programme runs smoothly.
- They asked where the bins would be located and were told that due to the scale of the building rubbish would be collected from the individual flats and dealt with by the management of the facility.
- Residents were concerned about the cost and logistics of moving and were told that they would be supported through this process and would not need to meet additional costs.
- There was a request that new windows are of a standard size so that it is easy to get off the peg curtains to fit them.
- Pets were a big issue for some residents and many voiced the opinion that everyone benefits from having pets around and that it is good for people's sense of wellbeing along with any form of social activity.
- Residents were concerned about the cost, especially for those who are not on benefits. They don't want people priced out of Sheerwater.
- They welcomed the idea that they could choose their kitchens and finishes.

➤ Action for the Design Team

1. Consider practical issues such as curtain sizes which impact elderly residents.
2. Consider requirements of residents with dogs.