
To: Housing & Community Safety Policy Board

On: 12 May 2015

Report by: Director of Development & Housing Services

Heading: St James Sheltered Housing

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Council's St James Sheltered housing provision is not a traditional sheltered housing facility where a group of properties would generally be located together in a complex. Instead the St James sheltered properties are based on the ground floor and first floor of various tenement blocks in Brown Street, Henderson St and Underwood Lane in the West End of Paisley.
- 1.2 In recent years, these properties have become increasingly unpopular and demand is low as a result of:
- their location alongside other mainstream tenement flats occupied by tenants from mixed age groups,
 - the dispersed nature of the properties means they do not have the benefits of the shared facilities at traditional sheltered housing complexes,
 - unlike all other Council owned sheltered housing, there are no lifts to the flats located on the first floor.
- 1.3 It is therefore proposed that any sheltered properties becoming void in the future at St James are decommissioned as sheltered, and let as mainstream properties. All existing tenants will however continue to receive the benefits of being a sheltered tenant which include: daily 'calls'/visits from their Sheltered Housing Officer, 24/7 access to either their Sheltered Housing Officer (office hours) or the Community Alarm service and Responder Team (outwith office hours), and the opportunity to participate in activities being organised for sheltered tenants, particularly at the nearby Gallacher Court.
- 1.4 Existing tenants will essentially experience no change in the service they receive, and they have been consulted on this proposal and been assured

that they would be able to continue to access the benefits of the sheltered housing service for as long as they reside in their home.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The 28 sheltered properties at St James be decommissioned as 'sheltered' as they become vacant, due to their low demand, unpopular location and the dispersed nature of the properties.
 - 2.2 All existing tenancies continue to be designated as 'sheltered' for as long as the current tenant resides there, and the current tenants continue to have full access to the sheltered housing service. Current tenants will be provided with housing options advice should they wish to consider a move to appropriate alternative accommodation.
 - 2.3 All sheltered properties at St James which become vacant in the future are re-let as mainstream tenancies.
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3. Background

- 3.1. The 28 properties designated as 'St James sheltered housing' are based on the ground floor and first floor of various tenement blocks in Brown St., Henderson Street, and Underwood Lane in the West End of Paisley.
- 3.2. In recent years, these properties have become increasingly unpopular due to
 - their location alongside other mainstream tenement flats,
 - the dispersed nature of the properties means they do not have the benefits of the shared facilities at traditional sheltered housing complexes,
 - unlike all other Council owned sheltered housing, there are no lifts to the flats located on the first floor.
- 3.3. The demand for any void sheltered properties at St James is now extremely low, and it is difficult to find applicants for this non traditional rational style of sheltered housing. The Council's other sheltered complex in the same area, Gallagher Court, remains popular.
- 3.4. The Council has more recently developed a range of options to better meet the housing needs of older people, including new grouped amenity housing in the Blackhall area, designating high rise properties at Calside for older people only, and the refurbished block of high rise flats with lounge facilities for older people at Glencairn Court, as well as a proposed development of grouped amenity housing in the Seedhill area. These housing options are all in line with a move towards focussing on providing homes that are fit for purpose and better meet the needs of older people.

- 3.5. A recent study of our sheltered housing by external consultants also concluded that the St James model was not sustainable or popular while recommending that investment should continue in the nearby Gallagher Court.
 - 3.6. All current tenants of St James sheltered properties have been visited and consulted on this proposal, and been assured that they would experience no change in the service they receive and continue to access the benefits of the sheltered housing service for as long as they reside in their home. They have all also been offered advice on housing options should they wish to consider moving.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - none.
 2. **HR & Organisational Development** – *none*
 3. **Community Planning – Community Care, Health & Well-being** – This proposal helps to ensure housing for older people is fit for purpose.
 4. **Legal** - none
 5. **Property/Assets** - none
 6. **Information Technology** – none
 7. **Equality & Human Rights** - none
The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
 8. **Health & Safety** - none.
 9. **Procurement** – none.
 10. **Risk** - none.
 11. **Privacy Impact** - none.
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List of Background Papers

- (a) Background Paper 1
The foregoing background papers will be retained within Development & Housing Services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Tom Irvine, Homeless & Community Services Manager, ext 6146, Tom.irvine@renfrewshire.gcsx.gov.uk.