

Sheltered Housing Review Update

May 2006

Planning consent granted for 16 flat extension at Rosefield Court

Since our last newsletter in December 2005 there has been little to report due to delays with the planning process at Rosefield Court. However, we have now been granted planning permission and hope to start work on site late summer. We expect the work to take around 10 to 12 months to complete and so the new flats should be ready towards the end of Summer 2007. Once we have appointed a contractor and have a firm timetable we will let residents know.

Why was it originally refused?

Our original planning application for an extension for 16 flats at Rosefield Court was refused in January, there were a few technical issues regarding the design but the main objection was from English Nature with regard to the proximity of the scheme to protected heathland - recent European law has added special protection to much of the heathland in the local area, meaning many planning applications are being refused.

How did we overcome the objections?

Our consultants worked with the Planning Officer to overcome the technical objections to the design and the application was resubmitted in February. We engaged a specialist planning consultant to negotiate with English Nature regarding their concerns about protecting the heathland. We were able to reach agreement by stipulating in the planning consent that residents of the extension must be over 65 and have a disability or infirmity which is recorded by a needs assessment. This is acceptable to English Nature as residents who qualify are less likely to go walking on the heath.

What does this mean for our existing residents?

It does mean that we will only be able to transfer residents into the Rosefield extension who meet the agreed criteria; this is not ideal as our usual requirement for our sheltered schemes is over 55. However, it was the only way we could secure planning permission. Over 96% of our current residents are over 65.

If you have stated a preference for moving to the new extension at Rosefield Court and are concerned about whether you will qualify, please contact either Nadine Robinson on 01252 845256 or Pauline Holland on 01252 870509.

Campbell Close

The next scheme we are working on is Campbell Close, where we have held a number of consultations with residents since January to look at potential designs for a new scheme. We now have a preferred scheme layout and our architects are working on the flat layouts to try to achieve as much of what residents have asked for as possible.

At Campbell Close we will again be affected by the European Protection Status for heathlands in the area and so we have already been working with English Nature to see how we can overcome this. Whilst there are already 25 dwellings in existence on the Campbell Close site and there is space on site to provide a good amount of open space around the new flats, we may have to accept some kind of restriction on occupation similar to that at Rosefield Court in order to secure planning permission.

We are working hard to ensure we get the best result we can and have again engaged specialist planning consultants to negotiate with English Nature. We hope to be ready to submit a planning application during July which will mean the application should be determined around October to November.

What about the other schemes?

Due to these delays with the planning process, decisions regarding the future of the remaining sheltered schemes within the review have yet to be reached. We apologise to residents for the uncertainty this is creating and assure you that we are doing all we can to move the process forward as quickly as we can.

Contacting us

If you have any questions please first contact either:

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