

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: HOUSING & TECHNICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE	Subject: Review of Housing for Older People	
From: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING & PROPERTY SERVICES and DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 17 February 2003	Ref: TMcK/PH	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the progress of the review of housing for older people and agree recommendations to develop housing services to meet the needs of older people in North Lanarkshire.

2. Background

- 2.1 The 'Homes for the Future' Officer/ Member working group concluded that the vast majority of older people wish to live in their own homes, in the community, with appropriate support, and with housing and care services in place to enable them to live as independently as possible. The preferred model, as an alternative to residential care, for frailer older people was very sheltered housing where support and meals were available on site but every individual had his/her own living space. However at present North Lanarkshire only has 2 such complexes. The Homes for the Future report to Social Work Committee November 2000 included the following recommendations:

- To review allocation of sheltered housing to ensure best use is made of existing stock;
- To review the role of the warden service to ensure the service is responsive to current and future needs of tenants;
- To consider the feasibility of adapting or upgrading existing sheltered housing to very sheltered standard;
- To develop a programme of new build very sheltered housing in conjunction with housing associations and Communities Scotland; and
- To consider the implications of Supporting People for the future development and delivery of housing support services for older people.

In order to progress these issues a working group was established comprising officers from Housing, Social Work and Communities Scotland.

2.2 Although the recommendations in this report are based on the priorities identified by the Homes for the Future Group it should also be noted that in reviewing housing services for older people account has also been taken of the wider policy context which affects the way services are or will be provided and commissioned, including:

- *Joint Future Agenda* – The purpose behind the Joint Futures Group Report (Nov 2000) was to improve joint working between agencies to improve care and support to enable people to live in their own homes in the community for as long as possible. There are many recommendations from this report which the Council and Health agencies are in the process of implementing, including the Single Shared Assessment process which aims to reduce the need for multiple assessments to access health, social care and housing services and improve information sharing between agencies.
- *Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act (2001)* – This Act introduces National Care Standards applicable to all care services – public and private, to be inspected by the care Commission. Sheltered housing services will be required to conform to the standards set, as will the Council's own residential homes. The physical environment required for residential and nursing homes to meet the regulation requirements is given in The Care Standards Act (2000). This states that by 2007, for example, that all care homes must meet enhanced space standards in bedrooms and shared facilities, with additional allowances made for wheelchair users; 80% of rooms must have single occupancy; and that there is an increased provision of toilets/bathing facilities in close proximity to each resident's room. For new-build facilities, extensions or first time registrations after 1 April 2002 en-suite facilities are to be provided to all service users. Under the Regulation of Care Act there will be standards developed for housing support services, which includes sheltered housing, with which the Council and other housing support service providers must comply.
- *The Lanarkshire Strategy for Frail Older People* – This pan Lanarkshire strategy aims to further develop services so that people have choices about staying in their own homes, and reduce inappropriate admissions to hospital, nursing homes and residential care and facilitate discharge planning and resettlement. Over time it is proposed to reduce the number of long stay hospital places for older people as part of the overall strategy to shift the balance of care from institutional to the community.
- *Supporting People* – In future all housing support services will be funded through the Supporting people budget, which will be transferred to the Council in April 2003. It will no longer be permissible for Councils to spread the cost of warden, or other services, across all tenants – known as rent pooling. Instead the cost of delivering the sheltered housing service will be transferred to the Council in April 2003 as part of the Supporting People budget. Although existing sheltered tenants will be exempt from any charge for the warden service the level of funding being transferred for the warden service from the Executive to the Council will be reduced to take account of future tenants who are not on housing benefit and who it is expected will be charged, according to the Council's charging policy, for the cost of the support services they receive. From April 2003 the Council must put in place a programme of Service Reviews for all services funded through Supporting People, including sheltered housing, to ensure current services are appropriate and represent value for money.

- 2.3 The proposals contained in this report have been developed to respond to increasing demands on community based services, including sheltered housing, as a result of an increasing elderly population and the shift in the balance from residential/ institutional care to community based services. While the overall population of North Lanarkshire is projected to remain largely static the elderly population (65+ years) is projected to increase by 12,000 between 1998 and 2016, a rise of 23%. The population of people aged 75+ years is projected to increase by nearly one third over the same period, a rise of nearly 6,000 people. The largest proportionate increase is in the North where the older population is set to double between 1998 and 2016.
- 2.4 Appendix 1 gives a breakdown of the current level of residential home, very sheltered and sheltered provision across North Lanarkshire and Appendix 2 provides an indication of the current shortfall in provision of sheltered and very sheltered housing, based on nationally recognised yardstick levels of provision. This highlights that overall the Council has a slight over provision of sheltered housing across North Lanarkshire but a shortfall of over 800 units of very sheltered housing. This obviously takes no account of the projected increase in the older population as outlined in 2.3 above, or any future retraction of residential provision to reflect the shift towards community based care. The Home for the Future group identified that the preferred model of accommodation for frailer older people was very sheltered housing rather than residential care. However the capital cost of a new build very sheltered complex (25 units) is in the region of £2 million. This is in the context of the HRA capital programme which is fully committed meeting the investment requirements of the Council's own stock, and a total development programme (through Communities Scotland) of approximately £10 million per annum to fund all new housing association and low cost home ownership priorities in North Lanarkshire.

3. Proposals

3.1 Assessment and allocation of sheltered housing

At its meeting on 6 February 2002 the Committee agreed to a revised pointing system for sheltered housing (Appendix 3) to help ensure that sheltered housing is targeted towards those who need it and would benefit from it the most. The new points system gives greater weight to those who would benefit from the on-site support available and whose current accommodation is not suitable for adaptation to meet their needs. In order to ensure a consistent approach to assessment, and further the integration of services through the Single Shared Assessment process, it was proposed through the Housing for Older People Working Group that Social Work undertake assessments for all new sheltered housing applicants who meet the basic criteria. In many cases assessments will already have been done and work is ongoing to enable Housing staff to access relevant client information to enable them to point applicants for sheltered housing. Ensuring that all applicants receive a community care assessment will:

- Ensure needs are assessed by staff qualified to identify care and support needs and ensure consistency in approach to assessments;
- Reduce the number of assessments an older person will have to undergo; and
- Ensure that all older people applying for sheltered housing receive the package of care they require, whether it is in their existing accommodation or if they are allocated sheltered housing.

Further work is required around resources required to undertake this work, and to resolve issues of confidentiality around sharing of information as well as the development of IT systems, however it is felt that this approach to assessment should be pursued.

3.2 *Upgrading of existing sheltered housing*

As identified in paragraph 2.2 the Council area is currently reasonably well provided in terms of sheltered housing but has a lack of very sheltered housing for people with higher support needs. As part of the review a survey has been undertaken of all Council sheltered complexes to establish general condition and identify potential for some complexes to be upgraded to make them more accessible and suitable to frailer older people. There are also some complexes that do not have basic communal facilities such as common rooms. The results of the survey are still being assessed but it is proposed to bring forward to Committee proposals for upgrading certain complexes to be funded from the HRA Capital Programme.

3.3 *New build provision*

As highlighted in 2.4 above the cost of new build provision is high which limits the rate at which new build schemes can be developed. However through discussion with Communities Scotland it has been agreed to develop a rolling programme of new build very sheltered complexes, owned and managed by housing associations, to include a complex in each main township in North Lanarkshire. The Department is therefore in the process of identifying suitable sites to progress this programme and has already agreed to contribute land for a new development at Paterson Street, Motherwell. Based on the need identified in paragraph 2.3 and Appendix 2 the following initial priorities have been identified:

- Seafar, Cumbernauld (25 units) site start 02/03.
- Paterson Street, Motherwell - site start 03/04.
- Airdrie (site provisionally identified at Old Union St) - proposed site start 04/05.
- Bellshill (site to be identified) - proposed site start 05/06.

In addition sites will be identified in Harthill, Moodiesburn and Kilsyth to progress new housing for older people to help meet the shortfalls in these areas. These sites will be progressed as soon as funding becomes available.

3.4 *Services to tenants in sheltered complexes*

In order to meet the changing needs of sheltered housing tenants and develop a more integrated approach to the provision of support services in line with the Joint Future agenda, it is necessary to review the traditional role of the sheltered warden. There have also been major advances in technology in recent years in terms of community alarms and other 'smart' technology, which can assist with providing safety and security for tenants. It is therefore proposed to review the remit and role of the warden service and bring forward proposals to a future committee, following consultation with staff, Personnel and Trade Unions, that will enhance the services available to sheltered housing tenants and improve co-ordination of services between agencies. It is also proposed to extend warden services to tenants who want and require the service within the following complexes where there are currently no staff on-site.

- Ochil Street, Wishaw
- Meadowside Gardens, Airdrie
- New Lane, Calderbank

In order to secure Supporting People funding it is proposed to provide the enhanced service initially by offering relief wardens the opportunity to work additional hours within the complexes.

3.5 *Implications of Supporting People*

From the 1 April 2003, the cost of providing the sheltered housing support service can no longer be distributed amongst all North Lanarkshire Council tenants and funded through the rent pooling arrangements of the HRA as it has been in previous years.

Supporting People, the new grant funding regime for all housing support services, introduced in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, is to be introduced on 1/4/03.

In the calculation for the transfer of resources through Supporting People Grant funding it is anticipated that the Scottish Executive will award grant of approximately 83% of the total funding required for the NLC sheltered housing support service. This is the proportion of existing NLC sheltered housing tenants who receive Housing Benefit as at January 2003. For existing sheltered housing tenants, there will be transitional protection. This means that for these existing tenants there will be no charge for sheltered housing support for the lifetime of their tenancy. To cover the costs of transitionally protecting tenants who are not in receipt of Housing Benefit, the Council is bound to fund these services from other sources, principally the HRA or if the Council wishes Supporting People Grant.

For new NLC sheltered housing tenants (post 1/4/03), the cost of housing support services will be met by Supporting People grant for those receiving Housing Benefit. For new tenants not receiving Housing Benefit, housing support service costs **may** be recouped through the application of a direct charge to the service users, through a charging policy to be decided by the Council. However, as outlined in a separate report to this Committee, it is proposed to defer consideration of a charging policy for warden services until April 2004 at the earliest.

As the support costs for sheltered housing will no longer form part of the HRA rent pool, it is inappropriate to apply a points value for this service under the standard rent structure. It is therefore proposed to remove this factor from the points weighting scheme.

4. **Recommendations**

4.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- a) Note the progress that has been made in reviewing housing for older people;
- b) Approve the proposals outlined in section 3 of this report; and
- c) Note that further recommendations will be submitted for approval regarding upgrading to sheltered complexes and the review of the warden service.

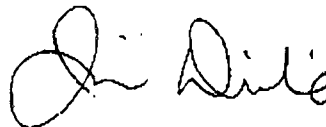
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5. Background Information

5.1 Available within the Housing and Property Services Department

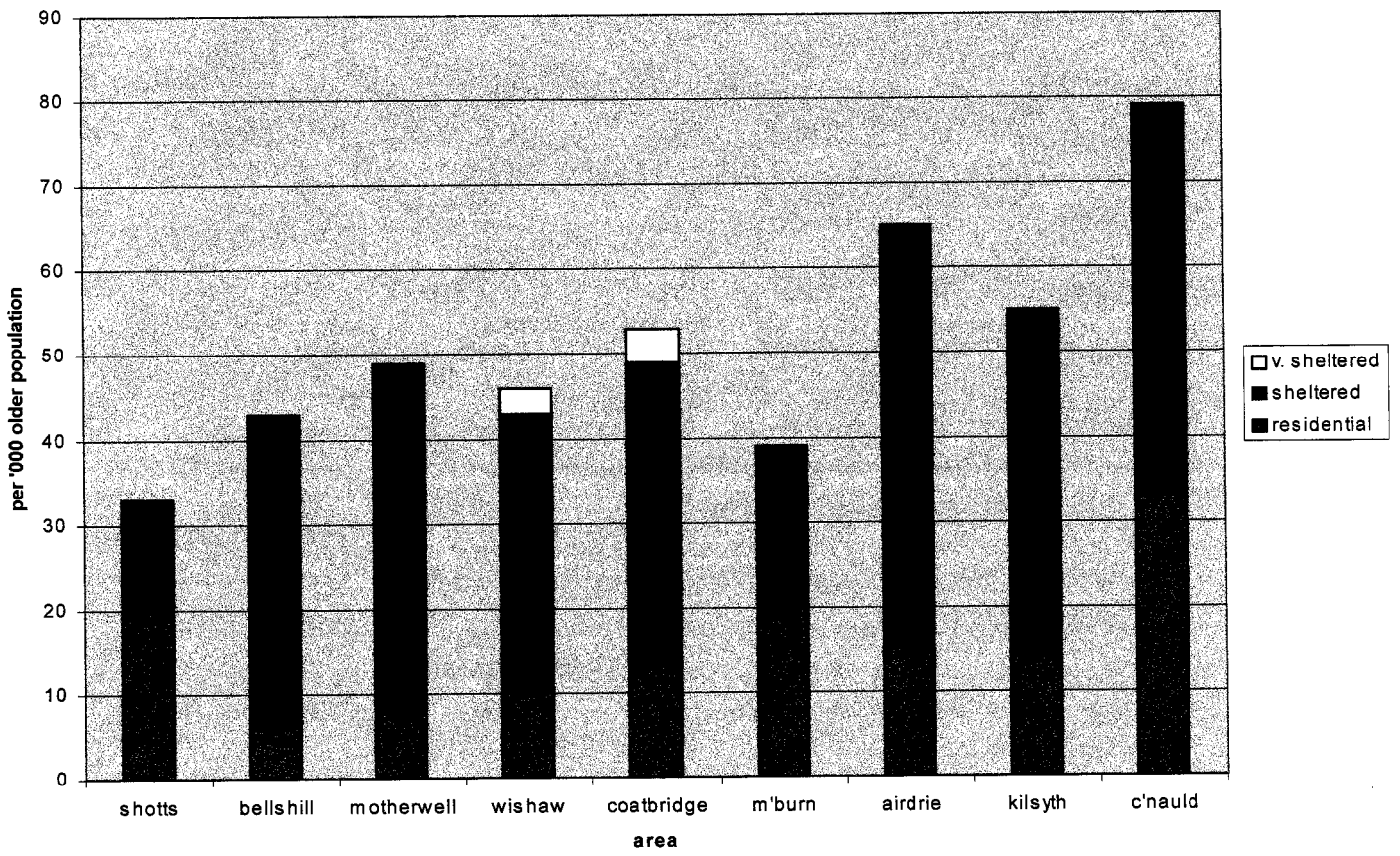


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Jim Dickie
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Specialist Provision



Sheltered Housing Provision

	sheltered provision	sheltered recommended	shortfall	v. sheltered provision	v. sheltered recommended	shortfall
shotts	27	72	45	0	41	41
bellshill	215	206	-9	0	118	118
motherwell	258	220	-38	0	126	126
wishaw	212	225	13	16	129	113
coatbridge	235	229	-6	27	131	104
m'burn	40	73	33	0	42	42
airdrie	341	240	-101	0	137	137
kilsyth	75	64	-11	0	37	37
c'nauld	222	167	-55	0	96	96
Total	1625	1496	-129	43	857	814

Sheltered Housing

Criteria for admission

- ✓ Current accommodation is not suitable for needs either because of location or unsuitability for adaptation
- ✓ Capable of independent living but requires some level of support for personal care and/or daily living
- ✓ Requires, and would accept, support services and 24 hour alarm cover provided by the complex
- ✓ Vulnerable due to age and/or disability

Points Table

Factor	Points
Housing location not suitable in relation to access to services and support	10
Housing design not suitable for needs – cannot be adapted	10
Housing design not suitable for needs – can be adapted	5
Homeless priority (incl hospital discharge)	10
Assistance required for housework	5
Applicant is socially isolated/ housebound and would like more contact with others	5
Assistance required to prepare meals	5
Applicant is vulnerable to falling/ has fallen in the home	5
Assistance is required to do shopping	5
Social Work assessment (care needs)	(0-10)
Medical assessment	(0-10)
Age – 65-70	2
Age – 70 – 80	3
Age – 80+	5
Total	Max 85