

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

AGENDA  
ITEM NO

HOUSING COMMITTEE

7

10 SEPTEMBER 2019

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>SHELTERED MODERNISATION PROGRAMME UPDATE</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To seek approval to the re-categorisation of Willow Road in Stonehouse and to provide Committee with an update on the overall progress of the modernisation programme.
<b>Decisions</b>	<b>The Committee RESOLVES to amend the categorisation of Willow Road sheltered housing scheme from ‘red’ to ‘amber’ and include it within the Sheltered Modernisation Programme for improvements to be made to communal areas.</b>
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Consultation has taken place with the relevant ward councillors, with the Chair and Vice Chair of Housing and the tenants of Willow Road and the wider Park Road estate.
<b>Financial Implications and Risk Assessment</b>	There are no direct financial implications from the decision in this report. As has been previously reported the Sheltered Modernisation Programme is not currently fully funded in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). If the programme is to continue beyond the current MTFP additional resources will need to be allocated by Council.  Lucy Clothier, Interim Accountancy Manager Tel: 01453 754343 Email: <a href="mailto:lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk">lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk</a>
<b>Legal Implications</b>	There are no legal implications arising from this report  Patrick Arran, Interim Head of Legal Services Tel: 01453 754639 Email: <a href="mailto:patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk">patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk</a>
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<b>Options</b>	These are set out in paragraph 3.4 & 3.5 of this report.
<b>Performance Management Follow Up</b>	Progress with the Sheltered Modernisation Programme will be contained within the regular updates to Housing Committee.
<b>Background Papers/Appendices</b>	<a href="#">Ark Report – June 2016</a> – Page 9 Appendix 1 - Willow Road Questionnaire Findings

**1.0 Programme Update**

1.1 Phase 1 of the programme is now nearing completion.

1.1.1 The alternative laundry for the residents remaining at Dryleaze Court has been in use since early 2018 and is now out of the 12 month defect period and no major issues were raised.

- 1.1.2 The four Ex-Scheme Manager's properties included in this programme have been converted into eight dwellings and have been occupied since the spring of 2018. These properties are also now out of the 12 month defect period and no major issues were raised.
  - 1.1.3 The modernisation works in the communal areas of Sherborne House in Stonehouse were completed in the autumn of 2018. These works included refurbishment of the lounge and the creation of a modern open plan kitchen area with improved dining and lounge seating areas. The works also included the creation of an activity room off the main lounge, lining of external brick work in the corridors, creation of individual scooter storage/charging points for each property, an open entrance with seating area, fob access for all entrances and a new disabled access toilet. This work is approaching the 12 month defect inspections with no major issues identified.
  - 1.1.4 The moving out of tenants from the main building at Cambridge House is nearing completion and it is anticipated that the final tenant will be re-housed by the end of 2019. Options are currently being explored for possible development of this site.
- 1.2 Phase 2 of the programme is proceeding on schedule.
- 1.2.1 Work began in June on the modernisation works in the communal areas of Concord in Nailsworth. These works include a redesigned communal lounge and kitchen, an improved entrance with automatic door and seating area, installation of a lift and the creation of a Health & Wellbeing Room. We have also created provision for scooter storage/charging, refurbished the central communal patio (which was unusable), provided fob access for external entrances, redecorated throughout and provided modern comfortable furniture. Work is expected to be complete in early October, in time for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary party being planned by the residents.
  - 1.2.2 Architects have been appointed for the proposed modernisation works at George Pearce House in Minchinhampton, works are due to start later this year. Residents have been consulted to gain their views and this has been fed into the design brief for the architects. Work has begun on producing plans and further consultation with residents will be happening soon.
  - 1.2.3 The moving of tenants from the main building at Glebelands has been progressing well with fifteen residents re-homed since this process started in January 2019. There are only a few residents remaining and options are being worked on for the site once it is empty.
- 1.3 Phase 3 - work is underway on planning for which schemes will be modernised in the next phase of the programme. This phase will cover the schemes to be included in the next three financial years and any decisions made will be closely aligned with the recently adopted Older People's Housing Strategy. This programme will be presented to the Housing Committee for approval in December this year.

- 1.4 The new building at Tanners Piece in Nailsworth was completed on schedule in June 2019. This saw the creation of 11 modern, fit for future, apartments for older people, replacing the 8 PRC bungalows that previously occupied the site.
- 1.5 The completion of Tanners piece also sees the site at Ringfield Close become empty and available for development (in order to mitigate traffic and congestion issues during the building work at Tanners Piece, this site had been utilised by the contractor). A planning submission has been made for the development of affordable housing, managed by the Council, on this site.
- 1.6 Planning permission was submitted in August for the planned redevelopment of the communal areas at the Broadfield Road sheltered scheme. These plans involve the creation of 9 new bungalows for rent, 7 no one bedroom and 2 no two bedroom, as reported to the June Housing Committee in the 'New Homes And Regeneration Programme' report. Broadfield Road will then be classed as 'Independent Living', as defined in the Older People's Housing Strategy.
- 1.7 Following consultation, the frequency of the Sheltered Modernisation Newsletter has now been reduced from quarterly to twice yearly. The last edition was delivered to the sheltered residents in July 2019 and included general updates and an article on the opening of Tanners Piece in Nailsworth.

## **2.0 Willow Road Sheltered Scheme - Background**

- 2.1 At Housing Committee on 28 June 2016, members were presented with a report on the Sheltered Housing Asset Review and the recommendations for the 6 schemes that had been categorised as 'red' in the Ark report i.e. suitable for disposal or alternative use.
- 2.2 Willow Road, Stonehouse was categorised as one of the red schemes due to a number of factors, such as high tenancy turnover and location.
- 2.3 It was resolved that Willow Road would form part of a wider review of the Park Estate and potential estates renewal project. As a result, the Council has only undertaken essential repairs and maintenance up to this point.
- 2.4 Consultation was undertaken with tenants following the June 2016 Housing Committee, who were advised that no progress would be made with these proposals until at least 2020.
- 2.5 The scheme consists of 24 properties comprising; 1 no one bedroom two person flat and 23 no one bedroom bungalows, some of which are small studio style properties and 10 that can accommodate two people.
- 2.6 Willow Road was built using traditional construction methods in 1965; therefore there are no issues with the condition or longevity of the structure. There are a total of 23 properties on the site which are located on the ground floor, providing sustainable homes for current and future tenants. The 23 ground floor properties also benefit from their own front and back doors which open to external space.

### **3.0 Options**

- 3.1 In line with the Housing Committee decision, Willow Road and the Park Road estate were assessed for refurbishment and redevelopment, by undertaking a number of feasibility options. The following paragraphs set out the considerations during the feasibility options and provide a recommended course of action for each site:
- 3.2 Willow Road (Refurbishment) – in this option, the suitability of the properties was re-assessed in line with the recently adopted Older People’s Housing Strategy. Particular attention was given to the issues raised in the Ark Report.
- 3.2.1 As mentioned in 1.2, tenancy turnover was deemed to be high in the Ark report. This has been monitored over the past three years to establish whether this has been a consistent trend. During this time, there have been 8 voids, 2 of which were as a result of a fire. The voids which were not associated with the damage from the fire were occupied within average void times. This indicates that there is currently no issue with high tenancy turnover. This improvement could be partly due to recent policy changes which have made one bedroom properties more desirable. The trend of high tenancy turnover could also have been associated with the age of the client group where high turnover may occur at times.
- 3.2.2 The location of the scheme has also been reviewed since the Ark report, and whilst it is a 10 - 15 minute walk to GP facilities, the Post Office and other shops etc, this is not dissimilar to other sheltered schemes in the district.
- 3.2.3 A recent consultation was carried out with the tenants in the form of a questionnaire conducted with them individually (for summary of results see appendix 1). This consultation confirmed that the scheme is popular and highly valued by those who live there. The residents felt that there was a very strong sense of community which benefits them in the form of mutual support. There were no issues raised around tenants accessing local amenities or their properties. It is possible for all properties at the scheme, apart from one, to achieve level access thresholds, which is an important element to achieving a sustainable scheme for the future and there is already some scooter storage on site. There were also no issues raised around fuel costs or keeping the properties warm.
- 3.2.4 Anti-social behaviour issues were raised in the Ark report. These have been monitored since the report was published and the Principal Neighbourhood Management Officer has confirmed that there had been a limited number of ASB incidents, citing neighbour disputes as the main issue. Other than this, the issues are similar to any of our other estates where families are living alongside sheltered schemes. The Police Community Support Officer’s in the area work closely with the Council to manage any issues. The recent consultation with the tenants addressed this question and again did not raise any issues around ASB.

3.3 Willow Road (Redevelopment) - a number of redevelopment options have been explored and it is not possible to increase the density on the site, with the best option only achieving 24 units. It is also worth noting that this option would have consisted of a number of flats. Under planning policy, if the site were to be redeveloped, there would need to be a minimum of 1.5 parking spaces per property, which reduces the ability to achieve more than 24 properties.

3.3.1 The approximate cost of developing the site is £3.5 million, which is difficult to justify when there are no structural concerns with the property and it is believed that the accommodation is sustainable into the future for the client group catered for. – It should also be noted that this scheme would not be eligible for Right to Buy Receipts as the Council would only be providing replacement homes.

The calculated NPV of the site if re-developed is £-68,517. This figure does not take into account the loss of rental income that would result from the demolition of the current properties.

3.4 As a result of the limited development potential and other factors which have changed since the Ark report, the recommended option for Willow Road is:

1) Willow Road sheltered scheme to be separated from any plans for a wider redevelopment of the Park Road estate.

2) Refurbishment, which should include the following actions:

(a) Re-categorise from red to amber – a similar decision was made by Housing Committee in relation to Burdett House, Stonehouse.

(b) Retain the sheltered housing scheme and bring it forward in the planned programme to address any components which are overdue for replacement.

(c) Programme the scheme in the sheltered modernisation project and refurbish the communal areas.

3.5 Proposals for the wider Park Road estate are currently being reviewed, depending on the outcome of this review options may be presented to a future Housing Committee for consideration.

#### **4.0 Recommendation**

4.1 It is recommended, that the Willow Road site is re-categorised from 'red' to 'amber'; that the scheme is brought forward in the planned programme to enable any components which have reached the end of their life to be replaced and for the scheme to be scheduled into the sheltered modernisation programme (subject to funding) for improvements to be made to communal areas along with the remaining amber and green schemes. These improvements will be shaped by the Older People's Housing Strategy.