

## **Strategic Vision and Standards for Sheltered Housing in South Derbyshire**

### **Introduction**

The objectives in the South Derbyshire Housing Strategy include:

- To identify and define the housing needs of South Derbyshire residents
- To work with stakeholders to maintain and improve the district`s housing stock
- To ensure that vulnerable people have access to appropriate and stable housing
- To address unmet specialist housing needs in partnership with Registered Social Landlords and planned with Social Services and Health
- To make homes across tenures safe, secure and warm

The Housing Strategy prioritises actions over a three-year period. During 2002/3 these actions include:

- Carry out specific research into the housing needs under Supporting People
- Map existing services and develop proposals to meet unmet need
- Agree a programme for improving Sheltered Housing schemes

This paper has been produced by a multi - agency group including representatives of the District Council, Social Services, the Primary care Trust, Tenants and the voluntary sector.

The paper outlines a vision for Sheltered Housing and identifies standards for future accommodation for older people in South Derbyshire. This includes the provision of new accommodation and to inform the refurbishment or remodelling of existing provision

The standards may also provide a benchmark against which project reviews for sheltered housing can be undertaken by the Supporting People team.

Alongside this work the council has commissioned specialist research into the housing needs of older people in the district. This information will be used to inform any recommendations on changes to the nature, structure and quantity of current Sheltered Housing provision

The intention is to provide or enable sufficient accommodation that is designed and developed or remodelled to meet the needs and requirements of older people

**Section One shows the Strategic Vision for Sheltered Housing in South Derbyshire**

**Section Two considers how the vision and standards will be implemented**

**Section Three looks at the background to Sheltered Housing provision and definitions of the various specialist types of accommodations for older people**

**Section Four deals with standards for new social housing for older people**

**Section Five deals with standards for existing dwellings**

**Section Six shows information on the need for Sheltered Housing accommodation and current provision**

This paper is in draft form and will be the basis of consultation with stakeholders, including the Housing Corporation, the Government Office for the East Midlands, tenants and RSL partners

The standards in this paper have been based heavily on the work done by the Devon Supporting People Teams

## **Section One: Strategic Vision for Sheltered Housing in South Derbyshire**

### **Overall Vision**

South Derbyshire is a place where older people can chose to live independently with dignity in safe, secure, warm, accessible homes which are located in supportive environments where they have access to customer focussed services.

### **Objectives**

1. That the Council's SH stock is a key part of a range of housing choices to meet the varying needs of older people
2. That the council uses its strategic housing and community planning influencing roles to facilitate the provision of high quality housing choices to meet the varying needs of older people
3. That older people's homes are :
  - Safe and secure
  - Accessible
  - Adaptable
  - Warm
  - Affordable
  - Well maintained
  - Accommodating to a range of interests and visitors
4. That the environment around older people's homes is :
  - Stimulating
  - Accessible
  - Safe
  - Allows access to a range of facilities and services
  - Supportive
  - Accommodating to a range of interests and visitors
5. That affordable customer focussed support services are provided in a "joined-up" way

## Section Two: Implementing the Vision and Standards

The Council will:

- ❖ Build on the vision and objectives to draw up clear standards for Sheltered Housing stock.
- ❖ Use these standards to carry out a mapping exercise on its own Sheltered Housing to show where current accommodation does not come up to the standards and what works would be needed to close any gaps
- ❖ Map the availability and location of existing sheltered housing and other accommodation for older people in South Derbyshire against the housing needs of older people.
- ❖ Agree a plan over time to achieve a level of provision of SH which meets identified housing needs and the agreed standards. This may include redesignation of currently inadequate accommodation, programmes of improvement and remodelling and proposals to meet unmet need
- ❖ Work with its partners to agree standards for other accommodation for older people in South Derbyshire
- ❖ Work with partners to agree plans to meet any unmet housing needs

### **Section Three: Background**

It is recognised and accepted that some existing sheltered housing schemes are no longer suitable for the purpose

Current issues about appropriateness of dwellings arise mainly from the fact that most of the sheltered accommodation in existence was constructed some years ago for people over retirement age who were physically active. Increasing numbers of people applying for sheltered accommodation, or already living there, are older and frailer than the properties were designed to accommodate.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has produced a draft Sheltered Housing Review Tool based on "home for life" scheme reviews and the proposed procedures for working with sheltered housing providers. The document considers the purpose of the review, the role of sheltered housing and the way in which support may be delivered, the existing buildings and how the design and facilities offered may be a barrier to achieving current and future objectives. It also identifies the changes that may be needed.

The Housing Corporation recently published a paper setting out proposals for re-defining sheltered housing to reflect the changes which have taken place within the sector. It suggests a continuum, rather than categories, to focus on the outcomes of each scheme. A priority is to bring housing and social care together to meet the higher support needs of many tenants and to link with the government's policies and ethos for care, reablement, choice and independence.

Joint commissioning and inter agency working is therefore essential to assist people to remain in their own homes.

Consideration needs to be given to necessary changes in the levels of support/ care needed and wanted by the tenants.

There are a number of options where a landlord is planning new dwellings, or is considering the remodelling of existing accommodation. Ideally all new accommodation should be built to a "home for life" standard which would meet any current/future needs. Where existing accommodation is being remodelled it may be impossible to improve on some features e.g. size of dwelling. In such cases properties should be improved to the highest possible standards (see section 4).

However, capital cost is a major consideration. Work to sheltered housing has to be prioritised against works to a larger general needs stock and to be met from limited resources

### **Definition of Sheltered Accommodation**

Prior to the implementation of Supporting People it was necessary for those wishing to access support to move to a specialist sheltered housing scheme. This was not always satisfactory as it resulted in the upheaval for the individual of leaving the existing home, where the person may have lived for

many years (and often down-sizing, with the issues of disposing of possessions). The change often required a move away from the area where relatives, friends, social and informal support links had been formed.

#### **Current General Definitions of Sheltered Housing.**

Designated sheltered housing. Some schemes were developed on the basis of being designated for letting to older people. Designation has proved to be an effective method of avoiding the right to buy for some landlords.

Category 1. Housing designed for older people who were able to live independently but wished to down size, or be closer to relatives. These dwellings are usually on one level, with one bedroom, a small compact kitchen and small, or no, garden.

All have an alarm call system for emergencies and receive the Community Warden service. Properties of this type are often grouped together to create small communities of older people

Category 2. Properties in this type tend to be grouped together in schemes in the traditional sheltered housing model. All have alarm call systems and receive the Community Warden service

Communal facilities, such as a common room and laundry, are usually available on site.

In South Derbyshire the council has not historically classified its Sheltered Housing into these categories. All Sheltered Housing accommodation currently receives the same level of support services.

Category 2 ½. This type of accommodation has become known under several names e.g. category 2½ , very sheltered or, more recently, extra care. Developments are larger to provide economy of scale with typically one or more blocks on a single site. Accommodation may take the form of shared or self-contained units and provision is for single people or couples.

Higher-level support services and care are available as required on site. Care and support packages, available 24 hours per day are provided and adapted to meet the needs of the individual. Packages as flexible and ensure that the tenant has the highest possible level of choice and independence.

More extensive communal facilities are included within the part of the complex. This can include hairdressing and hobby rooms and gym facilities. Some services and parts of the project may be open to use by the wider community e.g. providing day services, luncheon clubs or assisted bathing for example. Meals are often available in a restaurant style setting and additional help with household chores can be purchased from a "menu" system.

People living in this accommodation are normally eligible for home care services through assessment under the NHS and Community Care Act

There is currently no category 2 ½ provision in South Derbyshire.

Category 3. This category is mentioned for the purpose of clarification only. Projects of this type provide residential and or nursing care and must be registered with the Care Standards Commission, which has responsibility for setting and monitoring their standards.

### **Proposed Re-Definition for Sheltered Accommodation**

A re-definition of accommodation for older people is proposed to deal with current needs and the wider opportunities available through Supporting People to provide housing based support to individuals, regardless of the type of accommodation.

It is proposed that three types of homes be defined, homes with floating support, Sheltered Homes and Extra Care Homes

### **Homes with Floating Support**

Where older people are living in general needs accommodation and need support there is limited provision and opportunity for floating support to be provided into their homes at present.

This has changed under Supporting People as support is person centred e.g. it can be delivered to people where they currently live rather than them having to move to specially designated schemes. Floating support services, particularly for older people, are expected to expand significantly and many older people, with lower level support needs, will continue to live in their existing homes with support, and if necessary care, provided there. Where care packages are provided by Social Services closer working between the statutory agencies will be essential to ensure the co-ordination of the services.

### **Sheltered Homes, including Group Schemes and Communal Schemes**

Accommodation designed for people with limited mobility i.e. with some requiring a frame to walk or wheelchair use. Tenants will need regular support with pop in visits, assistance with admin matters, requiring help with domestic/household activities including shopping, cleaning etc.

Dwellings should be on one level with lift access as well as stairs where not located on the ground floor.

Tenants will receive a Community Warden support service which is accessible during normal working hours i.e. 9am -5pm on weekdays with an on-call service out of hours. Tenants will be visited every other working day.

All properties must have an alarm call system, backed up by pendants, bracelets etc as required. Support must be accessible at any time.

The layout, general design and decoration of the projects and individual units should take into account the housing needs of people in the early stages of dementia.

A partnership approach will be taken to the use of new technology to maximise the independence of resident's e.g. through the use of passive alarms.

Communal facilities, such as a common room and laundry, should be provided on site.

### **Extra Care Homes**

Extra care housing provides self contained, supported accommodation for frail elderly people. However, people below retirement age may also be housed if they have mobility problems, are in the early stages of dementia or require a higher level of support.

Schemes would have a full time sheltered housing scheme managers/ co-ordinators on site and additional support and care staff will be available as required twenty four hours a day, seven days a week Tenants will have the opportunity to have individual support and care packages provided, to meet their needs which will be managed by a scheme co-ordinator.

Schemes may also provide a range of other services e.g. day care for people living in the community or a base for community support staff.

In addition to a communal lounge and laundry a wider range of communal/ community facilities are usually provided within extra care schemes which may include a restaurant, exercise room, clinic room or a craft/ hobby room.



## Section Four: Standards for New Sheltered and Extra Care Housing in South Derbyshire

Key requirements:

- ❖ All new accommodation must have full disabled access.
- ❖ 51 square metres per dwellings for minimum internal size
- ❖ 2 beds in 100% of new provision
- ❖ Central heating or night storage heating in lounge, bedroom and hallway as a minimum

*(\*\* Need to go through and highlight/show which standards are none neg. i.e. included in Bldg Regs)*

### **External Environment (Extra Care and Sheltered Schemes).**

#### **Roads and Pathways**

- Public, communal and private space and pathways and roads should be clearly defined.
- Dropped kerbs must be provided at appropriate locations.
- Easy access for wheelchair users and those who have difficulty walking. Gradients of paths to be a maximum of 1:20. Steps and stairs should be avoided.
- Ramps to be a maximum of 5 metres at 1:12 or 10 metres at 1:15 with handrails fitted.
- Maximise natural surveillance and avoidance of hidden areas.
- Access paths should be a minimum of 900mm wide and with good, appropriate lighting.
- All paths should have a slip resistant surface.
- Handrails are required where area adjacent to the path has a drop of 380mm or more.
- A clear opening of 850mm is required on gateways.

#### **Landscaping**

- The landscaping should enhance the design of the project and include soft landscaping, including ground cover plants, shrubs and grassed areas.
- Garden areas must have maximum gradients of 1:12.
- Raised planting areas.
- Seated open areas.
- No drops of over 600mm without handrails

#### **Parking**

- Car parking for the project should reflect the current and future needs of the project for residents, visitors and staff. (Planning authorities usually require 1.5 spaces per person)
- One third of parking in combined sheltered and extra care schemes should be designated for the extra care properties.
- Ninety percent of parallel parking spaces should be 2.4m x 4.8min size (with 10% a minimum of 3.3m x 4.8m where spaces are grouped). All spaces must be clearly defined.

- Parking for residents should be as close as possible to their dwellings (30m should be considered the maximum).
- Parking for emergency vehicles to be provided within 30m of dwellings.
  - Communal parking areas should be identifiable with the group of dwellings that they serve.
  - Covered parking spaces (minimum size 5.7m depth x 3.6m wide) should be provided where possible.
  - For extra care and sheltered schemes where day care is provided a drop off space/ turning point for vehicle is essential.

#### **External Lighting**

- Lighting should increase security and safety and be vandal proof.
- A sensor-based system activated by reduction in natural light should be provided. In some locations lights activated by movement after dark may be more appropriate.

#### **Security and Safety Systems.**

- External and internal layouts should be designed to increase safety and security.
- 24 hour alarm call system fitted in communal areas and individual dwellings.

#### **Drying Areas.**

- Sufficient external and internal drying facilities to be provided.

#### **Refuse**

- Bin stores to be provided which are easily accessible, in a well-lit and secure area.

#### **Layout of Building/s**

- Schemes must meet "Secured by Design" standards.
  - Buildings should be designed in such a way that natural light and sunlight is maximised.
  - Living rooms should be south facing where possible.
  - The grouping of dwellings should maximise privacy and reduce noise.
  - Clear and concise signage for those living at and visiting the scheme

#### **Internal Environment (Extra Care and Sheltered Schemes)**

In some projects services, such as day care, are offered which result in non-residents requiring regular access to facilities within the buildings. These areas should be located separately from the tenants' accommodation to ensure a greater degree of privacy and security for those living there. Clear and concise signage of properties, lifts, and facilities must be provided.

#### **Entrance to Main Blocks.**

- The main access to the project should be level and clearly marked on approach to the building.
- A canopy (minimum 1.2m x 1.2m) should be provided outside all external doors.
- The entrance landing should be a minimum of 1.5m x 1.5m (clear of any door swing), with a level threshold (or maximum of 15mm upstand).
- The entrance should be well lit.

- Main doors should provide a minimum clear opening of 800mm. Front doors, including automatic must open inwards.
- An inner set of doors should be included to provide a lobby area.
- The access doors into the building and from reception, to the rest of the project, should be capable of use by a remote control door opener.

#### **Reception Area.**

- A reception area should be located at the main entrance.
- Large enough to accommodate a number of people arriving at the same time and for wheelchair users to access comfortably.
- Notice boards, seating, planters etc should be provided.

#### **Access within the building.**

- Some projects will offer facilities available to the wider community these should be located separately from the accommodation.
- All self-closing doors must be capable of independent operation by wheelchair users.

#### **Circulation Areas (corridors)**

- Any self closing doors are to be capable of independent operation by a wheelchair user.
  - Internal doors to corridors etc must provide clear openings of a minimum of 800mm and passageways to be 900mm (to allow for radiators, handrails etc).
  - Door handles etc must be positioned 600mm-1.2m above floor level.
  - Doors to individual homes must have a letterbox, door bell and property number.
  - Handrails should be fitted in all corridors.
- All areas should be well and evenly lit.
  - Two-way switches should be provided where necessary.
  - All circulation areas to have easy access to a warden call alarm type system.

#### **Staircases**

- Staircases should be straight flight where possible and be capable in all cases of future stair lift fitting to British Standard, while allowing sufficient space for others to have access. Suitable lighting (including emergency) must be fitted and building design to ensure natural light from windows wherever possible.
  - Easy rise staircases (max 35 degrees or a halfway landing) with a handrail on both sides.
- Heights and depths of treads on stairs should not disadvantage older people.

#### **Lifts**

- Passenger lifts are required in all projects where residential accommodation is provided above ground floor entrance level.
- The lift must be capable of taking a wheelchair, its occupant and an accompanying person.
- A fold down seat must be provided and all passenger controls must be capable of being operated by someone in a wheelchair.
- Warden/ emergency call button to be fitted within lift at height and location accessible to wheelchair users.

- An eight-person size lift is sufficient for sheltered schemes but extra care housing requires a thirteen-person size lift.

#### **Windows**

- In living rooms and bedrooms windowsills should be no higher than 810mm from floor level, to maximise natural light and provide views for those sitting.
  - All windows should be easily accessible and fitted with window locks.
  - Opening and ventilation systems must be able to be operated independently by wheelchair users.
  - All windows must be capable of being operated and cleaned without risk.
  - Upper floor windows must have restrictors for safety reasons.
- No windows to open onto paths or access ways for safety reasons.

#### **Communal toilets**

- Toilets (including those for wheelchair access) should be available close to the reception area.
- Toilets should be located to allow doors to open outwards without causing difficulty to those using main corridors.
- Slip resistant flooring.
- Thermostatic controls must be fitted to taps.
- Warden/ emergency call button to be fitted within each toilet at a height and location which is accessible to wheelchair users.

#### **Common room/ sitting room**

- The room should be large enough to accommodate all residents and occasional social functions for residents and guests.
- It should have the ability to be sub divided to allow for quieter areas and social/ activity areas.
- Double doors required to and from this main room.
- A chair store and coat area should be provided close by.
- The furnishings should be comfortable and homely.
- The room should be well lit and have even heating.
- Hearing loop system should be included.

#### **Communal Kitchen/ Tea Bar**

- Located adjacent or within the communal room.
- Of sufficient size to cater for refreshments and light snacks for all tenants, a reasonable number of visitors and guests.
  - Adequate storage e.g. for fridge, foodstuffs and utensils.
  - Must comply with all Health and Hygiene regulations.
  - Slip resistant flooring.
- Thermostatic controls must be fitted to taps.

#### **Laundry Room**

- Washing and drying facilities for use by tenants.
  - Thermostatic controls must be fitted to taps.
  - Sink and worktop area.
  - If not in main building then ensure adequate heating.
  - Extract ventilation.
- Slip resistant flooring.
- Thermostatic controls must be fitted to taps accessible by residents.

- In Extra Care a separate sluice room/ sluice washing machine for use by care assistants (appropriately positioned within the project).

#### **Heating**

- A constant temperature of 22C should be maintained throughout the building when the outside temperature is -10C.
- Where possible low surface temperature radiators should be fitted throughout (may not be practical in some locations) .
- Individual tenant control of room temperatures.

#### **Services**

- Suitable access and control of water stopcock, gas or oil (where appropriate) electric main consumer units to be provided for residents.
  - All switches, sockets etc must be positioned 1200mm above floor level.
  - Lux levels of .....
- Isolating valves to be provided for sinks, washing machines, baths, basins, WC's etc.
- Flexible plumbing systems
  - Two telephone points per dwelling, cabling for terrestrial television.
  - Fuse boxes must be easily accessible by tenants.

#### **Personal Alarms, Smoke Alarms, CO2 Detectors and Sprinkler Systems**

- Alarm call systems to be fitted in communal areas and individual dwellings.
- Smoke alarms must be provided in every communal corridor on every floor and within individual dwellings.
- CO2 detectors should also be fitted where gas is available on the premises. -
- Sprinkler systems must be provided in communal areas.

#### **Bathrooms in Communal Areas**

- In larger projects one bathroom with standard bath on each floor.
- Slip resistant flooring.
- Thermostatic controls must be fitted to taps.

#### **Guest / Visitor Room**

- Wheelchair accessible throughout.
- Double guest room with twin beds.
- Adjoining shower, wash hand basin and w.c. with slip resistant flooring.
- Tea and coffee making facilities.
  - Thermostatic controls must be fitted to taps/ shower.

#### **Wheelchair store**

- Located internally near to main entrance
- An easily accessible, well-lit, secure wheelchair store with sockets for battery charging to be provided.
  - Sufficient space to transfer to second wheelchair
  - Alarm call point to be included.
- Slip resistant flooring.

#### **Storage**

- Sufficient lockable storage areas for all the projects equipment, furniture etc.

### **Day Care Room**

- Sheltered and Extra Care schemes may include a separate room for day care clients.
- Small kitchenette provided as a minimum.
- Communal lounge for social activities/ interaction.
- Luncheon club area may be provided.

### **Required Only in Extra Care Schemes**

#### **Restaurant**

- Adjacent to the kitchen.
- Should be separate, or be able to be sub divided, from the sitting room.
  - Well lit with as much natural light as possible.
  - Suitably furnished , allowing for those with limited mobility and for wheelchair users.

#### **Quiet Room**

- Projects of ten or more people should include at least one quiet room for residents. (Books tapes etc).

#### **Craft/ hobby room**

- It is recommended that a room be provided where tenants can spend time involved in hobbies and social interaction.
- A sink, worktops, storage and appropriate tables and chairs to be provided.
- Thermostatic controls must be fitted to taps.
- Slip resistant flooring.

#### **Exercise Room**

- If possible a room where activities and exercises can be enjoyed under supervision.

#### **Hairdressing Room**

- A fully equipped hairdressing room for men and women should be provided.
- Sinks, worktops, storage and lockable cupboards to be included.
- Slip resistant flooring.
  - Thermostatic controls must be fitted to taps accessible to tenants.

#### **Health Workers Room**

- To be provided for visiting health and care staff.
- Location should allow for easy access and privacy for tenants attending sessions.
- Wash hand basin and worktop, table, chairs and lockable storage to be provided.
- Slip resistant flooring.

#### **Kitchen (may also be provided in a sheltered scheme)**

- Of sufficient size to cater for all tenants, a reasonable number of visitors and guests and other regulars e.g. day care lunches. Thought should be given to the future catering needs of the project.
- Adequate storage for equipment e.g. freezers, foodstuffs and utensils.
- Located next to dining room area.

- Service of meals possible into dining area without interruption of access to others.
- Must comply with all Health and Hygiene regulations.
- Slip resistant flooring.
  - Smoke alarms must be provided and CO2 detectors where gas is available.

**Laundry Room (in addition to standards for sheltered accommodation)**

- In Extra Care a separate sluice room/ sluice washing machine for use by care assistants (appropriately positioned within the project).

**Bathrooms in Communal Areas.**

- In Extra Care projects on assisted bath (Parker style) as minimum for every 20 households or one on every landing.

**Individual Dwellings within Extra Care and Sheltered Schemes**

- Each dwelling should be on a single level.
  - Dwellings should be designed to ensure that there is sufficient space for turning a wheelchair within all rooms.
  - Layouts must be designed to minimise noise transmission and have sufficient sound insulation
- All rooms and corridors to have easy access to a pull cord warden call alarm system.
- pendant/ wristband alarms issued to all tenants.
- Adequate space to allow for furniture and facilitate movement of larger items of furniture.
- Telephone points in living room and bedroom.
  - Each dwelling should have at least one sink, one wash-hand basin, one walk in shower and one Wc. Thermostatic controls must be fitted to taps/showers.
- Space and standards should meet lifetime homes criteria with the following minimum square metre sizes to apply :-

**Recommended Space Standards for Dwellings**

No of persons in dwelling 1/ 2-3

Total area of dwelling 54-65

Living room 12-13

Dining/kitchen 9.5-11

Bedroom (main) 14-14 + 6.5 minimum

Bathroom 10-10

Kitchen 7.5-7.5

Combined living room/kitchen 18.5-18.5

**Energy Conservation**

Standard Assessment Procedure (or SAP) rating required 100 or Carbon Index (CI) 8.1

All dwellings up to and including 3 occupants must have 1.7m<sup>3</sup> of domestic storage space (excluding airing cupboards) that is easily accessible. A minimum of half should be within the kitchen. Secure storage for harmful substances, medicine etc is required.

**Bedrooms**

- A percentage of new dwellings in Extra Care should provide two-bedroom accommodation.

- Main bedroom 14m<sup>2</sup> to allow for twin beds and wheelchair transfer to either. Where a secondary single bedroom is also provided 6.5m<sup>2</sup>.
- Dining rooms/ second bedrooms where provided must be a minimum of 6.5m<sup>2</sup>.
- Sockets outlets, TV/FM points, two way lights, telephone point and entry phone point must be provided adjacent to the bed head position in each main bedroom.
- Turning space for wheelchairs 1500mm minimum diameter clear and sufficient space to transfer from a wheelchair should be included.

#### **Kitchens**

- Internal kitchens should have natural light.
- Sink and at least one drainer. Lever taps should be provided.
  - Cooker space to be a minimum width of 625 mm and must not be located under a window or next to sink or fridge spaces (minimum of 500mm clear area on either side of the cooker space).
  - Total work space, which must be no less than 600mm wide, must be at least 1.5 m total with no less than 300mm on any one length).
  - Minimum of three appliance spaces (to allow maximum flexibility for fridge and freezer and consideration to washing machine and dishwasher space) with plumbing points provided.
- Wall cupboards must be accessible.
- Kitchen floor slip resistant.
- All controls and sockets to be accessible and remote switching labelled.
  - Suitable internal refuse arrangements which are manageable from a wheelchair are to be provided.
- Fully adjustable worktops, in sections to allow maximum flexibility
- For wheelchairs a minimum clear manoeuvring area of 1.8m x 1.4m is required.
  - Electric cooker boxes and where available gas connections for cookers.
  - Smoke alarms must be provided and CO<sub>2</sub> detectors where gas is available.
  - Switches, sockets, heater controls etc must be located between 600mm and 1200mm from the floor to allow easy of access.
  - Signage should be clear and appropriate for tenants with some visual impairment

#### **Bathrooms/ shower rooms and WCs**

- Internal bathrooms should be avoided.
- Toilets and bath/shower rooms must be fully wheelchair accessible
  - Walk in showers (to wheelchair standard) to be provided with graded floor (not shower tray sunk into floor) and shower seats (within folding legs) fitted to the wall.
  - Baths (if provided exceptionally) must have space 400mm minimum for a seat or platform at the end (away from the taps)
- All bathroom and toilet walls must be capable of taking grabrails and handrails.
  - All bathroom and main bedroom ceilings must be of sufficient strength to be able to take a track system and hoist. Where connecting doors are not originally provided a removable panel



should be included, from floor to ceiling, to enable the tracking to connect the two rooms.

- Position of fittings and type to be chosen for ease of use.
- Lever taps must be provided. Mixer taps are not acceptable.
- Thermostatically controlled water temperatures.
- Sufficient space to transfer from a wheelchair should be included.
- Non slip flooring must be provided in all toilets and bath/ shower rooms.
  - Toilet and bath/shower room doors should open out wherever possible and be fitted with override door locks.
- Basins must be minimum of 450mm above floor level, with knee space beneath.

Internal doors minimum of 775mm clear openings.

### **Staff Facilities**

#### **Office**

- Community warden/Scheme Manager`s office capable of accommodating computer desk, lockable cabinets, etc
  - Quiet Room/Relatives Room. A small room for private meetings with residents, relatives and staff
- Staff rest room located away from the main areas of activity.
  - Secure lockers for staff belongings.
- Lockable cupboards for cleaning materials and equipment.

## Section Five: Standards Within Existing Sheltered Schemes Review and Remodelling of Schemes.

As part of this work on defining a vision and standards for Sheltered Housing in South Derbyshire we need to review the existing sheltered housing stock from the perspectives of definition, standards and refurbishment needs.

This may result in some properties being re-designated to general needs where it is impossible to meet the defined standards, with support services where required, or upgraded to the new definition of sheltered housing.

Re-designation may also be required for properties which are below acceptable space standards, are too far from local shops and community facilities, or are hard to let.

Depending on the current provision of accommodation and services a number of projects may need to be considered for re-modelling fully, or in part.

The future provision of accommodation needs to meet the strategic needs identified within the council's Housing Strategy and the Supporting People Strategy. This may include making the project and its facilities available to others e.g. luncheon club.

Existing dwellings are often too small for current/ future use and properties are unable to be adapted substantially. Internal layout can also be poor. Much sheltered housing has one bedroom. This can be a disadvantage where a carer needs to be accommodated or partners sleep apart. This results in less flexible and increasingly difficult to let properties.

Only a limited number of wheelchair properties are available

Some sheltered properties have night storage heaters or have electric heating systems. These have often been criticised in the past as being inappropriate for less active people.

Some properties have been fitted with walk in showers where possible but many dwellings still have baths. This may no longer be appropriate due to the need for disabled access.

Meeting these standards for existing Sheltered Housing will have substantial funding requirements (capital and or revenue)

### **Key requirements:**

- ❖ Accommodation must be within 0.5 miles of shops and community facilities e.g. health centre, post office etc.
- ❖ Key requirement 45 square metres in existing accommodation.

- ❖ Existing communal areas should be fully accessible by wheelchair users.
- ❖ central heating or night storage heating in lounge, bedroom and hallway as a minimum.
- ❖ Lifetime bathrooms for all refurbished dwellings.

### Achieving Minimum Standards.

*(We will cost out meeting stds as outlined then revisit to finalise - recog we cant set ourselves up for impossible task)*

It may not always be possible for existing properties to be improved to the standards listed. It is therefore proposed that two lists be agreed (Recommended and Desirable) as shown below.

All items from the Recommended list should be achievable and are expected to be met. Those on the Desirable list should also be provided where feasible.

### Criteria for existing dwellings

<b>Recommended</b>
All paths more than 900mm wide
All paths have a non-slip surface
All paths have handrails
Lifts are available for all properties not on ground floor
In communal areas all electrical switches are two way
All dwellings are centrally heated
Hot water is thermostatically controlled
All dwellings have a warden call system
Smoke detector is installed
CO detector is installed
Kitchen is a separate room
Kitchens have a minimum of 1.5 m workspace (not less than 300mm in any one run)
All taps are lever taps
Floor coverings in kitchen and bathroom are slip resistant
Suited locks are fitted?
All wheelchair dwellings have minimum clear manoeuvring areas of 1.8 x 1.4 m

<b>Desirable</b>
Shops and community facilities are in close proximity
Car parking is provided within 30 m of dwelling
All dwellings are of wheelchair standard
All dwellings are to mobility standard throughout
Bathrooms are fitted to "Lifetime" standards
All properties have external ramped access where necessary

Appropriate drying facilities are provided
All dwellings on a single level
All dwellings meet lifetime homes criteria
Main doors have clear opening of 800 mm
Internal doors have clear openings of 775 mm
All dwellings have level thresholds
Internal passageways measure a minimum of 900 mm
Living room and bedroom windows are no higher than 810 mm above floor level
Kitchens have a minimum of three appliance spaces
Kitchen worktops should be fully adjustable
Door entry control system should be installed in schemes with shared access
All dwellings should have a second bedroom
Sprinkler system should be fitted (where necessary)
Remote or coded key safes should be fitted (where necessary)

#### **Wheelchair/Scooter Stores**

All schemes should have easily accessible, secure and well lit, wheelchair stores with sufficient sockets to charge batteries. Stores should have an external alarm fitted.

## **Section Six: the Need for Sheltered Housing Accommodation and Current Provision**

Work has been undertaken to help identify the future need for sheltered housing set against the current provision throughout the District.

The work proposed some tentative conclusions to be used as a basis for further and more detailed analysis and planning.

The general conclusions were as follows:

1. In some areas which can be considered as housing sub markets, there appears to be sufficient choice and competition between units of accommodation for the elderly such that some property types-especially bedsits and first floor one bedroom flats-, are now effectively "past their sell by date".
2. Such types of accommodation in these areas need radical approaches to prevent them declining further and continuing to be difficult to let.
3. In some areas there does appear to be potential future demand, but whether these households choose South Derbyshire sheltered housing will depend on how attractive it is compared to other options.
4. Refurbishment, improvement, and re-modelling, plus better promotion and marketing may make some schemes more popular, but in some circumstances where the market demand is not likely to be strong this will not be sufficient.
5. Most elderly people move only a short distance when they move into accommodation for their later years. Marketing and promotion needs to be quite locally targeted.
6. There is currently stronger growth and pressures to the north of the district closer to Derby city, but this does not necessarily mean that this situation will continue.
7. There will be inevitable growth in need and demand for higher care and suitably adapted housing as households live longer, but accommodation which is attractive for the younger elderly age group may not always meet this need throughout.