 Closure proposal explained at meeting

At a meeting with residents on Monday 4 July, Interim Director of Housing, Neil Stubbings, explained that following a review of housing for older people in Havering, it was proposed to build an older persons’ village on the site of the Serena, Solar and Sunrise Sheltered Housing Scheme.

Mr Stubbings said: “There is an over-provision of sheltered housing in Havering and the Serena, Solar and Sunrise Sheltered Housing Scheme does not provide the quality of housing we wish for the next 30 years.

“The scheme does not have lifts to all floors, much of the accommodation is bedsits which are below the standard we want and it is expensive to maintain.

“The site is suitable for an older persons’ village which brings together a range of services onto one site alongside accommodation suitable for older people with dementia or who have extra care needs.

“That is what we are proposing for this site as we believe it will help us meet the future needs of Havering’s older residents.”

More information will be online at www.havering.gov.uk/SSS as it becomes available

Trip to other schemes

So residents can see the other sheltered housing schemes which are available in Havering a coach trip has been arranged for Thursday 11 August.

The coach will pick up people from Serena, Solar and Sunrise Sheltered Housing Scheme and take you on a guided tour of the other schemes. You will have the opportunity to see the facilities, chat with residents and possibly view some of the flats in that scheme.

We will also be organising a coach trip to see an older persons’ village that has been built on a site similar in size to those available in Havering.

If you want to go on either coach trip please book your place online at www.havering.gov.uk/askhousing or tell your scheme officer.

What happens next?

• Sheltered Housing Team Leader, Sharon Nunn, and the Serena, Solar and Sunrise Sheltered Housing Scheme Officer, Kelly Murray, will be organising individual meetings with each resident during the next three weeks to gather information about your individual needs.

• That information will be used to help plan where you wish to move to and when.

• Another meeting will be held on Friday 12 August to update you on the current position.

• A report will go to Havering Council Cabinet which will include your feedback on the closure proposal and a final decision will then be taken on what will happen.

• A further meeting will then be held to brief you on the final decision and a likely timetable for the work they have agreed.

The next meeting is 10am to 11am on Friday 12 August in the Communal Lounge, Serena, Solar and Sunrise Sheltered Housing Scheme, Sunrise Avenue, Hornchurch.

If you can’t visit on the day please let us know using www.havering.gov.uk/askhousing and we will be happy to visit and talk to you.
Your questions answered

Q If Cabinet approve the closure what will be the timescale?
A From the final decision we estimate it will take a maximum of two years before the scheme is completely closed but you can choose to move at any time.

Q Where will you rehouse us?
A Each individual will have a meeting to discuss their personal needs. Family members or friends can be at that meeting with you if you wish. We will aim to identify where you want to go and what type of accommodation you want and will then aim to find such a place for you. That could be in Havering or elsewhere depending on where you want to live.

Q When will you rehouse us?
A We can start the process now if you know where you want to live. The sooner we know your personal needs the more chance we have of finding something suitable. If closure is approved we will not be able to begin demolition until everyone is moved out.

Q What priority will I get when looking for a new home?
A Because we are asking you to move you will get a high priority. You can either use the bidding system yourself or ask us to look for somewhere suitable for you.

Q How do I know what other places are like?
A We plan to organise visits to the other sheltered housing schemes in Havering so you can see them for yourself and decide if you wish to move there. If you are looking at properties outside Havering we may be able to help with transport. We will also be organising a visit to an older persons' village.

Q Will I be compensated because you are asking me to move?
A Yes, providing you have lived in your home for more than 12 months, the minimum statutory amount per household is £5,300. You may also be eligible for a Disturbance Payment to cover costs, such as removals, etc. We will talk to you individually to assess what this may mean for you and we will have people at hand to help you through the process.

Q How can I get more information?
A Information will be available at www.havering.gov.uk/SSS or by emailing Chelsea.potts@havering.gov.uk Your scheme officer will also be able to get information for you.

Who can I contact?
If you have a question about the consultation please contact
Email Chelsea.potts@havering.gov.uk
General estate enquiries www.havering.gov.uk/askhousing

Keeping in Touch
You can keep in touch with the latest news and information from Housing Services through our email newsletter.
Go to www.havering.gov.uk/enews and choose At the Heart online.
There is also information available at www.havering.gov.uk/SSS
You can also ‘Like’ us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/haveringhousing