

AGENDA ITEM 3

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

15TH DECEMBER 2015

TALBOT GREEN - EXTRA CARE HOUSING SCHEME

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES INDISCUSSION WITH COUNCILLOR M FOREY.

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1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Cabinet of the work being undertaken to develop the new extra care housing scheme in Talbot Green and to obtain approval for the draft allocations policy and eligibility criteria for extra care.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the ongoing work, in partnership with Hafod Housing Association, to develop a new extra care housing model and detailed service specification for the new scheme in Talbot Green.
- 2.2 Approve the draft allocations policy and eligibility criteria attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.3 Agree that the delivery of personal care services at the Talbot Green Scheme be tendered for.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In order to meet the challenges of an ageing population, it is vital that older people's services are sustainable and meet the aspirations of existing and future generations to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. This will require the development of alternatives to residential care including extra care housing. The development of the new extra care housing scheme in Talbot Green therefore provides an excellent opportunity for the Council to improve the choice and quality of accommodation and care options for older people.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In May 2014, the Council, in partnership with Hafod Housing Association, submitted a bid to the Welsh Assembly Government, Social Housing Grant (SHG) Fund to support the development of the first new build extra care housing scheme in the County Borough. The bid was successful and SHG of £4.6 million was made available to support the capital development of the scheme. The SHG allocation will cover 58% of the capital cost with the balance being secured by Hafod through private finance. The total cost for the development is £7.9 million.
- 4.2 The new extra care scheme is being built on the Council's former Highways Depot site on Cowbridge Road in Talbot Green and is due for completion in Summer 2016.
- 4.3 The new Talbot Green Scheme will be managed by Hafod who specialise in the provision of housing related care and support services to vulnerable people. Hafod has already built and managed a number of similar extra care schemes across South Wales and are able to bring their acquired practice and understanding to the development of extra care provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

5. EXTRA CARE HOUSING MODEL AND SCHEME SPECIFICATION

- 5.1 Extra care housing is accommodation primarily for older people, although it can also be used to meet the needs of people with physical or learning disabilities. Extra care can also be a suitable option for those people with early onset of dementia or other lower level mental illnesses. There is no national standard age limit however generally the age of 55 years or over is reflected in many scheme allocation policies.
- 5.2 Extra care is very much about enabling independent living and so is often an effective alternative to other institutional settings with built-in flexibility to adapt to changing needs as people grow older and their health deteriorates. Extra care enables people to live in their own home with 24-hour care and support services available on site and thereby provides a long term housing option and reduces the need for residential care.
- 5.3 The level of care would be dependent upon an individual's assessed need. An appropriate mix of customers with low to medium to high level care needs ensures a balanced community and one which promotes integration and positivity for residents.
- 5.4 The new Talbot Green Scheme will initially comprise of 40 self-contained apartments (16 one bedroom and 24 two bedroom apartments), each with their own private kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and living space. All apartments will be available for rent and each resident will have their own tenancy agreement.

- 5.5 Each apartment is designed to be accessible to people with disabilities or wheelchair users and enable people to live independently with their own front door, something which older people have identified as being important. Telecare technology will also be used throughout the scheme to enable people to live safely in their own apartments and, where appropriate, for care staff to monitor those who have dementia or other health problems.
- 5.6 With the availability of two bedroom apartments the scheme will be able to support couples that may otherwise have been separated by the care needs of one partner to stay together, even when one of them has significant care needs. The on-site staff care team will in these cases complement the informal support that the couple provide to each other.
- 5.7 The new Talbot Green Scheme facilities will include service areas for laundry, assisted bathing, treatment and day care opportunities which will serve the needs of the people living there and also have the potential to be available to other people from the local community. Other facilities for leisure activities, hairdressing, health visiting, information technology and sign posting to other services will also be available on site as required.
- 5.8 The Scheme will also include an on-site restaurant along with other communal facilities so people can socialise and participate in community activities if they so wish. These more public spaces will all be located away from residents' apartments, maintaining the security and safety of the accommodation elements of the scheme.

6. ARRANGEMENTS FOR CARE AND SUPPORT

- 6.1 The new Talbot Green Scheme will provide a range of services, including housing management, personal care and support, and housing related support. Scheme residents will be able to access a care and support service either on entry to the scheme or as their needs change.
- 6.2 Hafod, as the landlord, will provide the housing management for the new Talbot Green Scheme, such as letting the apartments, rents and repairs and maintenance.
- 6.3 Personal care services will be separately commissioned. .
- 6.4 Housing related support services available at the Talbot Green Scheme will aim to develop or sustain an individual's capacity to live independently in their accommodation. These services could include people receiving support to:
- Set up and maintain their home
 - Develop social, domestic and life skills
 - Develop the skills to manage finances and benefit claims
 - Access other services and take part in community activities

- Develop an awareness of personal safety and security issues

6.5 Commissioning options for housing related support will be considered by the Supporting People Planning Group at its meeting in December 2015. Options include utilising existing housing related floating support services or tendering for a new dedicated extra care scheme service.

6.6 Tendering processes to commission care and support services will ensure Providers are in place when the scheme will be ready for occupation.

7.0 EXTRA CARE HOUSING ALLOCATION AND ELIGIBILITY POLICY

7.1 A draft extra care allocations and eligibility policy and procedures document has been developed and is attached at Appendix 1.

7.2 The policy document outlines the partnership working arrangements in relation to the new Talbot Green Scheme providing clarity of roles and responsibilities in relation to the allocation process. This will also ensure that both allocation and voids are handled efficiently and effectively.

7.3 To be eligible for extra care housing, an applicant (or if a couple one or both of the applicants) must usually:

- Be aged 55 or over, although there could be some flexibility depending on individual circumstances, e.g. couples where one partner is not yet 55.
- Have had an assessment which identifies extra care housing as a suitable option for meeting their identified needs, or be willing to undergo such an assessment; and have a combination of housing and care needs.

7.4 Our overall aim would be to create a community at the new Talbot Green Scheme where people stay independent for as long as possible, but have ready access to care and housing related support. To achieve this, the new Talbot Green Scheme will need residents with a mix of care and support needs and all allocations will need to be in line with the dependency ratio guidance set out in the table below.

Dependency Level	Ratio	Number of apartments	Approximate level of care input
High	40%	16	15 hours per week or more
Low / Moderate	60%	24	Less than 15 hours per week

7.5 The balance will be subject to review as and when required to ensure sustainability and continuity of support.

7.6 The allocations policy will be facilitated by a dedicated Accommodation Panel. The Council through this Panel will have 100% nomination rights to all 40 apartments at the new Talbot Green Scheme.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. This exercise has shown that a full EqIA is not required. The screening form can be accessed by contacting the author of the report or the Cabinet Business officer.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

9.1 As stated earlier in paragraph 4.1 of this report, the capital cost of developing the new Talbot Green Scheme has been met through Social Housing Grant with the balance being secured by Hafod. There is, therefore, no capital expenditure implications for the Council.

9.2 The revenue costs of the scheme fall into three areas.

9.2.1 Hafod will charge rent and service charges to cover costs of the accommodation and the onsite services and facilities. In some cases, residents will be able to claim Housing Benefit to help pay part/all of these charges (subject to means test). As the Scheme is largely funded by SHG, the rent charges will reflect this subsidy. Actual rent levels and service charges are still being determined by Hafod in consultation with the Council's Housing Benefit Section.

9.2.2 Personal care services will be commissioned and funded through existing adult social care budgets with many of the residents likely to be receiving a care package which can be transferred. All residents will be subject to a financial assessment under Fairer Charging Regulations to determine how much, if anything, they have to contribute to the costs.

9.2.3 Housing related support at the new Talbot Green Scheme will be funded from Supporting People Grant and a funding commitment has been included in the Supporting People Operational Plan for 2015/2018, which was approved by Cabinet on 15th March 2015.

9.3 The costs of the care and support model which will operate within the new Talbot Green Scheme are still being finalised and will need to adjust as necessary in line with the individual needs of residents.

10. CONSULTATION

- 10.1 As part of the scheme development, public consultation took place in Talbot Green and the resulting feedback was incorporated into the final proposals.
- 10.2 Work is also underway, in partnership with Hafod, to develop a marketing and communications plan for the Scheme. The plan will include various advertising opportunities through print and web-based publications, open information events targeted at potential residents and awareness raising with appropriate professionals.
- 10.3 A show home will be available to visit from March 2016 and potential residents will be encouraged to visit the scheme in advance of its completion later in the year.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 11.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) received Royal Assent on the 1st May 2014 and takes effect from April 2016. The Act creates a new legal framework to bring together and modernise Social Services law. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, including accommodation based care and support services for older and vulnerable people.

12. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP

- 12.1 The development of the new Talbot Green Scheme will support delivery of the Council's corporate priority "to support vulnerable adults and older people to live independently".
- 12.2 In addition, the Council's draft joint commissioning statement for older people's services identifies as a priority the transformation of residential care by developing new models of service which are more sustainable and enable people to remain within the community in support services such as extra care.

13. CONCLUSION

- 13.1 The new extra care scheme in Talbot Green will provide high quality, modern fit for purpose, accessible accommodation for people with an assessed care need, thus ensuring that they are able to live independently for as long as possible. The Talbot Green Scheme offers an alternative to residential care and will support the need for additional extra care services as outlined in the draft older people's joint commissioning statement currently subject to separate consultation. Additionally, this development will improve choice and control for individuals with an assessed care need and provide a vital community resource, through use of it's the communal areas.



13.2 The Talbot Green Scheme is due to open in Summer 2016 and in order to achieve this timeframe there are a number of activities that are being finalised including:

- Determination of the care and support model
- Confirmation of rent levels and service charges
- Commissioning arrangements for housing related support services

Other information:

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Health and Wellbeing



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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Background Papers:

- Draft Extra Care Allocations and Eligibility Policy and Procedures Document
- Supporting People Operational Plan for 2015/2018 – Cabinet 15th March 2015

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APPENDIX 1



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXTRA CARE ALLOCATION POLICY AND
ELIGIBILITY**

**TALBOT GREEN
EXTRA CARE HOUSING SCHEME**

This policy document outlines the partnership working arrangements in relation to the extra care supported accommodation scheme providing clarity of roles and responsibilities in relation to the allocation process and management of the scheme. This will also ensure that both initial lettings and voids are handled efficiently and effectively. This will be facilitated by an Operational Accommodation Panel held on a monthly basis.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To outline the agreed working arrangements between partners to ensure the aims of the scheme are delivered.
- To reduce the duplication of information and promote the effective and efficient use of resources
- To ensure there are effective lines of communication so that all partners can fulfil their roles and responsibilities
- To provide clarity of roles and responsibilities of each partner within extra care housing
- To accommodate people with a range of need levels and a mix of need domains to retain a balanced community.
- To enable tenants to maintain or improve their level of independence
- To provide an alternative to residential care where appropriate

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The partners in this policy will apply the ethos of equal opportunities and demonstrate a commitment to providing housing services to the whole community and will not discriminate against any applicant on the basis of their ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or race.

INFORMATION SHARING

Information will be shared between the partners on a strategic level to monitor the outcomes of the scheme. Where information is to be shared in relation to individual tenants, this will be with their agreement and subject to protocols

TRAINING

Appropriate training should be co-ordinated between all partners and whenever possible joint training opportunities should be explored.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Extra care housing is a complex service involving elements of housing, support and personal care. Extra care housing schemes can only be developed and maintained through a partnership of stakeholders, including planners, commissioners, providers and developers.

KEY PARTNERS

The key partners involved in the provision of this extra care housing scheme are:

- Housing Provider (Hafod)
- Housing Related Support Provider (Successful Tenderer)
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Adult Social Care
- Care Provider (Successful Tenderer)
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Supporting People Team

PARTNERSHIP ROLES

Housing Provider

The housing provider is the owner (landlord) of the scheme and is responsible for the provision of accommodation and the management of the building. This function is usually carried out by the Scheme Manager or another employee of the housing provider and includes day-to-day management such as, rents, repairs and the lettings of properties.

The housing provider is responsible for the maintenance of the scheme building such as:

- Servicing and maintaining the fabric of the building
- Servicing and maintaining the fire alarms
- Servicing and maintaining the emergency lighting
- Servicing and maintaining the intruder alarm and door security systems
- Provision and maintenance of the call systems (community alarms)
- Health and safety within the building and its grounds
- Fire emergency procedures

All maintenance issues should be reported by tenants to the scheme manager or housing providers' office.

Housing Related Support Service Provider

The housing related support service provider is responsible for delivering housing related support services to assist those living in the scheme to successfully manage their tenancies and will where necessary support residents to:

- Set up and maintain their home
- Develop social, domestic and life skills

- Develop the skills to manage finances and benefit claims
- Access other services and take part in community activities
- Develop an awareness of personal safety and security issues

Adult Social Care Services

Adult Social Care Services will be responsible for the commissioning and funding of personal care services and undertaking the care assessment of individual tenants where appropriate. It is also responsible for the financial assessment and charging of the service users for such care services in line with Fairer Charging Regulations.

A Care Co-ordinator Role will be fulfilled by Adult Social Care and will where necessary:

- Assist with the move from the existing property where appropriate
- Gather financial information for the Fairer Charging Assessment for home care services.
- Liaise with the family and agree to social care package
- Advise on the advocacy support available
- Liaise with the care provider to arrange for – or assist the service user to access the care and support they require to meet their assessed personal care needs
- Provide emotional support
- Help with social contact and activities
- Access with other community organisations

Care Provider

Care will be provided by a registered domiciliary care provider commissioned by adult social care. The care provider will deliver a domiciliary care service in line with the agreed service specification in order to deliver the assessed outcomes as identified in the individual care plan, The service will be delivered on a flexible basis, 24 hours per day within the extra care housing facility.

Personal care and support may include:

- Help with washing and dressing
- Support with meal preparation
- Prompting and support with medication
- Assisting with access to social activities (within the scheme)
- (Each service user will have their own individual care and support plan)
- Alert the Care Co-ordinator to any risks of changes in care needs
- Will respond to an alarm from a call system (community alarm or Telecare system - as per local scheme arrangements.
- Support the tenant to meet their assessed outcomes to maintain or improve their independence and reduce their dependency on statutory services
- Make connections with third sector and local community groups to promote independence

- Ensure the appropriate use of moving and handling equipment to safely reduce the level of support needed, where this has been assessed

Role of Assistive Technology - Telecare

Protocols will ensure that on site staff and call-centre staff understand their respective responsibilities at whatever time a call is made. The telecare service will respond in line with the response plan agreed with the individual tenant.

SCHEME OUTLINE

The extra care facility will consist of 40 self-contained apartments (16 one bedroom and 24 two bedroom apartments), each with their own private kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, and living space. All apartments will be available for rent and each resident will have their own tenancy agreement.

Dependency levels and units

The dependency levels for the extra care units have been divided as follows.

In order to facilitate the aims of the scheme to be sustainable and customer focused there is a need to maintain a balanced community. This means having a tenant group with different levels of need and a variety of needs.

The dependency levels for the 40 apartments are:

40% High = Approximately 16 apartments

60% Low / Moderate= Approximately 24 apartments

(these figures are an approximation and to be used as a guideline only).

Although it is recognised that the level of care input will not necessarily equate to the level of the applicant's assumed dependency level, the following table is a guide for estimating initial requirements.

Care Input	Dependency level
15 hours per week and above	High
Less than 15 hours per week	Low/Moderate

The balance will be subject to review as and when required to ensure sustainability and continuity of support.

In considering which applicant is to be offered a vacancy, the Operational Accommodation Panel will not necessarily offer it to the person who has the greatest care input but will take into account the balance of the existing community when making a recommendation.

People accommodated in extra care will derive significant benefit from the scheme if the service is properly targeted, thereby fulfilling a preventative role and promoting and prolonging independent living.

Tenant Target Group

1. People with high level of care needs may be:

- Those in residential care whose assessments indicates they can be supported and would prefer to be in self contained accommodation; and/or
- Those who require a care presence at night or such frequent assistance during the day that to provide a domiciliary care package where they are living is prohibitively expensive

2. People whose care needs are unpredictable and therefore more difficult to meet with predetermined time units of care.

3. People with degenerative conditions where a move to extra care could prolong independent living.

4. People who are highly vulnerable and at risk, making access to support and care invaluable, although their actual care package may not be large.

In addition, applicants may:

- Be in accommodation which is no longer suitable or require re-housing on medical grounds
- Have an informal carer who would derive considerable relief and support from a move into extra care

Tenant Criteria

To be eligible for extra care housing, an applicant (or if a couple one or both of the applicants) must usually:

- Be aged 55 or over (unless there are exceptional circumstances in which case they would be assessed on an individual basis)
- Have had an assessment which identifies extra care housing as a suitable option for meeting their identified needs, or be willing to undergo such an assessment; and have a combination of housing and care needs

Applicants will:

- Be frail and / or physically disabled

And /or

- Exhibit some cognitive dysfunction, possibly with short term memory loss and some disorientation, provided they are not at risk to themselves or others and would derive psychological benefit from living in this setting.

And/or

- Suffer from depression and /or some other mental illness, provided they will be able to cope with the independent living aspects of Extra Care Housing.

And / or

- Have a degree of learning disability; again provided they will be able to cope with the independent living aspects of Extra Care Housing

Couples are eligible to apply where one or both meet the above criteria.

Tenancies in Extra Care Housing Schemes will be allocated on the basis of applicants' needs as established through the appropriate assessment process. Applicants must have a positive desire to retain independence within the community but also need the security offered by an Extra Care Scheme.

NOMINATIONS AGREEMENT

The Housing Association has a Nomination Agreement in place with Rhondda Cynon Taf that entitles 100% nomination rights to the Local Authority. The Association has to abide by the nomination agreement. Allocations are made through the Operational Accommodation Panel.

ALLOCATION / ACCOMODATION PANEL FOR THOSE WITH CARE NEEDS

All units will be allocated via the Operational Accommodation Panel which will meet on a monthly basis. Information will be gathered by each of the partners and submitted to the panel two weeks prior to the date of panel, in preparation for the meeting in order that all information presented to the panel is up to date.

The Allocations Panel will:

- oversee all applications
- determine eligibility
- determine the housing and care support needs of applicants, the suitability and sustainability of care arrangements and/or accommodation.
- monitor care hours available and agree adjustments as necessary
- confirm acceptance of care package required as assessed by Community Services
- confirm the dependency level as assessed by Community Services
- decide on how to deal with any complex applications
- decide whether to exclude an applicant from the waiting list should their circumstances have changed
- prioritise applicants for accommodation and/or consider potential alternatives

APPLICATION STAGE

Applications and referrals for the scheme can be submitted to Adult Social Care Services for registration.

Upon receipt of the application form the registering officer will contact the service user to inform them they will be contacted with a view to carrying out a care needs assessment in the future.

If the applicant requires housing related support then a Supporting People Access Form will be completed for the applicant.

PROGRESS LIST OF APPLICANTS

All applications for extra care housing will be retained on a tracking database held within Adult Social Care Services.

Information contained on the referral form will be utilised to prepare a brief overview of the applicant. This list will be used as a progress report and will be updated when required.

The Operational Accommodation Panel will manage the allocation and care co-ordination process to ensure appropriate use of resources before a tenancy is offered to an extra care tenant. The Operational Accommodation Panel will keep a record of meetings and decisions made. The meeting will be minuted and the progress list of applicants updated.

The Operational Accommodation Panel will consist of:

- Care Co-ordinator – The person responsible for organising the care needs of the tenant. This may be a social worker, community care worker or community nurse
- Landlord – Housing Association
- Domiciliary Care Provider
- Housing related support provider.
- Supporting People representative

The Panel will be attended by representatives of all the partners, with each representative authorised to make decisions required on behalf of their partner agency.

Where additional information is required to support the application other members may be invited to the group to assist with an individual application as and when required.

ASSESSMENT STAGE

Wherever possible the initial visit to potential applicants will be undertaken jointly by the scheme manager and care manager. Where this is not possible individual

visits will take place with the potential applicant. The care needs assessments and home visits will be reviewed at least once a year or more frequently should issues arise. Should the care needs have altered the Operational Allocation Panel would need to be made aware of these changes. Care assessments will be undertaken when a void becomes available within the scheme.

Applicants cannot be presented to the panel without a completed care assessment.

INFORMATION COLLECTION

Prior to panel the following information will be collated:

- Number of vacancies and position within the scheme
- Number of applications on the waiting list
- Summary of unified assessment where applicable
- Number of hours of personal care allocated within the scheme

New and existing cases will be updated and brought to the Allocation Panel meetings. They have assessed the information provided by the applicant. The progress List of applicants will be updated prior to the meeting.

The Allocations Panel will then consider the applications and identify individuals and their appropriateness for extra care.

The Allocations Panel can then discuss the application from all information that is available (for example, care needs assessment, application form, Occupational Therapists Reports, etc.) from this information the Allocations panel should be in a position to make an offer to the applicant if a vacant flat is available.

If an applicant requires housing related support in order to maintain a tenancy then an allocation of a place in extra care can only be offered if there is a vacancy with a support provider.

New applications are also assessed and the Allocations Panel will discuss further action.

ALLOCATION PANEL GUIDANCE

The Panel should ensure wherever possible, that a balanced community is maintained within the scheme which reflects the needs and aspirations of the wider community.

Applicants with the same level of need

Where two or more applicants have the same level of need, the Allocation Panel will allocate the vacant unit to the applicant whose referral was received first.

Who is not eligible for allocation

Any applicant whom the allocation panel has concluded cannot be sustained or will not benefit from an extra care environment.

Maximum dependency on entry

As a general rule applicants whose needs exceed those which can be met in residential care will not normally be eligible for extra care housing

An applicant should not have, on the basis of medical or other professional opinion, on entry to the scheme (or be predicted on the basis of such opinion, to develop within a short time of entry):

- A level of physical or mental frailty exceeding that which can be met by the care provision within an extra care housing scheme.
- A requirement for frequent nursing care beyond the level available from the community nursing service.
- A requirement for specialist health services which cannot be provided in a community setting.
- A level of physical or mental frailty which is likely to cause serious disruption or risk to other tenants or themselves.

Each individual will be considered with regards to their circumstances

Refusals

If the applicant refuses they will be required to re-apply should their circumstances change.

Complaints and appeals

Applicants will be entitled to appeal against decisions made by the Allocations Panel. All complaints and appeals will be processed through the Council's structures.

Management moves

The Housing Provider and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will reserve the right to re-locate applicants or make decisions outside the operation of this policy and dependant on tenancy conditions. There could be reasons why an applicant may apply for a transfer from one flat to another as a vacancy arises. Such applications will be discussed with the Housing Association to decide whether a potential transfer will benefit the applicant.

Internal transfers

If a vacancy arises and the Scheme Manager is aware that this may benefit an existing resident who has not applied for a transfer, they may approach the resident / their advocate. This situation may arise if an adapted property becomes available which may meet the needs of a resident who is living in a property without adaptation. The decision to agree a transfer is made by the Allocations Panel.

Transfer applications may be suspended if:

- There are management concerns which need resolving
- Where the transfer will result in additional costs to the scheme landlord, for example where the resident has carried out unauthorised alterations to the flat.

Prioritising apartments

Extra Care schemes are designed to accommodate frail older people and those with a physical disability. To this end all properties will have level access. There will therefore be no case for allocating a ground floor property on the basis of any need unless the applicant can demonstrate a medical condition such as claustrophobia which would result in the fear of using the lift or the panel considers that a particular applicant will maintain their independence longer by being on the ground floor (e.g. still mobile but for shorter distances).

The decision on who has a “specific need” for a ground floor or specially adapted dwelling will be made in partnership with the Housing Association. Two bedroom properties are to be let where possible to people who meet the criteria for this larger type of accommodation.

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