

Feedback from extra care providers

Cranbrook (Eastbourne), Bentley Grange (Hailsham), Margaret House (Uckfield) and Downlands Court (Peacehaven) – the landlord is Saxon Weald

- 1.1 Following the formal announcement of Supporting People funding being removed from extra care in East Sussex, Saxon Weald wrote to all of our residents advising them of the decision and the impact that this had on the scheme manager service which was part funded by Supporting People.
- 1.2 We advised residents that we would be looking at two options:
 - reducing the amount of time that a scheme manager spent at a scheme every week and therefore reducing our service to them; or
 - exploring the options for maintaining the scheme manager service at the same level it was, which would mean an increase to their service charge
- 1.3 We encouraged residents to feedback their views and there was an overwhelming strength of feeling that the residents wanted to keep the onsite presence as it was. We then utilised a model that we had used as an organisation in our Southampton Schemes, adapting our service from housing related support model to a housing management model which enabled us to levy a service charge for this management function.
- 1.4 The tasks that we are able to carry out through our enhanced housing management (EHM) service are largely the same as those that were being carried out by the scheme manager service but with a shift away from the pure support functions.
- 1.5 We liaised with residents about our decision by holding meetings and distributing Question & Answer sheets and received no objection to our proposals. We then carried out lengthy consultations with our LA Housing Benefit colleagues who agreed our model.
- 1.6 We are in the very early days but would suggest that there has been little impact to our residents as a result of the changes.
- 1.7 Where pure welfare support is required the scheme managers engage with families, the onsite care teams and other services still being commissioned by Supporting People.
- 1.8 We have had to reduce involvement in facilitating activities in any volume but continue to support the set up and engaging of residents and volunteers to keep these running wherever possible.
- 1.9 The financial impact to residents has been minimal, those eligible for Housing Benefit support continue to have the service subsidised and those self-funding have seen an overall reduction in costs. The costs of EHM are based on actual staffing costs across the schemes.

The Orangery (Sidely) and Newington Court (Ticehurst) – the landlord is Amicus Horizon

- 1.1 Supporting People paid for part of the cost of the support service to residents. The rest of the cost was covered by the rent & service charge paid by residents.

- 1.2 We had a massive consultation campaign in Autumn 2015 in which we gave residents some choices about the level of staff support they wanted in future – and the cost to them.
- 1.3 In line with their wishes, we launched a new service that provides intensive housing management and support – funded mainly by two service charges - one HB-eligible and the other ineligible.
- 1.4 The Join Us project (which was originally funded by an SP bursary) also continues and is now run by a residents steering group. Join Us tackles isolation and promotes digital inclusion by supporting resident ‘activists’ and providing an umbrella for all sorts of activities and links between schemes. It continues to be partnership with Lewes District Council.
- 1.5 While we have some capacity to support residents, we aren’t able to provide the structured support-planning and monitoring provided when we were funded by Supporting People. We also now have a slightly smaller staff team so they’ve shifted their focus to ensuring residents are safe and promoting wellbeing and social activity.
- 1.6 Despite this, the impact in Newington Court is we’re finding it less easy to deal with residents with a high level of support needs. We suspect also we may not be picking up the problems residents don’t tell us about – because we’re not proactively reviewing a support plan. So there may be an impact from the removal of preventative support – by definition difficult to prove or quantify. At The Orangery it’s difficult to say what the impact is because we’ve started off with the new service in place and the scheme only opened in May 2016.
- 1.7 We’ve got a continual dialogue with residents both at scheme level and through our retirement services steering group – their priorities are that we should be very proactive in dealing with isolation and loneliness and promoting wellbeing.

St Bartholomew’s (Rye) – the landlord is Sanctuary Housing

- 1.8 Sanctuary Housing opened St Bartholomew’s as an Extra Care scheme in February 2016. This was with the full knowledge that Supporting People funding, covering housing related support, was being withdrawn across East Sussex.
- 1.9 We had an initial discussion with existing residents of St Bartholomew’s Court about their option to take up the ‘Extra Care’ offer once they moved back into their homes but the majority have decided not to at this stage. This offer will remain open to them as their tenancy progresses.
- 1.10 As Sanctuary Group is committed to ensuring our new and existing residents at St Bartholomew’s Court receive the support they require, we are continuing to provide an enhanced on-site housing management service, regardless of Supporting People funding withdrawal. This would be highly unlikely if we did not have the Extra Care facility there which allows for on-site staff to, upon request, assist those residents who no longer receive Supporting People funding.
- 1.11 This enhanced housing management service includes:
 - On-site housing management / service manager presence 9am-3.30pm Mon-Fri
 - Face to face liaison with residents and visitors
 - Provision of information

- Complaint management
- Marketing and letting of properties
- 'Settling in' checks for new residents
- Proactive maintenance of the communal environment
- Sign-posting to other agencies - assisting with accessing support and services from other providers
- Assistance with reporting repairs
- Contractor liaison
- Welfare support assistance to help sustain tenancies
- Promoting and organising activities to enrich the lives of residents and minimise risk of isolation
- On-site maintenance assistant Mon-Fri 8am-4pm providing a responsive and proactive maintenance service including site compliance activities and day to day scheme repairs and improvements