

# *Sheltered Housing* **THE FUTURE**

## Welcome to the second “Sheltered Housing: The Future” newsletter

I would like to start by thanking everybody who came along to the meetings over September and early October. These meetings were very useful as staff got a clear picture of residents’ opinions on the review and what is important to them about where they live.



This edition sets out feedback from these meetings and also a summary of the main questions that were raised.

The members of the Older Persons Services User Panel have provided an article setting out their opinion

on the review and their involvement to date.

There will be further consultation meetings in January and details are on the back page of this newsletter.

I hope you find this useful.

*Paul Raeburn*

◀ Paul Raeburn,  
Head of Customer and Community Services

# Quotes from the Older Persons Services User Panel

As featured in the last edition, The Older Persons Services User Panel is the main consultation group involving residents' living in sheltered housing. This group has been involved in all aspects of the review of sheltered housing. Some of the members have written about their experiences:

*"For me being on the Older Persons User Panel means that I am informed of Tarka's future plans and am able to freely express an opinion on how fellow residents may be affected. Most importantly I know that any concerns will be acted on accordingly."*

**Pauline Wells**  
Coppes Close Resident

*"I've worked with the older persons group from the beginning and find that Tarka's staff are doing their best to secure a good future for us."*

*"It will not be much of a change from the Scheme Manager as we know, to the Support Worker. These changes are being implemented by Supporting People, Tarka is working towards making sure that we will have all the support that we need as individuals."*

*"There is no need to worry; we will probably find that the change is better and will also benefit the community."*

**Cathy Martin**  
Chubb/Churchill Resident

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

**This is a summary of the main questions that were raised at the consultation meetings. These cover the concerns that were raised.**

**Q: If the transfer from Torridge to Tarka had not taken place would the proposed move to floating support be considered? (Please note floating support will be referred to as support advisor from now on)**

**A:** Yes. Torridge Council as a provider of Sheltered Housing would have to consider this.

**Q: If residential scheme managers are replaced by a support advisor based service will the schemes just become general needs?**

**A:** No. Tarka acknowledges the specific characteristics of sheltered housing and will aim to ensure

that it remains housing for older people in need.

**Q: Has the decision to move to a service delivered by Support Advisors already been made?**

**A:** No. A decision will be made by the Tarka Board prior to April 2009.

**Q: Will residents have an input into the review?**

**A:** Yes. Tarka's board will consider feedback from residents when making their decision.

**Q: We have coffee mornings and activities organised by the scheme managers? Who will do this?**

**A:** As discussed in the earlier meetings Tarka is restructuring services so that there are staff delivering support to tenants and staff managing the schemes. The provision of activities on the scheme will still remain to be organised by Tarka staff.

**Q: If my need for support changes what will happen?**

**A:** If your need for support changes your support plan will be updated and the amount of support you require will be revised. This is one of the advantages of the new proposed service; the amount of support you receive will be flexible and individually tailored to your requirements.

*“I have found members of the Older Persons User Panel to be a group of other older people as well as members of Tarka staff who give up a lot of their time to ensure everyone in sheltered accommodation get the support they need where possible – I find attending the meetings both interesting and informative.*

*Tarka seem to be working towards making tenants feel safer and more comfortable within their environment and are generally good at looking after tenants needs. I would like to think they understand the needs of people living alone and the contact they need as individuals.”*

**Carol Brock**  
Torrington Lane

*“As part of this group I wish it to be known that Tarka really do listen to what we have to say about various issues concerning residents , this includes the diverse range of people that live within our community.*

*We make sure that you are kept well informed about any changes due to take place.*

*I find that Tarka is eager to listen to what residents have to say so that the service given is the best possible”*

**Eileen Brown**  
Ethelwynne Brown Court

**Q: What will support advisors do? What is the definition of support?**

**A:** Your support advisor will be part of a wider team of Tarka staff providing housing management and communal activity involvement to sheltered schemes.

**Q: Will I have to pay ?**

**A:** If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit there is presently no charge for housing based support. The cost is currently met by Supporting People and we have no reason to think this will change in the near future.

Currently residents who do not have a support need and are not in receipt of Housing Benefit have to pay a support charge. In the future there will be the option for them to opt out of receiving support. (Residents opting out will still have the opportunity to receive Housing Support at a later date)

**Q: If there is a change to support advisors will I still have access to the alarm service?**

**A:** Yes, all eligible residents will still have the provision of the alarm service available for 365 days a year 24 hours a day. As part of the review we are looking to improve and extend the alarm service.

**Q: Will my family still be able to use the guest bedroom?**

**A:** Yes – yourselves or family will simply book it by contacting a member of Tarka staff. Payment can be taken over the phone at the Tarka office, posted in by cheque or collected when a member of staff is next at the scheme.

**Q: Will I be charged for using the laundrettes?**

**A:** Not at present, but new residents currently signing up for sheltered properties now have a small charge for laundry facilities built into the service charge attached to their tenancy.

**Q: What will happen about our television licence if no staff live on site?**

**A:** National TV Licence Record Office state that when the scheme concessionary licence expires, existing residents at the cut off date will get 'preserved rights' which gives payment protection until you reach age 75. So you will simply continue to pay the £7.50 annual payment until you are 75 and then apply for a free licence. New residents moving onto scheme after the cut off date will need to apply for and purchase their own licence until they reach age 75.

**Q: Will I still see familiar faces if I need support?**

**A:** Yes, it is our intention to use existing staff to provide the new service.



## Feedback from Roadshows:

There was a very good turnout at the majority of meetings. Generally, the Devon Supporting People strategy and its implications were discussed and accepted. However, there were some major concerns expressed and these focused on the day to day running of the schemes.

There was some strong resistance to the proposals and a number of letters and petitions were received. Marlborough Court residents were opposed to the Devon SP proposals and a further meeting took place there with staff from Devon SP and Tarka staff present.

## MEETINGS

Venue	Date	Time
Shebbear	Tuesday 13/01/09	2.00pm – 4.00pm
Dartington Fields	Friday 16/01/09	10.00am – 12.00pm
Torridge View*	Friday 16/01/09	10.00am – 12.00pm
Rolle Court	Friday 16/01/09	12.15pm – 13.15pm
Griggs Close	Friday 16/01/09	2.00pm – 4.00pm
Southlea**	Friday 16/01/09	2.00pm – 4.00pm
Torridge Close/ Torrington Lane	Tuesday 20/01/09	10.00am – 12.00pm
Tuckers Park	Monday 26/01/09	9.45am – 11.00am
Bowhay Close	Monday 26/01/09	11.45am – 1.15pm
Croft House & Glebelands	Monday 26/01/09	2.30pm – 4.00pm
Copps Close	Weds 28/01/09	11.00am – 1.00pm
Newton Road	Monday 02/02/09	10.00am – 12.00pm
Marlborough Court	Tuesday 03/02/09	10.00am – 12.00pm
Chubb/Churchill	Thursday 05/02/09	10.00am – 12.00pm
EBC Phase 1 & 2***	Friday 06/02/09	10.30am – 12.30pm

\* Meeting being held at Dartington Fields.

\*\* Meeting being held at Griggs Close.

\*\*\* Meeting being held at EBC Phase 1.