

MINUTES

Meeting: SOUTH WEST WILTSHIRE AREA BOARD
Place: Nadder Hall, Weaveland Rd, Tisbury SP3 6HJ
Date: 12 December 2012
Start Time: 6.00 pm
Finish Time: 8.05 pm

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

Lisa Moore (Democratic Services Officer), Tel: 01722 434560

or (e-mail) lisa.moore@wiltshire.gov.uk

Papers available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

In Attendance:

Wiltshire Councillors

Cllr Bridget Wayman (Chairman), Cllr Jose Green, Cllr Richard Beattie (Vice Chairman), Cllr Tony Deane and Cllr George Jeans

Wiltshire Council Officers

Stephen Harris, Community Area Manager
Lisa Moore, Democratic Services Officer
Janet O'Brien, Head of New Housing
Nicole Smith, Head of Strategic Housing
Derek Streek, Head of Housing Management

Town and Parish Councillors

Chilmark Parish Council – P Boyles & L Jack
Dinton Parish Council – C Smith
Hindon Parish Council – M Constable, D Robertson & J Robinson
Mere Parish Council – A Long, R Sims, M White & L Wood
Quidhampton Parish Council – K Taylor
Sedgehill and Semley PC – G Purdue
Swallowcliffe Parish Council – G Ewer
Tisbury Parish Council – D Carrole & F Corp
West Tisbury Parish Council – I Lacey
Wilton Town Council – P Matthews

Total in attendance: 38

<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>
1	<p><u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed everyone to the extraordinary meeting of the South West Wiltshire Area Board, to focus on Council Housing in Wiltshire and changes to the Housing Allocations Policy.</p>
2	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>There were none.</p>
3	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>There were none.</p>
4	<p><u>Affordable Housing for the Future</u></p> <p>Janet O'Brien, Head of New Housing gave a presentation on the current Policy for adding to the Housing Stock and possible changes for the future.</p> <p>Since the Southern Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy was adopted in February 2012, the council had worked with housing associations to help deliver more affordable housing. The Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy was submitted to the examiner in July 2012. A public examination of the document would take place in February/March 2013, with the aim of full adoption of the policy by Summer 2013.</p> <p>The numbers of new homes to be identified around the South West are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 105 new homes to be identified in the Mere Community Area with 80 in Mere, 25 elsewhere • 210 new homes to be identified in the Tisbury Community Area with 40 in Tisbury, 170 elsewhere • 95 remaining new homes to be identified in the rest of the Wilton Community Area (the allocation for Wilton is included in Salisbury Area Strategy) <p>Questions and comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the affordable homes be to rent or buy? Answer: There would be a mixture of both. We look at the needs information for a particular area and look at affordability and then usually go for a mixture of both. • Who owns these houses once built? Answer: The developer will build the houses and then sell them on to a housing association to manage. • If only 4 households completing the rural needs survey said that they

	<p>were in need of affordable housing, how many houses would you build? Answer: If the Rural Needs Survey came back and showed that only 4 houses were required, we would not be looking to over provide the need. If the need was not justified the project would not receive planning permission to build the houses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a developer was to build 4 or less homes, would he then provide the contribution? Answer: If a housing association wanted to build 4 homes, then the fee would be waived, but if it was a private developer then the fee would be charged. We would look at the value of the site, the cost of the development and what they could afford to contribute. • With regards to the ‘need’ of the affordable housing, when is this need, now or in the future? Answer: The Rural Housing Needs Survey is carried out every 5 years. If 4 households complete the survey and say that they are in need, then that need is now. • New affordable housing properties will be owned by housing associations, but there are local land owners who would be willing to develop a section of their land if they were able to keep control of the housing stock and manage the properties themselves. Answer: We are also looking at this option and are currently in talks with local land owners to find a way to work together to ensure that rents remain affordable. If a land owner could offer the same as a housing association then there would be a way forward.
5	<p><u>Overview of Council Housing in South West Wiltshire</u></p> <p>Derek Streek, Head of Council Housing gave an overview of the current council housing stock and the tenants within the South West Wiltshire community area.</p> <p>A few years ago the council had contacted all tenants to speak to them about the possibility of transferring to a housing association because the medium term financial position was unsustainable. Tenants voted in favour of staying with the council. However a self financing scheme was introduced to replace the subsidy system in April 2012 which allowed the council to take a £118 million loan but the repayments on this are less than was be paid to the government in the subsidy system.</p> <p>The council previously had to pay a third of the rent revenue to government. This had now stopped and funds from revenues collected from rent could be invested on new council housing schemes for the future.</p> <p>Parking had been highlighted as a common issue on housing estates. Having inadequate parking spaces can also lead to access issues. The Council aimed to work with tenants to establish how best to use funds available.</p> <p>A new IT system would be launched in 2013, which would enable tenants to carryout tasks online, including; reporting repairs, tracking repairs and to check their rent account.</p>

	<p>The new combined repairs and maintenance contract for council housing had gone out for tender in line with European regulations. The chosen contractors will provide a service which covers heating, electrical, response repairs and planned maintenance? One of the purposes of having larger contracts is financial saving. Several possible contractors had been interviewed; the contract would be awarded in due course.</p> <p>A staff restructure was underway, to enable the Housing team to provide a more specialist service to the tenants. Officers would be able to deal with income recovery and to assist tenants in maximising the benefits available to them.</p> <p>Comments and Questions were then taken, these included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would the new contractor for maintenance involve local tradesmen? <u>Answer:</u> We have emphasised that we would like to see local businesses involved where possible, however using a local sub-contractor may not be cost effective. • Could the maintenance work be carried out by direct labour? <u>Answer:</u> The council does has a team of direct labour staff who deal with response repairs, however when there is the need to install a batch of bathrooms for example, it would be more efficient and cost effective to use a contractor who can deal with the workload. • Some tenants requiring adaptations due to medical conditions have had to wait a long time to see the Occupational Therapist, in order for them to submit a report to the Housing Team, before any work can be carried out. The current system needs to be changed. <u>Answer:</u> There had been some delays within the Occupational Therapist Team; however extra staff were now in place so the backlog would be resolved.
6	<p><u>Housing Allocations Policy</u></p> <p>The Board received information on the background of the Housing Allocations Policy, why it is being reviewed by Wiltshire Council and how it is seeking the views of the community.</p> <p><u>Wiltshire Council Housing Register</u> There were currently 17,088 people on the Housing Register across Wiltshire, 701 of those had expressed a first preference to housing in the South West Wiltshire (SWW) community area.</p> <p>The total number of lettings across Wiltshire since April 2012 was 611, with 20 of those in the SWW area, of which 18 had a local connection. The breakdown</p>

on reason for local connection was as follows:

- 6 Close family in South West Wiltshire
- 10 Household already lives in South West Wiltshire
- 2 Employed in South West Wiltshire

Under Occupation

Under the Housing Reform, the council was required to bring social housing in line with the private housing sector by introducing the underoccupation system.

In the SWW area 132 households would be affected by the underoccupation system which would be in place from 1 April 2013. The Housing Benefit payment to the occupants in a property which was underoccupied would be reduced.

The council had started a course of actions to ensure that all of the tenants involved were made aware of the options available to them prior to the 1 April 2013, these actions included:

- Publishing articles in Housing Matters magazine which is distributed to every Wiltshire Council tenant.
- Wiltshire Money to produce a short film which would be made available on the council's website/facebook page:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsSgigggDtY&feature=share>
- The benefit service would be writing to all customers believed to be affected by the new under occupancy rules throughout September 2012.
- Restructure of Housing Department to include Financial Inclusion Officer, extra Mental Health Housing Support Officer, Social Worker and dedicated Income Recovery Team.
- Housing Management to contact all tenants affected by underoccupation (this is thought to be around 463 households in total 8.6% of tenants) and offer an appointment with their housing officer.

Update on the review

The Localism Act 2011 introduced amendments to Part 6 of the Housing Act. It provides new freedoms to set the rules determining which categories of applicants qualify for social housing, these could include:

- Local connection
- Exclusions or reduced preference
- Under-occupation / Foster carers
- Households in work or seeking work / training
- Identified housing need

7	<p><u>Discussion and Voting Session</u></p> <p>Those in attendance then participated in a voting session on a series of questions on Housing Allocations criteria, by using the voting handsets.</p> <p>A copy of the presentation slides for the meeting and the results of the voting session are attached to the end of the minutes.</p>
8	<p><u>Urgent Business - Delegation of Authority to Agree Funding</u></p> <p>The Chairman agreed to take an item of Urgent Business which had been put forward by Councillor Deane.</p> <p>Delegation of power to the Community Area Manager for the purpose of funding the production and distribution of a community newsletter providing an update to local residents of the Tisbury Community Campus Plans.</p> <p>A report had been uploaded to the web and circulated at the meeting, detailing the proposal. A copy of the report is attached to the end of these minutes.</p> <p><u>Decision</u> The South West Area Board agreed:</p> <p>That in respect of the urgent matter above, the Community Area Manager, in consultation with the Chairman of the South West Wiltshire Area Board, be granted delegated authority to make a decision on expenditure for the purposes of distributing a community newsletter that will provide an update on the Tisbury Campus project, before the scheduled Area Board meeting on 6 February 2013.</p> <p>The Board will receive an updated at the next meeting on 6 February 2013 detailing the total amount required to distribute the newsletter.</p>
9	<p><u>Close</u></p> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.</p> <p>The next meeting of the South west Wiltshire Area Board will be held on Wednesday 6 February 2013, at the Grove Buildings, Mere at 7.00pm.</p>
<p><u>Attachments</u></p>	

South West Wiltshire

Housing Presentation

Derek Streek, Nicole Smith & Janet O'Brien

Current and future affordable housing delivery

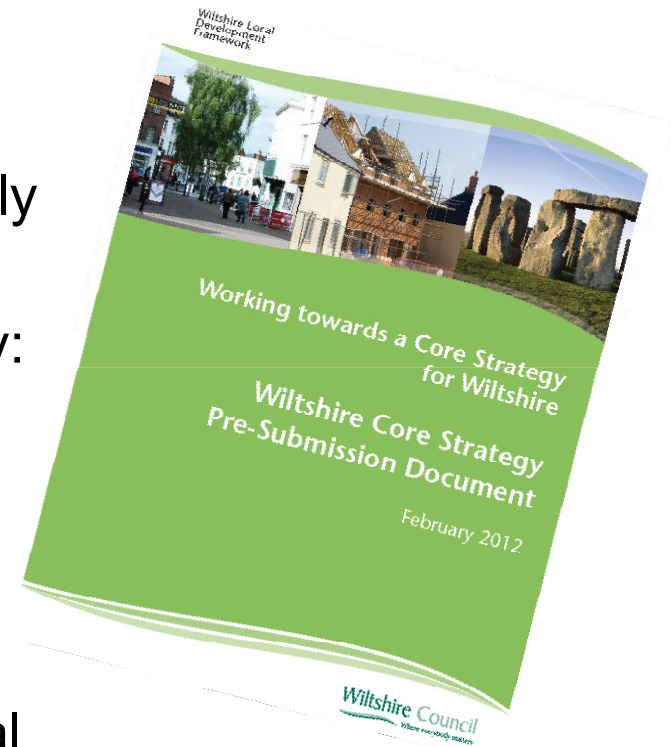
Current Policy – South Wiltshire Core Strategy

- Target of 40% on-site affordable housing required on all sites of 15 dwellings or more
- Target of 25% on-site affordable housing required on all sites of 5-14 dwellings
- Financial contribution towards affordable housing on all sites of 1-4 dwellings. Contributions range from £7,578 - £15,155 per dwelling.
- Contributions can be used towards affordable housing provision anywhere in Wiltshire.

Draft Planning Policy - Housing

Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy

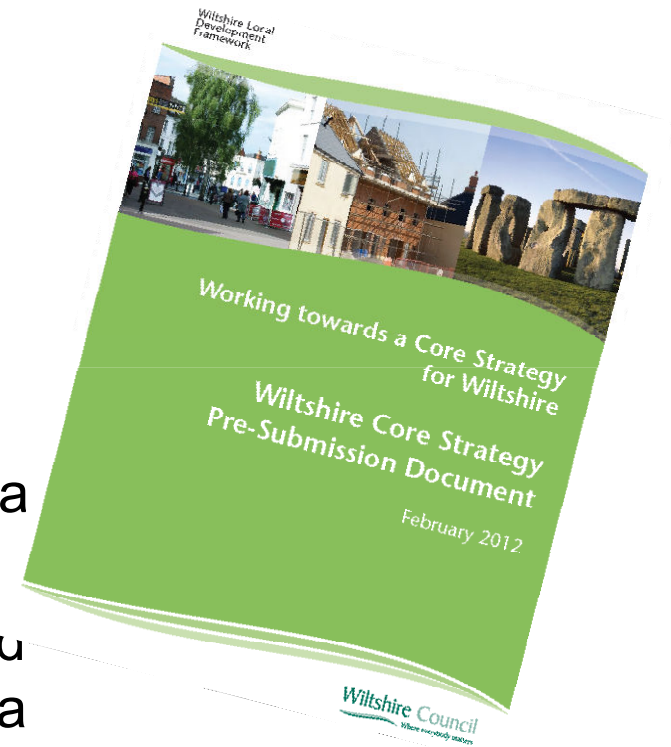
- Wiltshire Core Strategy submitted 10 July 2012. Awaiting Examination dates
- South West Wiltshire Area is covered by:
 - Mere Community Area
 - Tisbury Community Area
 - Wilton Community Area
- Housing numbers contribute towards alleviating affordability issues, meet local housing need and support employment



Draft Planning Policy - Housing

Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy

- 105 remaining new homes to be identified in the Mere Community Area with 80 in Mere, 25 elsewhere
- 210 remaining new homes to be identified in the Tisbury Community Area with 40 in Tisbury, 170 elsewhere
- 95 remaining new homes to be identified in the rest of the Wilton Community Area (the allocation for Wilton is included in Salisbury Area Strategy)



Draft Planning Policy - Housing

Designation	Settlement	Level of development proposed
Local Service Centres	Mere Tisbury Wilton	Modest levels of development in order to safeguard role and to deliver affordable housing
Large Villages	Fovant, Hindon, Ludwell Broadchalk, Dinton	Development limited to meet housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities.
Small Villages	East Knoyle, Kilmington, Semley/Semley Station, Stourton, Zeals Antsy, Berwick St John, Charlton, Chilmark, Donhead St Andrew, Donhead St Mary, Fonthill Bishop, Fonthill Gifford, Sutton Mandeville, Swallowcliffe, Tollard Royal Barford St Martin, Bishopstone, Bowerchalke (inc Misselfore), Compton Chamberlayne, Ebbesbourne Wake, Quidhampton, South Newton, Stoford, Teffont Magna/Teffont Evias	Development limited to meet housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities.

Draft Planning Policy - Housing

Affordable housing

- 5 or more = 40% onsite
- 4 or less = financial contribution – method to be identified in an Affordable Housing SPD
- Rural exception sites

Neighbourhood planning

- Statutory say for communities to help shape development in the areas in which they live



Pipeline delivery for South West Wiltshire

On site

Hindon Lane, Tisbury – 34 affordable homes. Due for completion Spring 2013 – Feb 2014.

Pipeline

UKLF site, Wilton – 180 affordable homes. Outline planning consent granted.

Other affordable housing opportunities

- Working with Parish Councils, Registered Providers and landowners to find opportunities to develop affordable housing for local people in rural villages.
 - Rural Housing Needs surveys are currently underway in Hindon and Fovant
 - Discussions also being held with Dinton Parish Council
 - Survey already completed in East Knoyle.
-

Wiltshire Council is improving the service to housing tenants...



...with a revised Business Plan:

- A change in the way council housing is financed has provided an opportunity to construct a viable Business Plan.
- This plan will outline the service standards we aim to achieve, and the level of investment we will make in the housing stock across Wiltshire.
- It will include £30m of investment in housing stock over the next 5 years.

...with an Asset Management Strategy:

- Asset Management is about the long term planning and maintenance of council assets, such as houses, flats and garages.
- Sets out a number of key actions that will improve the overall service.
- Fundamental to the successful delivery of Wiltshire Council's objectives within the Business Plan, to deliver good quality housing and services in a cost effective way.
- Identifies the housing stock, its condition, use and required re-investment over the next 30 years.
- Monitors, records and evaluates performance across the Housing Service.

...with a new IT system:

- Providing technology which will enable officers to update tenant information with 'live' information offsite i.e. when visiting a tenant in their home.
- Offering online access for tenants to report their own repairs, check their rent account and update any personal details.
- Supporting all of the other improvements currently being carried out by Housing.
- A customer focused system which enables staff to see on one screen, all contacts that have taken place between the Housing Service and tenants.
- Document Imaging

...new repairs and maintenance contracts:

- All repairs and maintenance will be provided by partnership contracts including our own repairs work force delivering a more efficient service for all Housing Service repairs.
- The new contract will deliver better value for money.
- The councils' current workforce will be retained.
- Apprenticeships will be created to provide employment opportunities.

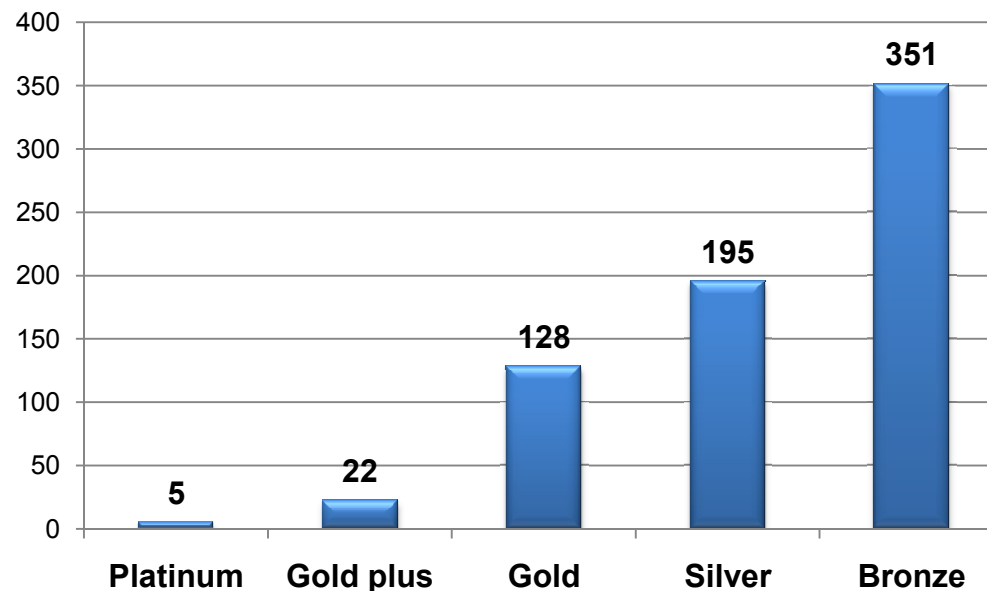
...with a staff restructure:

- To help ensure this additional investment delivers improvements to our tenants we are making changes to the structure of our landlord services. Staff will be empowered to do more to meet the tenants' needs. Providing the service tenants tell us they want.
- This will include apprenticeships and an emphasis on tenant involvement.
- Increased management and supervision will ensure this service is improved.

Housing Register Breakdown

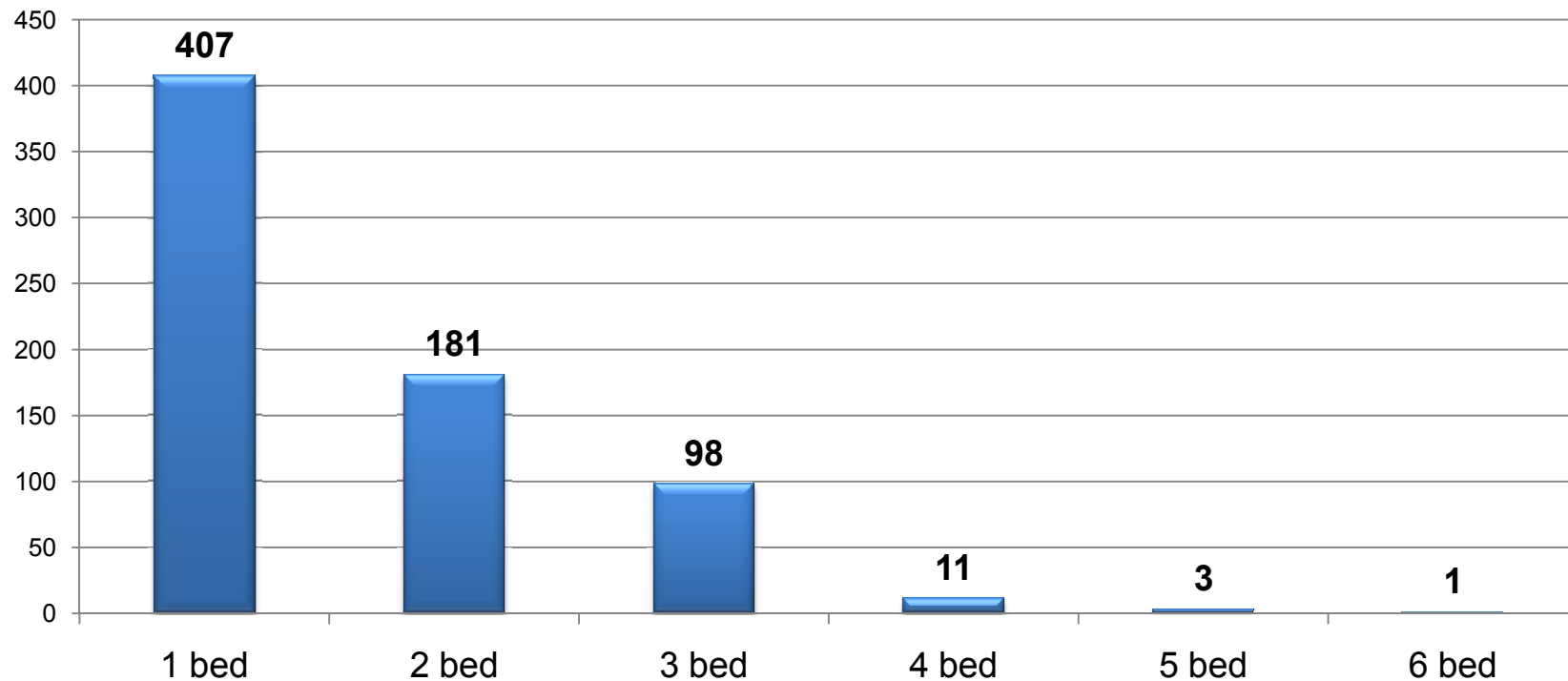
Total on the Housing Register **17,088**

701 Households with a 1st preference for South West Wiltshire



Housing Register

By Bed Size for South West Wiltshire





Social Housing Lettings in South West Wiltshire



Total lettings across Wiltshire since April 2012 **611 households**
20 Lettings in the area of which **18** had a local connection

Breakdown on reason for local connection

- 6 Close family in South West Wiltshire
- 10 Household already lives in South West Wiltshire
- 2 Employed in South West Wiltshire

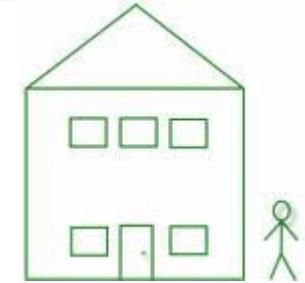
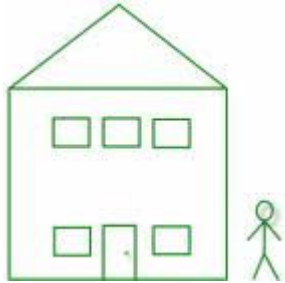
Lettings in South West Wiltshire Breakdown by band



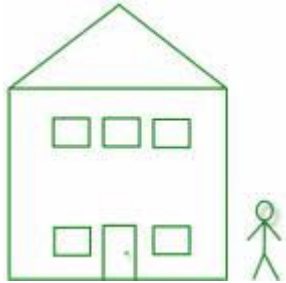
Platinum	Gold +	Gold	Silver	Bronze
2	4	12	1	1

Under Occupation

132 Households
in South West Wiltshire

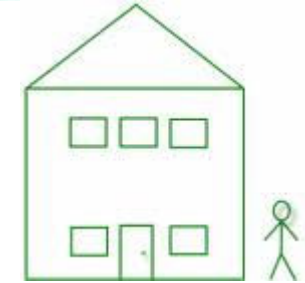


Landlord	Total number of households affected	Numbers of households losing £10-£20 pw	Numbers of households losing £20+ pw
Radian	6	6	0
Raglan	5	4	1
Sanctuary	4	3	1
Wiltshire Council	116	94	21
Wiltshire Rural Housing Association	1	1	0
TOTAL	132	108	23



Under Occupation

132 Households
in South West Wiltshire



Currently living in a	<i>Needs a...</i>			Total
	<i>1 bed</i>	<i>2 bed</i>	<i>3 bed</i>	
2 bed	50			50
3 bed	21	55		76
4 bed	0	2	4	6
Total	71	57	4	132

Housing Management – Underoccupation Welfare Reform

Actions being taken: General

- Articles in Housing Matters magazine which is distributed to every Wiltshire Council tenant
- Wiltshire Money having a short film produced which will be made available on the council's website/facebook page etc - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsSgiggqDtY&feature=share>
- The benefit service will be writing to all customers believed to be affected by the new under occupancy rules throughout September 2012

Housing Management – Underoccupation Welfare Reform

Actions being taken: Specific

- Restructure of Housing Department to include Financial Inclusion Officer, extra Mental Health Housing Support Officer, Social Worker and dedicated Income Recovery Team.
- Housing Management to contact all tenants affected by underoccupation (this is thought to be around 463 households in total 8.6% of tenants) and offer an appointment with their housing officer to discuss ways of tackling.

Housing Management – Underoccupation Welfare Reform - Advice

Staying and making up the shortfall in rent

- Cover the shortfall from personal income
- Offer/refer for budgeting and debt advice and discuss opening a bank account/Credit Union
- Try to increase hours of work
- Take in a lodger
- Apply for Discretionary Housing Payment

Assistance in moving

- Mutual Exchange – Homeswapper.co.uk and possible separate exchange list between RSL landlords
- Homes4Wiltshire – Bandings to be revised so underoccupiers in higher band
- Private Sector – Claim local housing allowance to cover rent

Review of Allocations

The Localism Act 2011 introduces amendments to Part 6 of the Housing Act.

It provides new freedoms to set the rules determining which categories of applicants qualify for social housing

- Local connection
- Exclusions or reduced preference
- Under-occupation / Foster carers
- Households in work or seeking work / training
- Identified housing need



Questions

1. How should Wiltshire Council consider Local Connection?

2 1. Maintain a open housing register for all

5 2. A Local Connection to Wiltshire is required to join

11 3. Priority to those with a local connection to an area

2. What is a Local Connection to an area?

15 1. Employed in the area

15 2. Lives or previously lived in the area

16 3. Family currently reside in the area

3. Should additional priorities be given to the following?

9 1. Under Occupation

15 2. Employment

10 3. Training

4 4. Those who volunteer in the community

4. Should we include any exclusions within the policy?

9 1. Those with no identified housing need

17 2. Those evicted or caused severe Anti Social Behaviour

11 3. Those with significant rent arrears

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING – 12 DECEMBER 2012 SOUTH WEST WILTSHIRE AREA BOARD

(URGENT BUSINESS - ADDITIONAL ITEM)

Delegated Power to the Community Area Manager for the purposes of Community Newsletter

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Area Board to consider whether it wishes to delegate power to the Community Area Manager to take an urgent decision before the next scheduled Area Board meeting on 6 February 2013, in relation to funding the distribution of a Community Newsletter providing an update to local residents of the Tisbury Community Campus plans.

2. Background

2.1 The South West Wiltshire Area Board has already delegated £750 to make decisions in the 2012/13 financial year, but it is not yet known whether this amount will be sufficient for this work.

2.2 The proposal to grant delegated power to the Community Area Manager, in consultation with the Chairman, would enable an urgent decision to be made without the need for an extraordinary meeting. The details of the decision would then be reported to the next meeting of the board to ensure transparency.

2.3 The Tisbury Shadow COB (Community Operations Board) worked alongside a design team to carry out a feasibility assessment of the Tisbury Campus proposal. This proposal (including the enhanced option) was approved by Wiltshire Council's Cabinet on 23 October 2012. The full Cabinet paper is available via the link below (item 11):

<http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=6824&Ver=4>

2.4 As a result of this decision, the Tisbury Shadow COB decided to produce a community newsletter to ensure as many local people as possible are made aware of the developments and are informed about what the campus aims to achieve. At the time of this report, the content and distribution of the newsletter is still being finalised and, therefore, it is not possible to present a full report to the Area Board. The Tisbury Shadow COB consider that this newsletter should be sent out as soon as possible, hence this action being taken so that there is not a delay until the next Area Board meeting to approve funding.

3. Recommendation

3.1 It is proposed that the South West Wiltshire Area Board agrees:

That in respect of the urgent matter above, the Community Area Manager, in consultation with the Chairman of the South West Wiltshire Area Board, be granted delegated authority to make a decision on expenditure for the purposes of distributing a community newsletter that will provide an update on the Tisbury Campus project, before the scheduled Area Board meeting on 6 February 2013.

A report explaining the decision and the reasons why it was considered to be urgent shall be reported to the next ordinary meeting of the area board to ensure that such decisions are subject to public examination.

Report Author: Stephen Harris – Community Area Manager
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