

Extra Care Housing

Resident newsletter

Issue 02

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – May 2021

Introduction

We continue to receive many emails and phone calls with questions and ideas for the services. We really appreciate people taking the time to get involved. Thank you and please keep the suggestions coming. We're intending to reply to all of these through the newsletter and FAQs and will make this information available on the webpages, so that everyone has the same information.

You asked for more information on the initial option that cabinet agreed in February. So, the FAQs in this newsletter provide more information about that option. Remember, the initial option is not the final option, it's just a starting point for our discussions and your feedback on it is important, as no decisions have yet been taken.

Many people have asked similar questions, so we have grouped these by 'theme'. For example, if you've asked a question about evening and weekend cover in the initial option, this question is answered below, but the wording may look different to how you wrote your original question.

If we haven't answered your question in this newsletter, we're looking at it for the next one! Some people have raised questions about issues with the current service. Typically, we will deal with those questions separately.

Q1: Why hasn't the council done more detailed work on the new model yet?

A: This is mostly down to how co-design is intended to work in stages. We don't start out having all the answers and all the detail straight away. We need to hear what's important to you.

We have been trying to keep some space to design with your ideas and suggestions in mind. We didn't think it was right to present residents with a finished model and only then ask for your thoughts, as that didn't feel in-keeping with the spirit of co-design.

We're trying to find the right balance. We heard from people in the online meeting that they wanted the council team to provide more detail of each part of the service. We heard you and are working on this now.

We are also busy working on a lot of the 'behind the scenes' things like researching different types of service

models to see what's worked well elsewhere and what hasn't.

Q2: I had a pendant/telecare system in my old flat and I moved to an extra care facility because of the on-site 24/7 presence. If I used the telecare/community alarm system proposed in the initial option, how long would it take for the emergency response to reach me?

A: We are speaking with the Life-Line service, the provider of the community alarm service across Wiltshire. We're finding out more information on response times but were not able to get the answer in time before we published this newsletter. We'll put the answer in the next newsletter and update the website.

Q3: The council's initial preferred option talks about the hub being based at Needham House, with weekly sessions being held in the other

three schemes. What do you mean by 'sessions'?

A: These are surgery type drop-in sessions each week for the residents of Crammer Court, Meadow Court and Bell Orchard and are designed to operate in much the same way as the current daytime service does now. It would be direct time with the provider in person and on-site. We had not reached a final decision on how many visits would be made to each scheme.

Please also see the myth busting section of the FAQ. We are now looking at a wider range of options with residents to co-design the service.

Q4: I have built up a relationship with my on-site carers and this is important to me. How can I have a say in who may win the contract to deliver a potential revised Extra Care Housing service?

A: Thank you for raising this with us. There are a couple of things to consider here.

Alongside co-design with residents, we will also be speaking to potential providers about their experiences in providing extra care and what they think a good model looks like (it has to be affordable to them to provide it).

Soon after the final decision on the new model the council will look to find a provider for a new contract. We call this 'going out to tender'. Remember, Cera Care and Somerset Care can also compete for the new contract.

We mentioned in the presentation that we would like residents to be as involved as possible in the decision on who the new provider might be. We do know of some interesting ways that people have done this successfully before.

If you have ideas about how you would like to be involved or want us to say more about how choosing a provider works, then let us know through the email and phone number: adultscommissioning@wiltshire.gov.uk or calling: 0300 456 0100 and

asking for 'Adults Commissioning: Extra Care Housing'.

Before you move on to the next question though -

It might also be helpful to clarify something here about who we mean by 'on-site carers'

- If the onsite carers you're referring to are part of an individual care package tailored to your personal care needs, that you have agreed with the council's social workers, then that package of care should continue.
- However if the question is asking about the staff who provide the contracted extra care service to all residents then the current onsite staff would normally have a right to transfer to a new provider if there is a change – but it is their choice to do so.

Q5: There is no mention of evening or weekend cover in the initial option: Are we to assume there will be no change, since this is paid by us in the service charge and the council would not benefit financially?

A: The initial preferred option proposed that there would be a day-time (9am – 5pm) presence at Needham House and a sleep-in presence during the night. It did not propose that the 'extra care' service was available on the evenings or weekend days.

It is important to remember that the co-design process now allows us to look at a wider range of options for the service.

We can clarify that the 'service charge' that residents currently pay will be a housing cost payable to the landlord. For example, in Needham House, the housing service charge pays towards the Scheme Manager Role (available Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm). Previously, these service charges were higher and included the scheme manager being available at the weekend. However, following a review, it was decided to bring this post in line with other housing services. Weekend

cover from housing was removed, creating a saving for residents.

There was another charge which was paid only by residents in Needham House and Bell Orchard. This was called the 'core charge' and was commonly understood to contribute to the costs of the night-time service. The council decided to temporarily remove this charge, creating an equal approach across all four extra schemes. From 1 November 2020 the council now fully funds the extra care service until a new model is agreed.

Based on some of our conversations with residents and colleagues as well as the questions we've received, we thought it would be useful to focus the next newsletter's 'myth buster' session on clarifying the different elements of the current model. Some people have also raised questions with us about the terms of tenancy and lease agreements on what the availability of '24/7 care' means. We will also look to clarify more on that subject.

Q6: The initial option talks about keeping the day shifts 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday, however at Needham House there is a 24hr presence. Does this mean that this service is being removed, or are you only looking at changing the overnight service at Needham and not the other schemes?

A: The initial option that cabinet proposed would be a daytime Monday to Friday presence at Needham House and a sleep-in service during the night, contactable by telecare or a community alarm from all four schemes. This would be installed and funded by the council. As Needham House had been designated as 'the hub' in the initial option, this proposes that there is no on-site presence at the other three schemes.

The initial option did not propose the extra care service being active at Needham from between 5pm-10pm (the time between when the daytime

presence ends and the night-time cover starts). However, people in any scheme with personal care packages for their individual care needs will continue to have those needs met.

There are other options we can now look through the co-design process at, but the final model does need to be affordable to the council, affordable for the provider, be in-line to residents' needs and lease / tenancy obligations, as well as be affordable for residents.

Q7: The preferred option does not say whether it will only be one person on call for all four schemes, or whether there will be more than one person working during the shift? What happens if someone in another scheme needs the carer at the same time as someone in my scheme?

A: Thank you for raising this. A decision had not been made on the number of staff providing the night-time cover. Under current arrangements we understand it is possible that more than one person could require the on-call worker at the same time, but we do appreciate that it is different when all are within the same building. The more staff are employed. The higher the cost of the service, but the higher the service level to each scheme. We will also be looking for feedback from providers on their experiences of providing night-time services under different extra care models.

We had also considered that the Life-Line system may meet the same outcome in a different way. This is a service that is used to provide on-call night-time cover across the county. The 'starter for 10' model in the presentation includes all four schemes having access to the community alarm service.

Q8: Will the proposals be accompanied by risk and equality impact assessments?

A: Yes.

The council has a responsibility to

the Public Sector Equality Duty and recognises the importance of service proposals being accompanied by robust risk assessment and equality impact assessments.

The 2 February cabinet paper on extra care housing included detail on risk and equality impact assessments, which can be found on pp.255-256 of the following [link](#) (after following the link, please click on 'public reports pack'). For those of you who have received a hard copy of the newsletter, please type this web address into your web browser

(cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MIId=13094&Ver=4),

Or – let us know if you would like a paper copy posted to you.

have internet access. We thought this would help make the online meeting more accessible.

We appreciate that more people may be familiar with Zoom and whilst Zoom comes with much of the same functionality as Teams, we chose not to use Zoom for the online meeting because it restricts meetings to 40 minutes and is currently under scrutiny regarding its data practices.

If you have a different preference for how a future online meeting could be run – please do let us know and we will do our best to accommodate this. We are mindful though that increasing the number of meeting types may make it more difficult to make sure everyone gets the same information.

Q9: Will the ambulance and fire service be consulted on the proposals for ECH?

A: Yes. We will be consulting with the ambulance and fire service on the final proposals for ECH before making a decision. Any final proposals will be risk assessed.

Q10: Why did the online meeting take place over Microsoft Teams?

A: We would have preferred to meet in person but COVID restrictions did not allow. We had also heard from some residents who were keen to get the conversation started. The online meeting was hosted over Microsoft Teams as we thought Microsoft was a brand that most people would be familiar with and you can use it from a wide range of devices.

Teams comes with a 'breakout function', meaning that it allows you to move into smaller 'breakout' groups to help exchange ideas, and is then able to return everyone to the main meeting together. We thought you would find this more accommodating when it came to sharing ideas and smaller groups allow more for in-depth discussions.

Microsoft Teams also allows people to dial-in from a telephone if they do not

Q11: The shared ownership leases and tenants' leases for Needham House state that emergency care must be provided on-site 24/7 for residents. Does this mean that the council cannot take the 24/7 on-site presence away from Needham House?

A: We are aware of the shared ownership leases and the lease agreement for tenants of Needham House, as well as the interpretation of the wording used in these lease agreements. This will be considered as we re-design the service. By the end of the co-production process, the issue will have been addressed appropriately, informing the new model.

Q12: Residents value the social activities that took place prior to COVID. Are there any opportunities to reinstate these and would residents have to organise them?

A: We are aware that many residents value the social activities that used to take place at your ECH scheme and unfortunately had to stop because of the COVID restrictions. We understand many would like to see this element retained in the new model for ECH. We would therefore expect the new contracts to have some provision for supporting activities.

Potential providers will be asked for their ideas on how to support and work with residents to organise activities of their choice under the new contract. Extra care is a form of independent living and we would always encourage residents being proactive in creating activities. We understand that some schemes already have had successful resident-led activities groups in the past.

there are opportunities to do so.

Q13: We have been updated that because of insurance liabilities, carers and other residents are no longer able to support their neighbours to attend a social event – e.g. assisting a neighbour in a wheelchair to attend a resident coffee morning. What can be done to support those who live alone and would like additional support to engage socially with other residents?

Q15: If you remove the on-site presence at Crammer Court, will I still be able to get hot dinners?

A: This is not correct. We have checked with the providers and their staff are covered by insurance, so they can support residents to attend the social activities, once government guidance allows.

A: We understand that on occasion some residents at Crammer Court use an external catering provider and eat together (and use the same service to eat in their flats under COVID restrictions). We also understand that the current extra care provider has a role in supporting this.

Q14: When the activities can run (outside of COVID restrictions) how much do they cost and who pays for them? Is it Wiltshire Council's responsibility to organise these as part of combatting residents' social isolation?

A: Cost will vary by the activity. Both Cera Care and Somerset Care are contracted to provide 10 hours of activities per week. It is part of the wider extra care contracted service that the council pays for. It is not possible to breakdown the cost 'by activity'.

As part of co-design, we will consider the level of potential eligible need for people to receive hot meals or direct support in meal preparation. We will do this across all our schemes, not just Crammer.

If you believe you have an eligible social care need for support with meal preparation, please contact us using the email address or phone number in the newsletter and we'll point you in the right direction. Or you can speak to your provider and ask them to put you in touch with social services 'Advice and Contact' team.

If onsite services stopped at Crammer (bearing in mind no decision on the final model has been made yet) then residents without an assessed social care need for support in meal preparation would still be able to access and order hot meals from external providers, as anyone living independently in the community would. The new provider would be able to help you make these arrangements in accordance with the principles of independent living (so for example, we wouldn't expect doorstep delivery from the provider). There are a number of ways this outcome can be met appropriately.

Reducing loneliness and social isolation will be elements of a new service specification. Outside of contractual provision, residents would of course be able to decide on other activities that they may wish to undertake and fund themselves. We are also happy to work with residents and the future provider on alternative sources of funding for activities where

However we would not normally expect a provider under an extra care contract to have a direct role in meal preparation and related domestic duties, unless there was a need to specify it in their contract or if it was necessary because of the

level of residents' need, such as in a care home, or where a person has an assessed social care need for home meals provision or direct support in meal preparation.

Q16: How often is the onsite night service currently used?

At April 2021, there were the following number of calls made to the onsite services. We are currently analysing the patterns and reasons why the night service is used and will update this in the next newsletter.

Scheme

Average number of calls to night service (April 2021 data)

Bell Orchard	five per week
Crammer Court	six per week
Meadow Court	three per week
Needham House	one per week

We heard from people at the online residents' meeting that many were concerned about how the night support could work if the council's initial preferred model were to go ahead. We thought it would be useful to compile all the remaining questions on telecare / community alarm into one section below.

As the county-wide community alarm service Life-Line has much experience in this area, we sought their specialist advice to support our answers here.

Q17: How will the call centre assess the needs of the resident, if they are using the emergency alarm?

A: The call centre will assess the needs of a resident using the emergency alarm in the normal way. For example, they will ask you a series of questions about your current state and the help that you may need. This would be the same approach used by the call centre handler to determine the type of help and support that you may need.

Q18: Will the call handler have appropriate training and qualifications?

A: Yes. We will only choose a provider that has the right staff with the right skills, experience and qualifications to do the job.

If the Life-Line service were to provide this function, we already know their staff are appropriately trained and experienced.

Q19: Who will the responder be and how will they get to my scheme? My scheme is not listed as the hub in the initial option, so would the responder be put at risk trying to access my scheme, if I call for help in the night?

A: At the moment, we don't yet know who the individual responder will be as we do not know which provider will win the new contract. We would not expect any different risk for a night-time responder than for any Life-Line or emergency services responder that may need to respond to a call for help anywhere in the community. We will make sure the service is properly and safely provided for responders as well as residents.

Q20: How will the responder get into the individual's scheme and then their flat, if they are not on-site?

A: This would be the same as current arrangements with your on-site service. Any responder would have access to each scheme and residents' flats, via master keys, so that they can access any resident's flat, should the resident call for help.

Q21: How will the responder be able to locate the client if they are not in their flat and the responder is not familiar with the scheme and its grounds? How much longer will it take the responder to reach me, if I am not in my flat and they visit my flat first?

A: A typical pendant/telecare system has a range of 50 yards (according to Life Line). This means that if you are not in your flat, the responder will know that you will be on-site somewhere and can

look for you.

If you are not in your flat and have not informed the call centre of your location, then it is difficult to say how much longer it may take to find you, as it would depend where you are and who you are with. We will make sure all responders visit the schemes at the very start of the contract and know their way around.

Q22: What happens if the responder can't hear the resident?

A: According to Life-Line, if the responder cannot hear you, then they will call your telephone. If there is no reply, the responder will phone the first contact on your list and ask them to go around to your house. If they are unavailable, the responder will try your second contact, or third etc. If your contacts are unavailable, as you have pressed your button, the responder will get their emergency response person to come around and see what the situation is.

Q23: Often the first question from the responder is are you bleeding. How can you answer this if you have fallen or hit your head?

A: If you are unsure whether you are bleeding, it is best to answer 'I don't know' to the responder and explain that you have fallen. The responders are well trained and will be best able to assess the situation and provide the appropriate support that you may need.