

**Camden Carers' Voice meeting
Minutes – 19 April 2018, 10.30 am – 12.30pm
Argenta House, Aspern Grove, Belsize Park, NW3 2AB**

Attendance:

29 carers, Chair: Jacky Spigel (Steering Group) **Steering Group** - Jessica Buck, Costas Louis, Eamonn Cashin

Allegra Lynch, Camden Carers Service (CCS), Philippa Russell, CCS & C404, Anna Wright, HealthWatch

Apologies: Kate Harwood, Sue Parry-Davies, Janet Cabot, 2 carers

Presentations: Shaun Flook, Head of Housing Needs, LB Camden
Sarah Whitmore, Sheltered Service Team Leader, LB Camden
Shanta Joseph, Commissioning Manager, LB Camden

The chair welcomed everyone to meeting, went through the ground rules. The Steering Group were introduced.

Shaun Flook, Head of housing needs, LB of Camden

- Shaun expressed empathy and respect for carers having been part of the family care for close members of his family
- See presentation: [..\19 April 2018\Camden Carers Voice and Housing Needs 19 April 2018.pptx](#)
- Camden is an unaffordable borough for housing – there are 6,000 on the Housing Register, with 900 allocated new homes last year.
- Housing Register – you apply online and bid on home connections which has a points based system. Verification is a long process with many qualification criteria and exemptions around housing need eg; being homeless, overcrowded, under-occupied, health issues which are aggravated by your housing, you are vulnerable with support needs or have a complex mental health and Care Plan
- Qualifications and assets – you will not qualify if you assets are above £32,000 and/or property abroad
- General needs and sheltered housing are allocated through the scheme but supported living and extra care are not.
- Who is included in a household? caregiver or person with care needs. Additional bedroom if sharing with another family member who's care needs severely affect your sleep or they need overnight care and there is no carer in the family
- Need is assessed as well as points eg wheelchair accessible

Questions and answers

- Q: A carer has a disabled son of 44 who applied for sheltered housing but he is not eligible due to his age. A: Check with next speaker.
- Q: Carer noted the lack of available accommodation and Camden needs to look at increased supply. A: All housing needs planning permission. The Community Investment Programme (CIP) is trying to build more affordable housing

- Q: Carer asked about availability for mum and two children living in a hostel, offered a flat in Barking when at school in Camden A: there is reasonable preference – priority to prevent homelessness and temporary accommodation has to be affordable. Suitability and disruption assessment is done to assess suitability but sometimes it is not possible to allocate in Camden. It's such a difficult job due to lack of money and it makes for some very hard decisions.
- Q: A carer asked Shaun about the number of homes being built under CIP **Action:** Shaun will check the figure
- Q: A carer is homeless and living in temporary accommodation. He cares for his mother who has long term mental and physical problems and he needs to live with her, as she can fall. She wants to stay in Camden her home of 40 years but they are offered housing with only one bedroom. The carer also asked about a diabetic person in need of sheltered housing and why there is not adequate link between transport and housing. A: as these are personal circumstances, Shaun will speak to him separately.
- Q: Why is allocation for people with learning disabilities shrouded in mystery with no clear path, allocation system or communication with parent. Mother is not involved with discussion around her son's housing. The social worker is part of a panel, but she is not informed. **Action:** Shaun to check on this and respond to carer
- Shaun briefly talked about other care options: Extra Care Housing – for older people needing extra care run by Housing Association partners
- Homeshare – option if you have a spare room and have some care needs. It's not a care service but runs alongside
- Mutual Exchange – swap home with other social housing tenant.
- Intermediate renting – more affordable rent eg shared ownership. Shaun had to leave but offered his contact details, shaun.flook@camden.gov.uk for any queries. The chair thanked him for his time and all the helpful information / support

Sarah Whitmore, Sheltered Service Team Leader, LB of Camden

- Sarah was welcomed to present around **Sheltered Housing**. [Sheltered housing Presentation.pptx](#) There are 23 schemes in Camden of self-contained, unfurnished flats with a sheltered housing manager on location at least 3 days a week. Each flat has a Careline alarm.
- Sheltered housing manager – gives daytime support to tenants, monitors tenant well-being and assesses needs eg of repair. They do not provide physical care, help around money or medication.
- You can apply if you are eligible for housing register housing need, over 65 with care needs. There are some exceptions eg mental health need or specialist support needs.
- Apply through self-assessment form followed by a visit to the person to make the assessment, the assessment panel then make decision. There is a waiting list and you are helped to bid.

Questions and answers

Q: Are responsibilities clear of what support is and isn't supplied and who settles people in? A: They ensure tenants have what they need in the flat. Everyone has a support plan and manager ensures care is given as needed through support agency. The manager is responsible for overall well-being and managed by Team Leader to ensure work is done by supervising staff, following up on issues.

- Q: for someone who is under 65 who moves in, what impact does this have on their benefits? A: the manager could not advise on benefits.
 - Q: A carer asked about an older person going on waiting list for when their current home is no longer suitable. A: good to prepare in advance as much as possible and express an interest. A carer suggested to put people in need on waiting list from 55yrs plus, which was well received.
Q: how do you assess responsibility to maintain tenancy if someone is disruptive? A: if someone is disruptive the Sheltered Housing manager would monitor, ask a specialist to assess situation and maintain close relations with relevant teams.
 - Q: can family member move in? A: not usually but if the person is too unwell on own, the manager will look at options. The tenant can decide if they need to move.
 - Mutual exchange also applies to sheltered housing.
- Sarah was thanked for coming to the meeting

Shanta Joseph, update on actions from last meeting

- Shanta feedback that Philip Darby intended to show plans for the new Carers Centre, but they are being updated and will be available for the next Camden Carers' Voice meeting
- Carer's Card – following the new contract from 1 April, she can confirm there will be a carer's discount card. They are meeting with Careline next week and will have a timeline for them.

Carer involvement

- Camden Council see the value of carers to be involved at the decision making level.
 - Shanta suggested two options for **engagement**: [Carer Representative - Camden Carer Support Service Contract Monitoring Role description 09 APRIL 2018.docx](#)
[Experts by Experience Carers Working Group 09 April 2018.docx](#)
 - To have best services draw on experience from those that use them with:
Carer **representation** at meetings for Carers' Services
 - Experts by experience working group to be involved with Adult Social Care services eg procurement panels and boards
 - Attendees were invited to read the information and contact Shanta. There will be incentives in the form of vouchers for carer's help.
 - The chair notes she was involved with evaluation process which was worthwhile.
 - Shanta confirmed that carers with learning disabilities are welcome.
 - Some involvement will be more complex and may offer training eg for monitoring role.
- Would carers be invited to give input into the new Carers' Service plans and the Centre for Independent Living? This is essential.
Action: Shanta noted this request and would take this back to Philip Darby

Action and feedback from last meeting

- Allegra asked carers to look out for all the exciting events over Carers' Week, 11-17 June 2018
- Next meeting 21 June will be on planning for the future, Wills and Trusts at NEW VENUE: **Charlie Ratchford, Camden Carers' Service**