

**CITY BOARD
21 JUNE 2012**

ITEM A8

CONVERSION OF COMMUNITY ROOMS – SLINDON CROFT AND GARSDALE COURT

Report of the Director of Housing and Customer Services

1. SUMMARY

At the meeting on 19 April 2012, the City Board received an update on the review of under-utilised community rooms. The report recommended converting the community rooms at Slindon Croft and Garsdale Court to accommodation for elderly or disabled tenants. A petition was handed to the Chair on behalf of the residents of Slindon Croft asking the City Board to reconsider closing the community room at Slindon Croft. The City Board deferred the decision until the next meeting to allow the petition to be considered. A copy of the petition is attached at Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The City Board agrees to the proposal to convert the community rooms at Slindon Croft and Garsdale Court to accommodation suitable for elderly or disabled tenants, subject to the Council's approval.

3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 On receipt of the petition the City Board agreed that further consultation would be undertaken with the residents of Slindon Croft.
- 3.2 Of the 30 residents consulted, 10 said they use the community room at least once a week. Observation from staff and a member of the DACP however, showed low attendance at the Monday exercise class and Tuesday coffee mornings: 2 and 4 residents respectively. Although there was higher attendance at the Live at Home Scheme sessions, only 4 local residents attended each session.
- 3.3 Previously, Derby Homes has received complaints about problems with parking but this proved to be a general complaint rather than one related specifically to the community room.
- 3.4 The Operations Manager visited the lead petitioner to give him an opportunity to raise any further issues he believed were relevant. It was clear that he had tried hard to generate interest in the community room with other residents, but had little success.
- 3.5 On 19 April 2012 the City Board was advised that there are three community rooms in close proximity to each other in the Keldholme Lane area of Alvaston: Humber

Close, Garsdale Court and Slindon Croft. The review proposed to close and convert Garsdale Court and Slindon Croft. City Board members asked for clarification on the location of the community rooms and distance between:

- Humber Close and Slindon Croft is 577 metres
- Humber Close and Garsdale Close is 376 metres
- Garsdale and Slindon Croft is 163 metres.

A map is attached at Appendix 2 showing the locations of each community room.

- 3.6 The petition made reference to disabled tenants who may be housebound as a result of the closure. The Customer Services Manager is looking into transport issues on their behalf. It is also proposed to discuss an alternative venue with the Live at Homes Scheme

4. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

The Housing Act 1985 requires that tenants are consulted on all matters that affect their tenancy. A second consultation was completed with residents of Slindon Croft following receipt of the petition.

5. FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of running Slindon Croft community room is £2,725. This is covered by £979 income from tenants and £1,746 subsidy from Derby Homes. The cost of converting the room to accommodation has been estimated at between £7,000 and £9,000. This property is suitable for conversion to a large one bedroom bungalow.
- 5.2 Closure of the room would create an immediate saving to tenants of 0.68p per week and to Derby Homes £1,746 a year. At a conversion cost of £9,000 rental income of £71.00 per week would recover costs in 2.5 years.
- 5.3 The cost of running Garsdale Court is £2,865 a year. This is covered by £1,110 income from tenants and £1,756 subsidy from Derby Homes. The cost of converting the room to accommodation has been estimated at between £7,000 and £9,000. The property is suitable for conversion into a two bedroom property to suit a disabled person.
- 5.4 Closure of the room would create an immediate saving to tenants of 0.68p per week, and to Derby Homes £1,756 a year. At a conversion cost of £9,000 rental income of £80.00 per week would recover costs in just over 2 years.

6. COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

This is a matter which requires the approval of the Council. Approval will be sought at the next available meeting of the Council.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There are a small number of residents that use Slindon Croft community room regularly. Residents will be able to use the Humber Close facilities which are a short distance away.

8. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

These will be considered through the conversion process.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report:

Legal and Confidentiality

Personnel

Environmental

Risk

Policy Review

If Board members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author, or Phil Davies, Chief Executive, phil.davies@derbyhomes.org – Phone: 01332 888528

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Supporting Information: City Board report - 19 April 2012

Appendix 1

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For further information
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SLINDON CROFT COMMUNITY ROOM

Sirs,

We being Derby Homes residents strongly object to the possibility of the closure of the Slindon Croft Community Room.

Our objection is based on the fact that the Room is used weekly on four occasions, these being on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and on a Friday.

The Wednesday and Friday bookings are used by an organisation known as 'Live at Home' and both occasions are very popular and well attended. Hot meals are provided on both dates and the loss of this facility would be a sad blow.

The other two booking, Monday and Tuesday are also appreciated facilities by everyone.

Many of the residents attending the events are siabled and look forward and rely on these weekly events. In some cases they would be housebound without the opportunity to attend.

Everyone attending all the facilities, appreciate the wonderful surroundings at Slindon Croft Community Room and also enjoy the lovely garden, which we hope will not be under threat.

Shoulds you decide to close Slindon Croft and Garsday Court Community Rooms, what will be the alternative convenient location?

Perhap the Board would be willing to meet the signatories of this petition at an early date, here at Slindon Croft, to discuss the situation before taking any action



