
Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/06/21 10:38

PETITION FOR EQUAL HOUSING CHOICE FOR DISABLED RESIDENTS And SENIOR CITIZENS

Living In Social housing and Wrekin Housing Trust Property.

The Wrekin Housing Trust are able to discriminate against disabled Residents on the grounds of disability.

A Disabled persons Choice of Home is reduced by at least 95% when compared to an able bodied person.

As an able bodied person, regardless of banding, they have the opportunity to apply for 150 houses per year.

This figure is reduced to a maximum of 6 per year for a disabled person and there appears to be no formal or accurate method of assessing the needs of Individual Disabled Residents..

Many disabled residents have aids that can easily be transferred from one property to another without any additional effort, but the Wrekin Housing Trust refuse to address the issue of ensuring equality of choice.

The gap between Disabled residents and able bodied residents needs to be addressed and closed with the Wrekin Housing trust being brought out to answer why they openly discriminate.

You can download a petition form below and return it to myself with the signatures you have collected.

http://www.telfordcouncilwatch.org.uk/images/fbfiles/files/housing_petition.doc

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/06/21 10:59

I am now raising an online petition to Petition The Prime Minister on this very important and unfair issue.

When and if the Petition is allowed I will place the relevant web address online.

The Petition has now been sent off to N0.10 and will read as follows

Please click on the link below to confirm that you wish the Number 10 website to display the petition at the bottom of this email in your name.

Your petition reads:

We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to Equal Housing Choice For Disabled Social Housing residents

The Wrekin Housing Trust are able to discriminate against disabled Residents on the grounds of disability.

A Disabled persons Choice of Home is reduced by at least 95% when compared to an able bodied person.

As an able bodied person, regardless of banding, they have the opportunity to apply for 150 houses per year.

This figure is reduced to a maximum of 6 per year for a disabled person and there appears to be no formal or accurate method of assessing the needs of Individual Disabled Residents..

Many disabled residents have aids that can easily be transferred from one property to another without any additional effort, but the Wrekin Housing Trust refuse to address the

issue of ensuring equality of choice.

The gap between Disabled residents and able bodied residents needs to be addressed and closed with the Wrekin Housing trust being brought out to answer why they openly discriminate.

Thank you for submitting your petition.

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/06/21 12:49

Letter Sent to the SS

Disability discrimination is alive and well within the Wrekin Housing Housing Trust.

If you are an able bodied resident, you have the right to Choose upto 150 homes, regardless of banding in the Choose Your Home Scheme.

This choice is dropped by at least 95% if you are disabled.

A disabled resident can only choose a maximum of 6 properties per year.

This is Disability Discrimination.

I am now raising a local petition and am looking for other residents to join me.

I am also in the process of petitioning the Prime Minister to gain a wider and fairer choice for the disabled residents in all our communities.

Disability is an issue that can effect anyone of us at anytime and affects many people in different ways.

One thing all Disabled people have in common who rely on Social Housing, is the lack of fair choice and clarity of policy, procedure and practice.

Now is the time not only to say, "Enough is Enough" – it is also time to do something about it.

Are you disabled, are you having housing problems, are prepared to to do something about it.

If so, lets get together, the ball is already rolling, now lets make our voices heard.

Together as one voice.

Contact John Franklyn on 01952 676990.
Email- telfordcouncilwatch@minister.com
Website – www.telfordcouncilwatch.org.uk

Lets turn voice of the minority into the voice of the majority.

Act now before it is too late.

John Franklyn, Donnington, 676990

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Matt - 2008/06/22 06:57

Surely disability discrimination is illegal?

What have the trustees got to say about this?

MR IAN THOMAS WELLS FLETCHER
MR JOHN CHARLES MINOR
MR JEREMY CHARLES STEPHEN DUCE
MR JOHN GILBERT SERCOMBE
MANDY HOLCROFT
MR DOUGLAS ERNEST CADMAN WRIGHT
MR ROBERT GLEN FLOYD
MS MARGO BROTHERTON
MISS SUSAN MARION ELIZABETH RUSHTON
MR JAFFERHUSEIN KAPASI
MR ANDREW COPSON
MISS GILLIAN MARY PHILLIPS

"MEMORANDUM AND ARTICLES INCORPORATED 30 APRIL 1998 AS AMENDED BY SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS OF 1 MARCH 1999, 2 MARCH 1999, 15 JUNE 2005 AND 14 MARCH 2007
Objects FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY (A) PROVIDE HOUSING AND HOSTELS AND ASSOCIATED AMENITIES FOR PERSONS IN NECESSITOUS CIRCUMSTANCES UPON TERMS APPROPRIATE TO THEIR MEANS (b) PROVIDING FOR AGED, DISABLED, HANDICAPPED (WHETHER MENTALLY OR PHYSICALLY) OR CHRONICALLY SICK PERSONS IN NEED THEREOF HOUSES OR HOSTELS AND ANY ASSOCIATED AMENITIES SPECIALLY DESIGNED OR ADAPTED TO MEET THE DISABILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS OF SUCH PERSONS (C) SEE MEMORANDUM FOR REMAINDER OF OBJECTS"

They would seem to be in breach of their memorandum and articles as registered with the Charity Commission.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/06/22 07:51

Well pointed out Matt, it could be worth having a chat with the Charity Commission, I certainly have no reason believe they are acheiving their ow aims.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/06/22 08:58

The following is an extract from a document from this link:
<http://www.telford.gov.uk/demservices/DisplayDocument.asp?type=pdf&ref=6657>

Relocation Loan Assistance

To enable a disabled person requiring adaptations to a property, where it is not considered feasible to adapt their existing dwelling, to relocate to a suitably adapted or adaptable property.
Assistance Criteria and Limits

- a. The proposed property must be fit for human habitation and meet the decent home criteria.
- b. The property must be certified as suitable for the disabled person by the Agency Service Team and an Occupational Therapist.

Surely this also contradicts anything they say in relation to a disabled person can ONLY be provided with a house which is ALREADY suitably adapted.

My wife is not the only person who is being treated this way. I have learned of 4 other individuals in the last few days.

I already have several petitions from TCW being completed and will get them to you by post very soon John.

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/06/22 10:27

I have just sent an email to Jim Hawkins and the BBC to see if they will assist in raising the profile of this issue and provide a forum for debate.

I will be writing to others formally to see what response they come up with.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Matt - 2008/06/22 20:18

Peedoff wrote:

The following is an extract from a document from this link:

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I already have several petitions from TCW being completed and will get them to you by post very soon John.

Yes, but that's TWC. And the WHT is entirely different... oh! Perhaps not that different!

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/06/23 02:52

I walked the dogs around the block last night and identified two houses, partially adapted for disabled residents given to families who are able bodied.

The WHT have a policy that does not work.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/06/23 18:02

Extracts from WHT Housing policies. They fail to mention that being disabled may be too costly to move you from one home to another if any or further adaptations are required to the property you wish to move to.

Able living service

This service offers adaptations and advice if your health needs make life difficult in your current accommodation. Adaptations are changes to your home that allow you, a family member or carer greater safety, mobility or better access to your home - letting you live independently.

It's not always possible to adapt a home. If we can't, we'll work with you to find more suitable accommodation or other solutions for your needs.

You can apply by contacting your local Trust shop or office, or by telephoning 01952 217148. If you live in sheltered housing you can speak to your scheme manager or ask your occupational therapist to apply on your behalf.

When you apply to our Able Living Service we may visit you to carry out an assessment.

We will check:

that you get the right advice and support

what changes would meet your needs

whether there are any better ways to meet your needs

whether moving to an already adapted property may be more suitable than making changes to your home

that we are meeting our adaptations policy.

There is a limit to how much we can spend on an adaptation. If the work needed is going to cost more than this limit, we'll advise you on options available.

Putting customers first

At The Wrekin Housing Trust we aim to provide you with a friendly and efficient service and this leaflet tells you more about what you can expect from us.

We believe in providing the best possible housing services by valuing and treating our customers as individuals. We have worked with both customers and staff to develop our vision of good-value customer service. Our vision is to:

give a prompt, reliable and friendly service

get the job done - properly

treat people fairly

listen and take notice

give value for money

look out for people at risk

look for better ways of doing things

support people to take pride in their homes and neighbourhoods

think ahead and plan for future generations

give employees the skills and resources to deliver the right service for customers.

This will happen if we all work together

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Matt - 2008/06/23 18:12

TWC would pretend to convert housing so they were suitable for disabled people.

What would happen was this: A Doctor would say "My client has severe difficulties doing x and y. I think they need the kitchen modified, a walk in bath or shower, stairlift, new path to the front door, and back door, etc."

A social worker would go round, make careful notes, then the resident would get a letter denying them help. As TWC had not got any money in the budget.

But what they would do to appease the resident and their family would be to fit a few token gestures towards disabled access. Maybe a grab rail at the side of the steep steps to the front door, or perhaps a hand rail up the path.

That's why there are so many partially converted houses. It was all a ruse to pretend to give a damn about the disabled.
:angry:

=====

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/06/23 18:21

This is exactly what is happening to my wife. Grabrails in the rear garden to allow easier access. Grabrails in the toilet and bathroom, plus additional aids to help her bathing. But she cannot use a bath and we cannot live in our existing property safely.

She cannot also use a stairlift due to her mental health problems. A level access property or a property with a through floor lift has been specified but highly unlikely we will ever see one.

What you have described Matt is spot-on.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Carol - 2008/06/26 10:36

Peedoff, I understand how you feel but as from last year I understand building regs state that all new builds must have wheelchair access so the doors have to be wider and sockets must be half way up the wall macking it easier for people in wheelchairs.

It all boils down to the council practising what they preach but it might be worth going round some of the new builds and having a look.

I also understand that so many of the estates that are built so many houses are given to the trust so it might be worth looking at them, good luck.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/06/26 11:18

I fully appreciate what you said Carol, but the fact remains that many disabled people are like my wife and need certain types of adaptations. With that in mind it still stands true that there are very few houses which have the adaptations my wife requires.

BVT will make the necessary changes at my current house so why the hell can't they do it at any other house. We have already been as good as told that we can't or will not be offered any 'new house' on the new developments such as Lightmoor Village because none of them are adapted.

It would be very interesting to see if anyone from the Trusts can enlighten people like myself as to just how many, if any, new houses are adapted for people like my wife. It does not help when the WHT refuse us consideration of any dwelling which does not have the correct adaptations already included.

This is as much a money issue with the WHT and T&WC as it is a discrimination issue. They just don't want to spend on the disabled.

Paint new white lines down the A442, put in speed restrictors, put up new fencing, dish out money on other things, but let one disabled individual with special requirements ask for adaptations and the answer is no if they need them put into

another house.

I am not doing this just for my wife's benefit, I am doing this for all disabled people who are being done down by the system. I am hearing of new cases from others and I am disgusted with some of the reasons I hear that someone has been turned down for a bungalow, etc.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Carol - 2008/06/26 13:42

I am sorry to read your reply but I had a extentsion built 2 years ago and the builder got in to a heated discussion with the man from building regs he said all NEEW BUILDS would have to be fitted with wide doors ect.
It would be worth while going round the new estates but i fear it would take on the same thread as the EP. I wish you luck on the bunglaow the council dont have any and if they did they were only 2 beds which is no good for a family with kids.
My first port of call would be building regs dept at Darby house or you could contact the estate agents and rent private, all the best

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/06/26 14:45

Take the TMC for example 800 houses, upto 50 of those houses will be for Social Housing.

Lightmoor - having spoken to the developers upto 50 will be Social Housing.

The New Develeopment at Leegomery - non will be for Social Housing.

This example is 2000 houses, upto 100 will be for Social Housing.

Remember -

Now the Choose Your Home has been in place for 18 months (approx) - the waiting increased from 5000 to over 9000 in one year.

It took Salford 5 years before the same happened and displays the performance of the trust, the fact that properties are sold and not replaced is a great issue.

Quote building regs all day long, they do not cover stair lifts, perching stools, hand rails etc.

It is more than often the case that stair ways in new builds are often meeting such minimum standards they are not strong enough to take a stair lift.

There are wider implications to housing the disabled, the elderley, the infirm that building regs do not cover.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/06/27 16:38

Just when you think that someone might just be watching what happens on this website and taking notice to try and not screw things up any further and along comes BVT to fail the Choose Your Home scheme again.

I put my name down for a new house on the Lightmoor Village development and even though all applicants are supposed to be contacted to let them know whether or not they may be considered the BVT obviously do not want to follow the rules and even tell me that I am NOT accepted.

A polite telephone call to let me know would at least be expected, but I feel that this is probably more due to the fact that I have sent a letter of complaint to the BVT only last week.

Discrimination or an oversight on their part? You decide, but I know where my money would go. Again, as my wife is disabled it means she is immediately disqualified from even getting an opportunity to view just because the house would require adaptations.

Well done Choose Your Home, BVT and WHT!. Your attitude towards people like my wife now speaks volumes. Have I really p**s*d someone off?

=====

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/06/27 17:08

I've had a chat with someone from the trust and will be writing formally to the Council, WHT and local MP's.

Despite trying to raise the awareness of a real people issue, trying to convince the media that this actually happens, is at best extremely difficult.

We spent almost eight on the phones today alone.

I feel a demo with Senior Citizens and disabled people needs to be arranged!!

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Carol - 2008/06/28 15:43

John if you want to meet up with senior citizens they have a meeting at the Town hall in Oakengates. I can find out the date of the next meeting. I also think it would be good for you to meet with the senior citizens even if it's only to tell them about TCW.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by jimboo - 2008/07/02 14:43

why wont they modify the house u are in if your wife is as porly as you say then they have a duty of care towards her wellbeing

=====

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by gwilliamson - 2008/07/02 14:54

jimboo wrote:

why wont they modify the house u are in if your wife is as porly as you say then they have a duty of care towards her wellbeing

Because this council have a terrible habit of always fobbing off residents so they don't need to get their finger out and actually do something , let alone god forbid , to actually spend money on residents well being.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/07/02 15:11

Jimboo. It may be that you are missing the whole point of the issue here.

If a disabled individual has relevant issues with the house or area they live in and there are no adaptations in their current home then the council and housing trusts jointly refuse to adapt any house that a disabled person wishes to

move to.

An obvious example regarding the discrimination is that if you are on the CYH scheme and wish to move and you have no disabilities then you have the chance to select up to 150 homes per year. A disabled person does not have the same options.

A disabled person cannot just pick and choose like other non-disabled people can because the T&WC and the housing trusts will not adapt any future home.

The only true thing is that the Council DO have a duty of care towards her well being. I have written letters to the council, BVT and 2 councillors (George Ashcroft and John Dixon) and I have yet to get any response.

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/07/02 15:45

Other problems exist with adaptations the Council Team can provide,

For example:-

My wife can only use a stairlift that accomodates the function of standing. The adaptations do not have access to that piece of equipment, so they only option is self purchase and installation.

Fortuanate, I was able to get one cheap, but you can face a bill of £1000 upwards.

Not all disabled people get DLA and many have been refused on initial application and renewal over recent months.

Many disabled people find themselves caught between the devil and the deep blue sea.

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Matt - 2008/07/02 19:22

Problem is that some TWC officers live in the past.

They still think Labour is in charge.

They still think it is acceptable for decisions to take months -not weeks!- to be implemented. Or ignored, further.

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by jimboo - 2008/07/03 02:11

i dont think im missing the point at all iam disabled myself when u apply for a house as a disabled person the council have a duty to take into account whats rong wit u so therefore houses suitable for disabled people are scarce u probably woudent find 150 houses for disabled people in a year i would love to move into a nice little bungalow but the fact is that i own my house and there for score low on the points system for rented accomadation the council have given me adaptations for my house witch i very gratefull without them life would be much harder so y dont u apply for a house as a non disabled and then get the work done or buy what your looking for

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/07/03 02:44

The answer is very simple to that. The WHT, other Housing Trusts and the CYH will NOT allow any move to take place unless the property you wish to move to has ALL the adaptations required for the specific needs of the disabled person.

This is why NO disabled people can move. We cannot even do an exchange as we have been told that any exchange request will be blocked if the property is NOT adapted.

Catch 22 and complete discrimination on the part of the WHT. Disabled are stuck where they live unless the WHT relax attitudes and rules.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by jimboo - 2008/07/03 03:36

have u been offerd any homes sofar how long u been on the list

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/07/03 04:48

We have been on the list for nearly 2 years, have been offered no homes, but have been in the position on the list to have at least 6 houses in areas that we wanted. We had to fight to get a viewing on one house as they offered numerous reasons as to why the property was not right.

If we were to take a house which, as the trusts and the professionals say we need then it has to be a 3 bedroom bungalow or a 3 bed house with a through floor lift and not a stairlift. This being the case then there is little chance of seeing a properly adapted house come available within the next few years, and that was stated by a member of the CYH. In his words 'You're in for a very long wait'.

Meanwhile, my wife is suffering both mentally and physically while the trusts and CYH say we can only select houses which are suitably adapted.

We shall continue to select up to 3 homes per week when possible on the CYH scheme and keep insisting we get treated the same as an able bodied individual or family. We know that the CYH scheme will continue, as they have done before, to deactivate our account because we am not choosing the homes they demand we select.

Some Councils seem to genuinely care and adopt the correct stance to help disabled people. I wonder if the WHT could adopt a similar attitude towards its disabled tenants.

The following is taken from Manchester City Council:

http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=200003&documentID=2678&pageNumber=2

Moving to an Adapted Home

If you need a home that's specially adapted for a disabled person, we can help you move quickly and easily.

You can move somewhere that has already got all, or most, of the adaptations you want, or to a place that would be easy for us to adapt straightaway. This is often a much better option than trying to adapt your current home.

If you are interested in moving to an adapted home, contact us at Housing On Call (0161) *** **.*

One of our expert re-housing staff will interview you to find out about what you need and check why your present home is unsuitable. They'll explain how easy it is to move, tell you where you can find the right property and give you an idea of how quickly you could find the right place.

When you're interested in a property we'll arrange for you to look round. We'll talk to you about help with moving and decorating costs too.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/07/03 05:02

Some points that seem to be overlooked

Not everyone can buy, thats why we have Social Housing

If you don't declare a disability you can be considered in breach of tenancy.

Not every WHT property has the right buy or acquire

The properties are sold regularly as identified by the recent documentation placed in a recent post.

Waiting list up from 5000 to 9000

If you are disabled you will not be considered for a property that is not already adapted.

The issue is about equality and that is one thing it isn't - equal.

=====

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/07/03 05:07

Just o add further insult to injury the WHT have 525 properties for disposal.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by jimboo - 2008/07/03 19:01

i dont think i over looked anything theres no rule that say u cant buy i no some people have never worked who relie on socia housing but many years ago it was exactly the same no properties to rent u had to buy because if you worked then it whent against u as far as getting a council house u cant be treated the same as an abled body person if u are disabled its impossible if i had been in a house for 2 years that wasnt suitable and making me ill i would have done something about it or thr people who care for me would have i know the council arent great thats our fault peole like to moan and shout but ask them to make a stand wosh there gone
i worked for 35 years in the same job became ill and had to leave my wife now supports me and my family i dont get any help whats so ever maybe i should because iam disabled

=====

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/07/04 03:15

Jimbo, like many people who use this forum, people make a stand, but making a stand is often topic specific and can come down to a single perons own experience on a given topic, not every person cn stand on every topic.

There is a rule that says you cannot buy, 1 the property might not have the right to acquire.

two years ao 4000 people were claiming DLA, the majority of cases were genuinie, yet they were targeted for cut backs.

A person in receipt of DLA, benefits etc will not get a mortgage and with the credit crunch it is becoming harder.

We will see more people need Social Housing because of repossessions, homelessness is up yet housing stock is sold off at an alarming rate, like this month, 525 going to auction.

The point is, there is no equality in choice for disabled people, if they declined someone because of their race, then almighty kick offs would happen.

You've overlooked some very valid points made earlier in this topic.

When it comes to making a stand, I think my stance on a wide rage of local topics is well documented.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/08/27 08:12

I wonder if someone can bring other opinions into this I have found on the CYH scheme about their lettings policy for Lawley. This is a joint scheme between Beth Johnson and Bournville Village Trust.

There are many points which can be questioned but if anyone can clarify this one point that I personally see as blatant 'worded' discrimination:

Equal Opportunities

Applying local lettings plans to the allocation of properties may have an adverse effect on equal opportunities. However, whilst the lettings plan limits the number of certain groups, it does not exclude anyone. It attempts to balance groups of people in order to ensure a mixed and sustainable community.

Then why can a disabled person not apply. I am not entitled to apply for these homes because my wife is disabled. Am I wrong or what?

=====

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/08/27 08:27

It is without adoubt clear discrmination, this policy with the WHT has already been challenged once and the disabled resident gotthedecision overturned based on the grounds of discrimination.

By not allowing a disabled person to apply, is excluding, therefore discriminatory.

=====

Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/08/27 08:57

As stated in a letter I received following a complaint and subsequent meeting with a senior member of the WHT, it states;

Dated 24/07/08

"In our meeting I outlined how the Choose You Home (CYH) system works, explaining the banding system and the types of properties people are eligible to bid on.

I have taken on board your comments that this is unclear on the website and we will amend this in a future development".

Note: So far the changes have not been made on the CYH website.

Therefore it seems that in the future we may see a change in the properties advertised where it will clearly state on specific houses "Do Not Apply If You Are DISABLED".

I think that would do the trick!

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Housing Summit

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/08/27 09:38

I'm just about to send out the following email to MP's, Cllrs etc,

Housing Summit

As you will be aware, the last 18 months or so have seen the Social Housing waiting list in the Borough of Telford and Wrekin increase from 5000 to 11,000.

As you know, the issue of Social Housing is somewhat complexed and with a growing population the future housing needs are only going to increase.

The issues facing the Borough of Telford and Wrekin and the need for Social Housing are further compounded by issues such as

- * An ageing population
- * Increased needs by young people aged 16 to 25 years
- * The Sales of current housing stock
- * Housing not being replaced after sales are completed
- * A growing population linked with the dash for City Status
- * An unfair Choice on Choose Your Home ie – All houses available in the all bands section are allocated to those in the Urgent band thus negating the need for this banding.

And many more issues besides.

Having assisted a number of residents gain a home of their own or even simply emergency accommodation, I am alarmed at the clear discrimination faced by those residents who are disabled and find themselves a victim of Disability Discrimination through no fault of their own, but more because they were honest and declared a disability in the belief they would be treated fairly.

An able bodied resident can apply for up to three houses per week therefore they have a opportunity to apply for 150 houses annually. When compared to that of a disabled resident the discrimination becomes clear as their annual choice is restricted to about six per annum. Although they can apply, they will not receive equal consideration because of their disability.

The argument for this policy seems to revolve around the issue of adaptations. The needed adaptations for many disabled residents could be easily catered for as they are aids that can be easily transferred from one property to another without any cost to the Social Housing Landlord.

Other issues further compound the problems as residents can be injected into the housing waiting list from outside agencies, giving the impression of queue jumping, therefore it is not uncommon to find a single person in for example a three bed property or a partially adapted house, suitable for disabled residents being allocated to able bodied residents.

The social housing waiting list consists of a wide range of residents going back as long as 1992, by any standards, this is not acceptable.

Whilst the whole issue is complex, what I do firmly believe is "doing nothing" is no longer an option. It is not about now, next week or even next year, It is about our children, grandchildren and beyond.

It only takes an adverse twist of fate and anyone of us could find ourselves on the street and in the need of Social Housing.

As the moves towards a Housing Summit appear to have come to grinding halt, myself and other residents are going to arrange a Housing Summit and will forward invitations to yourselves accordingly.

I respectfully ask that you put your weight behind it, raise the genuine concerns of residents, put politics to one side and start the wheels of motion towards constructive change which is an extremely important Social Issue effecting many in our communities.

Kind Regards

John Franklyn, 83 Queens Road, Donnington, Telford, TF2 8BZ, 01952 676990, telfordcouncilwatch@minister.com

I'll compile a list of people and forward, then we can guage who really see it as a real issue.

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Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/08/28 12:47

I've had the pleasure of having a very talk with MP David Wright this evening. He has been man enough to offer an olive branch, despite all the criticism I've thrown at him and I have accepted it.

We will be talking about getting the Housing Summit moving and I am feeling very confident about it happening.

Whilst I am always prepared to do my bit, I have to admit that there are others who would be better at handling it, because of position and experience.

I hope this is the beginnings of good news for some.

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Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by Carol - 2008/08/28 13:42

Why is David Right ringing you John ? are you sure it was David Right MP and not the foot ball player. I would like to know is he going to talk to all of us ?.

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Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/08/28 15:50

This is absolutely excellent news providing there is honesty at this summit and no hiding facts and making excuses. We all know what the MP's, etc, can be capable of.

Who are you thinking of for taking this matter further. I, for one, may not be the best candidate in spite of the fact that I instigated the most recent attack on the Trusts for the disabled issue, but if I am asked then I would love to take up the challenge and offer help in bringing some strong views and evidence to the summit.

Unless there are any other individuals, possibly George Ashcroft, then I will do what I can and offer my services freely.

Did you have anyone specific in mind who has both a position and/or experience?

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Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/08/28 16:49

I do think it's vital to be honest here, any housing trust could quite easily ignore a bog standard resident and could easily ignore a Councillor, but it is certainly a lot harder to ignore an MP especially if they are accompanied by a housing minister and the opportunity to get all groups together is not one to be missed.

I do also feel, as hard as it maybe that this has to be handled not only sensitively, but also professionally as a topic of this nature can be very emotive.

Getting us together as residents will be the easy step as we all want the best and we can get together to plan our strategy

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Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by Carol - 2008/08/29 13:48

I don't know why he won't meet with all of us or has he seen that film dead man walking. I am sorry but after the way his right hand man has treated us I have every right to be mad.:angry:

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Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/08/30 17:17

Having received a response today from the WHT regarding my ongoing complaint into discrimination against disabled people and housing I have been reliably informed that over this year alone the WHT is spending £660,000 on adapting properties and has spent similar amounts each year since it was founded. Where?

The important question here is if that is the case then why are there only a few adapted houses available to share amongst so many disabled people? I think that this money has been spent on guardrails, handrails, wheelchair ramps and possibly some showers, maybe the odd one or two stairlifts. How many houses have been adapted? What were the adaptations?

Applicants for disabled housing date back years and still they do not have a property. What's gone wrong? If so much is being, and has been, spent on disabled adaptations then where are the properties that are adapted? The answers to these questions and many others need to be got from the WHT and other Trusts.

I have it in writing that the WHT DO NOT have any level accommodation. So who owns the 3 bed bungalows scattered in various districts around Telford? Who owns the 3 bed adapted bungalows in Lawton Farm Way, Leegomery? Why was a bungalow in Lawton Farm Way advertised on the CYH as a WHT bungalow? Do the WHT think that all people in social housing are stupid?

Recently George Ashcroft and myself attended a meeting in which we were informed that the WHT do not have funding to carry out any major adaptations as it would drain their resource and they would go bankrupt if major adaptations were carried out to the people who specifically needed them. If so, who is telling the truth? Paul Birch, Diversity Manager of the WHT who claims poverty on behalf of the WHT, or Jane Brookes, Director of Housing Services, who makes the claim that so much is being spent every year on adaptations for the disabled?

I know that a housing summit is hopefully going to be put together and I for one certainly hope this will see changes made, but I doubt we will see answers to some very pertinent questions.

"The WHT have admitted that there is a severe shortage of affordable rented homes in Telford. The Trust, along with other landlords, will continue to work with the Council to develop new properties."

Then my answer to that is; STOP SELLING THE HOUSES OFF THEN.

Again I have been advised to contact the Telford & Wrekin Housing Team to discuss other housing options. What this means is that if you are not satisfied with the way the WHT are assisting you then get out of social housing and get into privately rented unsecure accommodation and that way you will not be a problem to the WHT anymore.

Now the case for those who collate this info for the WHT. I am here for the long haul, and this problem will not go away for a while yet.

Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/08/31 07:31

We know what is happening, but more importantly, we know what is NOT happening and these are part of the reasons why this forum was set up in the first place, to bring people together on common issues.

What we need on this issue, like many others and as HOOP has proved, people need to come together and stick together.

Its easy to fob off individuals, but not so easy to fob off a group and thats what is needed.

People together.

Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by Carol - 2008/08/31 09:59

Hoop says we all have to stick together, that's all very well but if they wont tell you about the next full council meeting. I think this housing summit will be held behind closed doors.:angry:

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Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/08/31 10:27

It can't be held behind closed doors because we'll be part of it.

When I referred to HOOP, I was on about the great success because of numbers.

When people are divided, the relevant authority whether it be WHT, BVT etc they are fire fighting and constantly putting out small fresquite easily in many places. you bring them together, you suddenly have a major force to be reckoned with.

Whilst individual cases can be looked at, we need to head for major wide sweeping changes. This does not happen with lone voices, this is what I meant about People Together.

Its taken 2 years to get this far, a summit could happen in weeks, change will take a little longer.

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Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by Carol - 2008/08/31 12:30

Yes John & Hoop I see what your saying "united we stand" and I am willing to do my part but rembmer I have had dealings with Mr Wright and his right hand man and dont trust them.

=====

Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/08/31 12:43

At least he's come forward to offer help. Unfortunately, MP Mark Pritchard and his office do not return emails or messages left and I live in his constituency.

Sometimes you have to be prepared to put things aside when you are looking for the betterment of others and look at the wider issue.

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Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by Carol - 2008/09/01 11:58

And I will be the first to hold up my hands if Mr Wright keeps his word.

=====

Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/09/02 11:47

Had a very positive meet today with MP David Wright and I feel a housing summit is too far off.

The Shropshire Star have also picked up the story and awaiting confirmation of waiting list figures from the WHT. It'll be interesting to see how they explain the increase from 5000 to 11000 on the waiting list since CYH started.

=====

Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/09/02 15:13

Is that a typing error John? You say that a housing summit is TOO FAR off, or do you mean NOT TOO FAR off?

Just curious as I am going to be meeting for stage 3 of the complaint procedure with the WHT before too long and I am now getting a little infuriated with their constant 'NO HELP' attitude.

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Re:Housing Summit - MP David Wright

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/09/02 16:31

That's definately

Not Too far off

and in all fairness to MP David Wright, the ball had already started rolling.

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Re:Housing Summit - What Do You Think?

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/09/03 09:47

An initial part from the Shropshire Star Web site.

MP David Wright is planning a housing summit.

Number on rented homes list doubles

The number of people who have registered for social homes to rent in Telford and Wrekin has doubled in less than two years, figures reveal.

A total of 11,000 people have registered for social homes to rent, according to the new figures. This has doubled since the launch of the Choose Your Home lettings scheme in 2006, which allows people to view available homes from social landlords before submitting an application,

Telford MP David Wright said more affordable housing was needed and he is planning a housing summit to help tackle the issue.

Bosses at Wrekin Housing Trust, which runs the Choose Your Home scheme, said demand had increased due to rising house prices.

Kylie Anderson, operational manager of Choose Your Home, said: "The fact that Choose Your Home is so accessible and several other housing associations also use it means that a high number of people -11,000 - have registered to use the scheme.

"The number of people registered on Choose Your Home has doubled since it was launched in November 2006."

Read the full story in the Shropshire Star

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Re:Housing Summit - What Do You Think?

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/09/03 11:02

How convenient how the Shropshire Star fail to mention that TCW has Campaigned since September 2006 to get this

summit when it was first promised and the drive to get it done was because of an email sent out to a number of Councillors, MP's including MP David Wright, MP Mark Pritchard who fails to answer and MP Caroline Flint in it was said "We would arrange the Summit" - how convenient.

Re:Housing Summit - What Do You Think?

Posted by Carol - 2008/09/03 12:16

John, have you seen the rag "insight" it has a big spread on Sutton Hill but nothing about TCW.:angry:

Re:Housing Summit - What Do You Think?

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/09/03 13:45

More to the point John is that I see the Shropshire Star has failed to mention any of the efforts people have gone to and why the campaigns are being raised against the WHT and other Trusts. I would like nothing more than to see this housing summit as a great success but I can foresee this as being one of the biggest whitewashes ever. I do find it funny how it appears in the Star that David Wright seems to be the one who has taken the glory for this summit. All I can say is "We'll see".

TCW and you, John, need to be credited for all the effort you have put into this and shown.

I am amazed that the WHT bosses still have not figured out that the reason the number of people on the Choose Your Home waiting list has more than doubled is because the population is growing, mainly because of the large number of foreigners moving into the area. It also may have something to do with the fact that the houses are being sold off by the WHT at a much faster rate than they are being replaced. Then there are all the reasons that you point out with regard to the younger generation.

It is worth noting that there are houses which even after 8 plus weeks which were advertised on the CYH website has still to be allocated as they are still lying empty and saying 'Offer Made'. Why?

If, however, as Kylie Anderson states that only 10% actively choose homes then how come there are some people still looking to move after 16 years? Why is it that any individual who has been on the waiting list for many years is still there? The CYH scheme apparently does not allow too long a period before applicants are taken off the waiting list for non-selection stating that if they have not selected a home within a measured time then there is no real interest in moving at all. That being the case why is it that someone can have been waiting for as long as 16 years? Have they been rejecting houses for up to 16 years? If they are not serious about moving, and let's face it if they are still selecting houses after 3 or 4 years then they are probably not that serious at all, unless there is a real and justifiable reason why there has not been anything suitable.

Too many people are allowed to waste serious applicant's time by using the system to look for that 'PERFECT HOUSE' in a 'PERFECT LOCATION'. Unless there is a very serious reason as to why someone has not selected a house, or has selected several and refused them, then those applicants should be struck off the list. They are the ones who are not serious about moving.

I can't even exchange or move unless I select the right kind of property, and the WHT have told me that they will block any move I want to make to any property unless it suits my wife's circumstances. I really feel like saying 'To hell with the bloody lot of it':angry: and lying through my teeth to move to another town and start fresh all over.

The Wind Of Change

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/09/03 15:58

The Wind of Change

Social Housing is on the agenda as a priority, but it has taken two years of pushing to do it.

Numerous letters, emails and discussions with Members of Parliament and Councillors, most of which were ignored,

even by the Councillor responsible for housing and is or was listed as a Director of the WHT.

It has to be said the Wrekin Housing Trust certainly snapped up a bargain when they bought approximately 13,000 houses from Telford and Wrekin Council, they then employed a strategy of selling stock at an alarming rate and now hold a stock of approximately 10,000.

Whilst the Wrekin Housing Trust continue to sell, which adds to the housing burden, they have to be questioned and made to answer as to why they sell so many so often and why do they build out of the borough. It is suggested that they are now investing in new builds within the area of the potteries.

Hardly fair to the residents of Telford and Wrekin is it?

The following link highlights a residents struggle, unfortunately, this kind of story is becoming accepted as the rule, rather than the exception,

<http://xrl.us/op4i7>

As identified in the Shropshire Star of 3rd September 2008 the waiting list has almost doubled. Here the Wrekin Housing Trust are playing a game of smoke and mirrors, blaming the increase on rising house prices, failing to mention the policy to sell, if a property requires £8000 or more work to be carried out on it. The WHT need to accept that their sales policy plays a great part in the increased housing need.

In order for the WHT to provide the best for the residents, there has to be a need for all to buy into the idea, here is a piece from an internal email of the WHT, sent from a Director of the Trust to a staff member, I was copied in

“Thanks xxxx, nice reply.

Not sure if Debbie mentioned to you but I have been contacted by the telford council watch group. I am going to do a reply later today and will copy you in. It will have to be very non committal”

Here is a clear indication of the Trust Director, giving praise on what was a “fob off” displaying the secretive institutionalised attitude they have.

Residents have many genuine concerns that need addressing as a matter of urgency and a policy of honesty from ALL Social Landlords needs to be endorsed.

I do have a question for Nathan Rous who wrote a piece about Campaign Groups and how he would support a Campaign group about Campaign Groups.

This is one Campaign Group that played a part in kick starting the Sutton Hill Regeneration, the Housing Summit, would you now come forward and say, they can work when done correctly?

Below is the email that prompted a response from MP David Wright, ultimately leading to the Housing Summit.

After having given MP David Wright a hard time on a number of occasions, I will now publicly praise him for his approach to myself, the time he afforded myself and the way in which he handling this.

I personally believe it took a real man to do what he did and I will say to everyone that he was extremely positive about pushing this forward and has already made considerable in roads with regards the Housing Summit.

Whilst this could've been done sometime ago, maybe it's fortunate it didn't as housing is right at the top of the government's agenda.

Unfortunately the same cannot be said about MP Mark Pritchard, who does not respond to his Constituency, but it must be hard when your visiting McCain and the Dalai Lama.

Below is a copy of the email sent out to many including MP Mark Pritchard, MP Caroline Flint and a number of borough Councillors.

Housing Summit

As you will be aware, the last 18 months or so have seen the Social Housing waiting list in the Borough of Telford and Wrekin increase from 5000 to 11,000.

As you know, the issue of Social Housing is somewhat complexed and with a growing population the future housing needs are only going to increase.

The issues facing the Borough of Telford and Wrekin and the need for Social Housing are further compounded by issues such

- * An ageing population
- * Increased needs by young people aged 16 to 25 years
- * The Sales of current housing stock
- * Housing not being replaced after sales are completed
- * A growing population linked with the dash for City Status
- * An unfair Choice on Choose Your Home ie – All houses available in the all bands section are allocated to those in the Urgent band thus negating the need for this banding.

And many more issues besides.

Having assisted a number of residents gain a home of their own or even simply emergency accommodation, I am alarmed at the clear discrimination faced by those residents who are disabled and find themselves a victim of Disability Discrimination through no fault of their own, but more because they were honest and declared a disability in the belief they would be treated fairly.

An able bodied resident can apply for up to three house per week therefore have a opportunity to apply for 150 houses annually. When compared to that of a disabled resident the discrimination becomes clear as their annual choice is restricted to about six per annum. Although they can apply, they will not receive equal consideration because of their disability.

The argument for this policy seems to revolve around the issue of adaptations. The needed adaptations for many disabled residents could be easily catered for as they are aids that can be easily transferred from one property to another without any cost to the Social Housing Landlord.

Other issues further compound the problems as residents can be injected into the housing waiting list from outside agencies, giving the impression of queue jumping, therefore it is not uncommon to find a single person in for example a three bed property or a partially adapted house, suitable for disabled residents being allocated to able bodied residents.

The social housing waiting list consists of a wide range of residents going back as long as 1992, by any standards, this is not acceptable.

Whilst the whole issue is complex, what I do firmly believe is “doing nothing” is no longer an option. It is not about now, next week or even next year, It is about our children, grandchildren and beyond.

It only takes an adverse twist of fate and anyone of us could find ourselves on the street and in the need of Social Housing.

As the moves towards a Housing Summit appear to have come to grinding halt, myself and other residents are going to arrange a Housing Summit and will forward invitations forward to yourselves accordingly.

I respectfully ask that you put your weight behind it, raise the genuine concerns of residents, put politics to one side and start the wheels of motion towards constructive change which an extremely important Social Issue effecting many in our communities.

I will arrange a venue, an agenda, invitations and a warm welcome. I hope you will take part.

The wind of change is blowing gently in favour of the resident, I for one intend to turn it into a full scale hurricane.

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Re: The Wind Of Change

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/09/04 01:41

Your email to the MP's spells it out quite well and I agree with all you say. My support and attendance at a summit is guaranteed.

What you say about single people being given 3 bed houses reminded me of 2 people who used to live near to me and

were caught cheating the benefits.

They are a married couple who since being caught supposedly split up and went their separate ways. The husband got a 3 bed house in Arleston while the wife stayed put temporarily. However, the wife got herself a 3 bed house via an exchange and moved. Guess where to? Arleston, 2 roads away from her 'So called' ex husband.

Oddly enough both of them still use only one house and both are classed as disabled, yet the husband runs his own decorating/gardening/oddjob business and still gets his full disability. His wife still gets her disability also. Neither of these 2 cheating individuals have children living with them.

That's where the housing system is completely crap. No proper checking and no follow up. Any person who takes advantage of the system should have their house taken off them and also their benefits. And they say 'Cheats never prosper'.

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Re:Equal Housing Choice For Disabled WHT Residents

Posted by Peedoff - 2008/09/08 07:43

There is talk of carers being given more money because they are considered to be full time workers if they care for a friend or relative 24/7.

Can a carer be considered to be a worker or not?

If so, then why are carers disqualified from applying for houses if the person they care for is a wife/husband/partner?

If they are on benefits they are disqualified from applying for houses that specify a person must be working.

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