

## **WHITELEY VILLAGE BUILDING AND PLANNING UPDATE – DECEMBER 2017**

### **The Care Hub preliminary work is underway**

There has been much excitement recently as the plans we have been developing over the last 2 years are finally emerging on site. The hoardings are up, the site manager is in place and the preliminary clearing work is underway.

Discussions with residents and families at Whiteley House, Ingram House and Huntley House have proved useful in terms of trying to lessen the impact of construction work and traffic and these communication lines will remain open throughout the work period. Our thanks go to the Rugby Club for bearing with us as the site is being set up.

### **Formal Sign off with our Funding and Construction partners has taken place**

We have now signed the contract with Triodos /Unity bank for the funds to build the Care Hub with 30 care suites, social space and therapy rooms, and to convert Whiteley House into 40 extra-care apartments to rent on the open market. Castleoak, our appointed contractors for the Care Hub, are now on-site preparing the space for building work to commence in January.



The total length of time for the building project is estimated at 15 months, which takes us to Spring 2019. The Castleoak team will provide regular updates as soon as they start construction work and we have appointed three resident liaison leads, so that people in the village can discuss any issues directly with someone they know. We are delighted that three village residents have agreed to take on these roles and, though not solely responsible, they will be the “go to” people who can manage the communication between residents and the contractors. For staff, there will be a regular update on our internal Yammer pages and there will be “news” at staff team meetings from managers. For families and partner organisations we aim to keep this website regularly updated.

We hope to be holding a celebratory “First Dig” photo opportunity in January so be sure to watch out for news about this event. You will be welcome to come and join us on what will be the next momentous occasion in the history of the village.



Throughout the building work we are aiming for “business as usual” at Whiteley House for all of our current residents. We will, however, only be taking in new residents (unless villagers) for short respite stays. No new long-term admissions will be made after Christmas.

This is important as it means we can concentrate on supporting our current Whiteley House residents and their families through the transition period. We have held some group sessions at the home to explain what is happening and Martin Garbett the Director of Community Services has recently held individual family sessions to talk specifically about their individual cases.

We will also be working with staff to find alternative opportunities for their employment in other areas when the time comes. Meetings to plan staff transitions are taking place on a regular basis and all staff in the Care Centre have had the opportunity of a 121 session to talk about what their roles could be in the future. This has already led to some of them trying work in other areas of our care services. We are grateful to all our staff for the fabulous job they do, so we want to ensure they have the support they need to see them through a process of change that is going to last at least 15 months.

## **Whiteley Walk and the Alms Houses – Decision to Appeal**

Since planning permission was refused by Elmbridge Borough Council in July the Board have met and agreed unanimously that we will appeal the decision.

Our Planning Consultant has therefore been instructed to lodge a formal Appeal in January. It is unlikely we will see the result until the latter part of the year. We are anticipating an Inquiry date in the Autumn of 2018 and naturally there are no guarantees of the outcome. We will however keep everyone appraised as things progress.

## **Care and Support – building services for the future**

We are working closely with the local NHS, the Hersham GP practice, the new Community Services provider, Princess Alice Hospice and the local Social Services to enable us to deliver even better support across the village community as the Care Hub develops.

Alongside this, several new initiatives are underway, including, introducing the Hobbs Therapy Team (83 people are using this service) for both physical and mental health improvement; the carers group supported by our faith team; the plans for new church facilities to enable us to provide food and drinks, plus good facilities for social related activity there; and now a new scheme, the Opening Doors Project, aimed at those most lonely people within our Village. These important developments are all part of building the resilience of this community during a time when state funding continues to reduce.

**Chandra McGowan**  
CEO