

# Riversdale Court, LEICESTERSHIRE

Client: Charnwood Borough Council | Main Contractor: Willmott Dixon Housing Ltd | QS: Faithful and Gould | SE: Curtins Consulting Ltd | CDMC: Wm Saunders Partnership LLP | M&E Consultants: EME Installations Ltd | Contract Value: Approx £2.5million | Date: Nov 15

Halsall Lloyd Partnership were appointed by Charnwood Borough Council to prepare proposals for the refurbishment and remodelling of an existing two storey over 55's complex known as Riversdale Court, as well as the provision of a number of new flats in an extension to the east wing of their existing building.

The building is home to independent retired and elderly tenants with a part time on site warden, available on call 24/7. Originally there were 16No. bedsits and 8No. self contained flats with one larger two bedroomed warden's flat. Tenants of the bedsits shared bathrooms which were accessible off common corridors. Although the self contained flats were fully occupied, some of the bedsits proved difficult to let due to the 'institutionalised' perception of having a shared bathroom and were not considered to be 'fit for purpose' to current standards.

The brief therefore called for the bedsits to be remodelled to provide self-contained single bedroom flats (a conversion rate of approximately 3 bedsits into 2 flats). In total 29No. flats have been provided, with one of the existing bedsits on the ground floor being converted for use as an ensuite guest room, and the existing warden's flat converted to 2No. one bedroom flats. Of these, 8 are refurbished, 13 are formed by remodelling existing bedsits, and 8 are new build flats (two of which are fully wheelchair accessible) housed within a new extension to the eastern end of the building.

A 13 person passenger lift has been installed in order to provide full and convenient level access to all floors of the building (where previously there was only a stairlift), and the residents' lounge and kitchen has been re-provided at first floor level with an external balcony to take advantage of the panoramic views out over the river and water park.





Externally, the carpark has been extended with extra parking spaces formed along the access road, secure and accessible storage for mobility scooters has been provided, and the shared gardens have been landscaped and include raised beds for vegetable growing and viewing decks which are fully accessible.

A value engineering exercise was undertaken following the granting of planning permission for the original design which featured a larger new extension. In order to meet the client's budget, HLP worked in close collaboration with the chosen contractor to swiftly produce revised proposals for the extension to be reduced in size by removing three flats and a new planning permission was granted.

Several informal consultation events for the residents of Riversdale Court took place in order to canvass opinions and comments prior to the submission of the planning applications. Discussions regarding phasing also took place, leading to the decision for the resident tenants to be decanted and temporarily re-housed whilst the construction works were undertaken in one phase. A public consultation event was also held at this time, to which all the residents surrounding the site were invited.

During the construction works, the returning residents visited the site on several occasions to witness progress of the works. Along with the client, the residents have expressed enthusiasm and delight upon returning to their flats, and everybody is impressed with the design and layout of the new residents' lounge and the views out over the water park from the new balcony deck at first floor level.



Throughout the construction process, HLP have received favourable feedback from the main contractor regarding our prompt, attentive and pro-active service. In terms of design, we have focused on improving the efficiency and use of the client's existing site to provide improved and extra living and communal accommodation, both internally and externally.

We understood from the outset that this scheme was to set a precedent for the client's other similar complexes, and we feel that we have been instrumental in the successful delivery of this flagship project.