

8,566 sign one petition, more say 'leave OAP care alone'



STRONG OPPOSITION: Bishops Court residents Doris Crofts, 80, and Maurice Houghton, 91, with the petition POSTPHOTOC171207AJL2-4

By **CHRIS BIRKLE**

A PETITION opposing the closure of a care home for the elderly is among the biggest ever handed to Notts County Council.

Some 8,566 people say they want Bishops Court in Boughton, near Ollerton, saved.

The council plans to close eight homes in Notts, including Bishops Court, and replace them with 'extra care' places, where people are put in sheltered accommodation and book visits from nurses when needed.

More than 18,000 people have now objected to this plan, with signatures appearing on 11 different petitions, many handed over at the full council meeting. Typical protests can gather just a few hundred names.

Bishops Court resident Doris Crofts, 80, said: "Everybody has been behind us. It was a strong petition."

"It's a nice, modern home. I am quite happy here. It is a friendly place and I am well looked after. We would miss each other."

Stella Smedley, councillor for the Ollerton, said: "The feeling in my area runs very strongly".

The public are being asked for their views on the closure plan.

18,000 want homes saved

It is the cheaper option for the council as it tries to help more people over the age of 85.

Arnold North councillor John Stocks submitted two petitions at the meeting, containing more than 1,888 signatures against the proposed closures, while Mansfield councillor Chris Winterton handed in a 863-name protest against the possible axing of Daleside Residential Care in Forest Town.

Mansfield councillor Joyce Bosnjak presented a petition signed by 367 people supporting Mansfield Pensioners' Action Association - this despite Coun Bosnjak admitting the possible closures were something

she was "directly responsible for". Sutton-in-Ashfield North councillor Jason Zadrozny submitted 2,297 signatures against the closure of Kirklands Care Home in Kirkby-in-Ashfield and said there could be "10,000 more".

Sutton-in-Ashfield East councillor Steve Carroll handed in 67 signatures against the closure of Ashcroft Residential Care in Sutton-in-Ashfield.

A spokeswoman from Nottinghamshire County Council said: "We have received a great deal of interest on the proposals around the future of care for older people in Nottinghamshire and welcome any

more comments before the consultation closes on January 11.

"When the consultation period closes, we will analyse the responses and we plan to take a report to councillors in March 2008."

People can give their views by phoning 08449 808 080, e-mailing communications.ssd@nottscc.gov.uk, visiting www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/futurecare-questionnaire.htm or writing to: Terry Pears, Adult Social Care and Health, West Bridgford House, Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7UN.

newdesk@nottinghameveningpost.co.uk

Summary:

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