

Petition launched by residents to get shop steps removed

RESIDENTS living around the Sharpley Road estate in Loughborough have voted overwhelmingly to have steps removed from in front of their local shops to create better access for disabled people and mothers.

The Sharpley Road shops, which include Curex Pharmacy and Sharpley Road Post Office, are rented from Charnwood Borough Council but Meena Bhandari, who runs Curex Pharmacy, says the access is preventing some customers from entering her shop and started a petition.

She managed to collect around 120 signatures, which she has now handed in to the council via her local councillor, Coun Julie Bradshaw.

She told the *Echo*: "I had a visit from the occupational health people about four or five years ago when the disability act came in, who said it was a problem. I was

told it would be cheaper to raise the footpath than replace the step but it just died a death and nothing happened because of money.

"I'm having to go out to serve disabled people and patients with pushchairs find it difficult to negotiate. I do think it prevents people coming in."

Coun Bradshaw added: "It is difficult for many of the people including the shopkeepers themselves to get in and out of their own shops safely. Improvements are certainly needed to enable better access for all for example people who have mobility problems and those with pushchairs."

A Charnwood Borough Council spokesman said: "Our records show we have one leaseholder at Sharpley Road. We will carry out an assessment of the shop and should a ramp be required to allow disabled access then we will carry out this work."



Petition about disabled access to shops on Sharpley Road, Loughborough - pictured (left to right) resident Sheila Corbett, Coun Chris Carter, Meena Bhandari, Coun Julie Bradshaw.

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Care homes transferred to new firm

CARE homes in Shepshed and Wymeswold have been transferred to a new provider.

The Willows, The Lant, in Shepshed, has been transferred to Four Seasons while Wymeswold Court, in London Lane, has been transferred to HC-One Ltd. Both used to be run by Southern Cross.

Southern Cross says completion of the transfers represents a major step in winding down the group's operations after it underwent struggles earlier in the year over concerns about the high rents being asked of them by landlords.

Dr Chai Patel, HC-One chairman, said: "After months of uncertainty for residents, relatives and staff we are delighted and honoured to be starting this new era. I want to thank residents and their families for their patience, and staff for their commitment and hard work during the recent difficult period."

Four Seasons takes back 45