



SHELTERED HOUSING

Tenant Handbook

The Sheltered Housing Tenant Handbook can be provided upon request in other formats including audiotape, CD, in large print, Braille and other languages. Please contact your Scheme Manager to arrange.

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About this Booklet

This booklet is produced by the Sheltered Housing Team and is given to all new tenants.

The purpose of this the handbook is to provide you with information you may find useful during your tenancy and to advise you of the various policies relating to the day to day running of the Scheme. This booklet is meant to supplement the information contained in your tenancy agreement the Tenants Handbook, which you received when you signed your tenancy agreement and further information given to you at your New Tenant home visit. You will also be given a 'Welcome Leaflet' which will provide you with information specific to where you live.

If a situation arises which is not covered in any of these documents please speak to your Scheme manager.

Sheltered Housing

Sheltered housing is designed for older people to help them live independently for as long as possible in a safe and secure environment. It offers you the chance to remain independent and active with the reassurance that help is close at hand. There is a Scheme Manager, who will provide appropriate support. Each property is also fitted with emergency pull cord / lifeline equipment, which is connected to a central control service when your Scheme Manager is off duty.

Moving into the Scheme

Your Scheme Manager will contact you when you move into the scheme. They will –

- Show you around the scheme, highlighting the facilities (these vary between schemes).
- Explain the use of the laundry (where available), the emergency alarm system and the fire and emergency procedure.
- Introduce you to your neighbours.
- Advise you of local facilities such as doctors, dentists, chemists, shops, day centres and bus stops.
- Complete a support plan with you. This is completed jointly and is an official record of the level and type of support you have been assessed as needing and a plan of how we hope to achieve that.

Your Scheme Manager will also take some details from you concerning your health, next of kin contact details, doctor and the people you would want contacting if you are unwell. This information will also be passed onto the Central Control Service and will help us to provide the best service in the event of an emergency.

If you are unsure of anything when you move in please do not hesitate to speak to your Scheme manager.

Your Scheme Manager

The Scheme Manager is your main point of contact with the Sheltered Housing Team. Their main duties include

- Keeping in regular contact with you usually by daily visit or by use of the intercom system. The method by which you are contacted will be agreed as part of your support plan.
- Respond to emergencies and to get help.
- To provide support to enable you set up and maintain your tenancy.
- Help you liaise with support providers such as doctors, care workers and social workers.
- To provide support in helping you apply for benefits.
- To provide support to help you comply with tenancy requirements.
- Ensuring the Scheme is clean and tidy, secure and free from hazards.

Scheme Managers do not

- Provide Personal Care – this includes administering medication of any kind, lifting you or cleaning inside your home.
- Deal with your money – Scheme Managers are not allowed to handle cash or hold cash for safekeeping

Scheme Manager's Hours

Scheme Managers work Monday to Friday. They do not work at the weekend or on bank holidays.

Their usual hours of work are from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. with a 45 minute lunch break.

Cover for Scheme Manager

Scheme Managers are entitled to holidays. If your Scheme manager is not available for duty we will organise another Scheme manager to provide cover and contact you. They will also respond to any emergency situations which may arise.

Out of Hours Cover

Whenever your Scheme Manager is not on duty the scheme is linked to West Lancs DC Control Centre monitoring service. This allows us to provide emergency cover 24 hours a day 365 days a year. If necessary they will contact the emergency services, your doctor and next of kin, or arrange for an emergency repair. In order to contact your next of kin etc it is vital that they have up to date contact details. We would, therefore, ask you that should you change doctor or if your emergency contact changes address / telephone number that you notify your Scheme Manager at the earliest opportunity. The free phone number for the **Control centre is 0800 566 666**

Welfare Checks

Your Scheme manager will contact you every day they are on duty to check on your welfare. This is normally done by either a home visit or by using the intercom system or telephone. The preferred method of contact will be agreed with you and will be recorded in your support plan.

Master Key

On some schemes the Scheme manager has a master key to all flats. It will only be used in the case of an emergency or in other circumstances if you have given your permission. If the master key is used the Scheme manager will always knock or ring the doorbell before entering the flat. Where there is no master key you should consider giving a duplicate key to the Scheme Manager – they will discuss this with you.

Emergency Call / Lifeline Alarm System

Each flat has emergency alarm equipment which can be used to summon help in the case of an emergency. Pulling the cord and speaking to the operator once they have answered activates the pull cords. Pressing the pendant operates the Lifeline.

Your Scheme Manager will show you how to use this equipment when you move into the scheme. Your Scheme Manager will also carry out a complete test on this equipment every 13 weeks.

Registering with a Doctor

If you are already registered with a local doctor it is unlikely that you will need to change surgery when you move into the scheme. If you do need to change doctor your Scheme Manager can give you information on local surgeries. This information is also provided in your welcome information. If you do need to change doctor we ask that you do so within two weeks of moving into the scheme. If you have any problems finding a new doctor please speak to your Scheme Manager.

Support Plan

Your Scheme Manager will complete a 'Support Plan' with you when you move into the scheme. The plan will detail the type, range and level of any support needs you may have and how we can help with these. Your Scheme Manager will review your support plan with you at least once every six to twelve months. If you would like to discuss it sooner please do not hesitate to speak to your Scheme Manager. If you have any major changes to your circumstances we will also seek to review it with you sooner. If you wish you can have a friend or relative be present when your support plan / review is discussed.

If you have any complaints concerning your support plan or any other issues relating to Supporting People funding you can contact the Supporting People Team by writing to them at :

Fire Safety

Your Scheme Manager will advise you of the specific fire evacuation procedure on the first day of your tenancy. The fire evacuation procedure for your scheme is displayed at various points around the scheme. Please take time to familiarise yourself with the fire evacuation procedure. **Smoking is not allowed in any of the communal areas** but tenants may smoke in their own homes.

In General

- Be aware of the location of any equipment such as alarm activation points, fire extinguishers and fire blankets within your scheme.
- Always keep fire doors closed.
- Never obstruct the automatic fire doors on the communal corridors.
- In your own home make sure cigarettes are thoroughly extinguished and ash trays are regularly emptied in a safe manner. Smoking is not allowed in any communal areas of the scheme
- Never smoke in bed.
- If you use oxygen at home you must inform the Scheme Manager and follow the guidelines given by your supplier. You should not smoke whilst the equipment is in use.
- Do not put any lighted materials in the bin rooms / stores.
- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Keep your cooker clean and free from any build up of grease.
- Never use the lift in the event of a fire.

Fire Alarm Test

In the purpose built schemes, the fire alarm is tested each week. The purpose of the test is to confirm that the sirens sound and that the alarm activation is received by the Control Centre. The time of the test is highlighted on the notice board in the main foyer area.

Electrical Equipment

Please check any electrical equipment you bring into your home is not faulty e.g . frayed wires. In some schemes the Sheltered Housing Team is responsible for the maintenance of

your cooker and refrigerator. If you notice any faults with them please notify your Scheme Manager immediately.

If you wish to carry out any alterations in your flat you will need to obtain written consent prior to the commencement of any works. From 1st January 2005 it is an offence to carry out electrical alterations unless it carried out and certified by an approved contractor. The building Control Department may also need to be notified. Failure to comply with these regulations could result in a £5,000 fine. For more detailed information please see your Tenants Handbook.

Security of Accommodation

Security of your accommodation is your responsibility. The Sheltered Housing Team aim to provide safe and secure accommodation for all our tenants; however this can only be achieved with your help in observing the following guidelines.

- Always lock all doors and windows when leaving your flat
- Always lock your front door even if you are just going to the laundry or into a neighbour.
- Never let anyone you do not know into the building.
- Always ask workmen for their identification
- Always inform your Scheme Manager if you are going away

CCTV

Most Sheltered Housing Schemes have areas which are protected by CCTV (usually parts of the grounds and the main entrance / foyer area) . If they show criminal activity and or acts of anti social behaviour, pictures taken by the cameras will be shared with the police and other agencies.

Laundry

Where there is a laundry on site, your Scheme manager will show you how to operate the machines and you will be given 2 tokens per person each week for this purpose. Use of the facilities is restricted to residents washing only. Under no circumstances should it be used for family / friends washing. Your Scheme Manager will advise you of the opening times at your scheme.

Refuse Storage / Collection

West Lancs uses both wheelie bins and bin bags systems of collection. There are also different systems for items to be recycled - using either wheelie bins or boxes. Your Scheme manager will advise you which systems are in operation in your particular scheme.

The Guest Room

Where there is a Guest Room, it is available so friends and family can stay overnight, particularly those who live far away. Although the room is booked on a first come first served basis priority will be given to those people who are visiting sick relatives. The Sheltered Housing Team does not make a charge for the use of the guest room. However, individuals are free to make donations towards the social funds at the scheme should they wish to.

Pets

Animals such as cats and dogs are not allowed at some Sheltered Housing Schemes- you should speak to your Housing Officer to see if this applies to where you live. You can keep goldfish or small caged birds. Any pet must be kept under control and must not cause nuisance to other tenants.

Repairs

Repairs can either be reported to your Scheme manager or directly to the repairs call centre (01695 577177). You can also report emergency repairs via the Control Centre if your Scheme manager is not on duty. Further information on repairs can be found in your Tenants Handbook. Any concerns you have regarding Health and Safety should be reported to your Scheme Manager.

Concessionary TV Licence

Everybody over the age of 75 is entitled to a free TV licence. In some Sheltered Housing Schemes, tenants under age 75 may also benefit from a Concessionary TV licence . Your Scheme Manager will advise you of the current situation at your scheme. They will help you to complete the necessary paperwork to include you on any concessionary licence.

Gross Rent

Rents and support charges vary in different schemes. Your gross rent consists of up to three separate components.

- The net rent - this may be eligible for housing benefit, if you apply and meet the appropriate financial limits.
- The Support Costs - these may be eligible for Supporting People funding, if you apply and meet the appropriate financial limits
- Heating Charge – this covers the cost of the background heating and hot water. The heating charge is not eligible for either housing benefit or supporting people funding.

Council Tax

It is your responsibility to notify the Council Tax Section that you have moved into your new tenancy. You can contact them by phoning the main council call centre number (01695 577177) or by visiting any of the council's Customer Service Points.

Utility Supplies

You will need to notify your utility supplier that you have moved address (gas , electricity, water). You will need to supply them with any meter reading and the date you moved in.

Comments / Compliments / Complaints.

We welcome your views, comments and suggestions about the service and the council. How can I have my say?

If you would like to make a comment, compliment or complaint, you can:

- Ask your scheme manager for a form. (There are copies on the notice boards and Information Points)
- Pick up and fill in a form at a Customer Service Point
- Write to us at : Sheltered Housing Team, West Lancs BC, PO Box 16, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, L39,2DF
- Use the red 'Suggestion Box' located in the communal area

What happens once I have made a complaint?

- Step One: We will deal with your complaint within 10 working days
- Step Two: We will carry out a full and fair investigation within a month if things are not resolved
- Step Three: We will arrange for a different senior officer to review your case within a further month if you remain unhappy.

We will keep you informed if our investigation needs to take longer or if it needs to be handled differently

What happens if I am not happy with the way West Lancs DC has responded to my complaint?

If you are unhappy with the way West Lancs DC has dealt with a complaint, you can contact the Local Government Ombudsman.

Health and Safety Risk Assessment

A Health & Safety Risk Assessment for the scheme has been carried out and is reviewed on a six monthly basis. Tenants are encouraged to participate in the six monthly risk assessment reviews. If you would like to be considered as a tenants' representative for your scheme please speak to your scheme manager.

Protection from Abuse

There are different types of abuse including :

- Financial
- Physical
- Psychological
- Sexual

- Discriminatory
- Neglect

West Lancs BC has been working in partnership with Lancashire County Council to address the needs of vulnerable adults who may have been abused. We have signed up to the 'No Secrets' strategy (copy available on Information Point).

If you feel that you are being abused or suspect abuse to another person you should either inform your Scheme Manager (who will contact the Multi Agency Team at Lancashire County Council) or you may wish to contact them direct on 0845 053 0028.

There is also a confidential helpline available 'Action on Elder Abuse' on **0800 8808 8141**

Whilst visiting the scheme, the welfare of children and younger people has been considered, as they need to be safeguarded from abuse. Children under the age of 16 are not allowed onto the scheme unaccompanied. When in any communal areas (including gardens) they must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times. Under the terms of your tenancy agreement you are responsible for the behaviour of all of your visitors.

Electric Scooters and Wheelchairs

Not all schemes are suitable for these items. Some have identified areas where they can be stored and re charged but in others the only place to keep them is inside your own flat. Please speak to your Scheme Manager who will advise you of the situation at your scheme. These items must not be left in corridors or other communal areas where they present a hazard. Regular Health and Safety checks are carried out at schemes and you will be asked to remove any equipment considered to be a risk.

If you are given permission to bring an electric scooter onto a Sheltered Housing Scheme you must have third party insurance cover.

Extra Care Sheltered Housing

West Lancs BC provides some units of 'Extra Care' sheltered housing at its Marlborough Court scheme in Skelmersdale. Clients with an assessed care need may be eligible for this service. If you or any one you know may be interested , please speak to your Scheme Manager who will provide you with more information regarding the service and how to make an application.

Useful Contact Numbers

West Lancs Borough Council / Lancashire County Council Numbers	
Sheltered Housing Team	01695 716815
West Lancs BC Call Centre (for all Departments)	01695 577177
Lancashire County Council	0845 053 0000
Social Services Skelmersdale	01695 651200
Ormskirk	01695 585800
West Lancs BC Repairs Call Centre	01695 577177
Supporting People Team	01772 531482
West Lancs Control Centre	0800 566 666
General	
Age Concern - Skelmersdale	01695 720406
Ormskirk	01695 571522
Lancashire (Day Care Services)	01282 477556
Emergency Services	999
Police	01695 724101
Pensions Service	0845 60 60 245
Pensions Service Textphone (if you have speech or hearing difficulties)	0845 60 60 285
Citizens Advice Bureau	01695 723110
Crime Stoppers	0800 555 111
Samaritans	01942 492222
Scottish Power (General Enquires)	0845 272 1212
United Utilities (Water) Account Enquiries	0845 746 1100
Dial-a-ride	01704 893373 / 896605
Hospitals	
Ormskirk	01695 577111
Southport	01704 547471

