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Section 1 - Our aims and principles

Welcome to Brighton & Hove City Council’s sheltered housing service. We hope you are happy in your new home.

The sheltered housing service aims to provide older people with a high quality of accommodation and support services, meeting a wide range of needs, and so enabling older people to live independently and in comfort.

- the services should provide a ‘home for life’ for tenants. Tenants will only have to move on to other accommodation offering more support in exceptional circumstances.
- tenants and applicants will be treated with the respect due to older members of the community.
- the service aims to provide accommodation of a standard that will enable older people to live in comfort and dignity, with security, peace of mind and a sense of community.
- the service will aim to provide a high standard and range of communal facilities within schemes, both for tenants and the wider community of older people.
- the service will provide tenants with support and assist them to access the services that they need to live independently.
- the service will seek to be one of the best providers of sheltered housing and to be in the forefront of developments that can improve the quality of housing and services.

Brighton & Hove City Council’s housing services are for everyone. We deliver our services in a fair and accessible way, and take positive action to improve services to meet the needs of the many groups that make up our community.

Section 2 - Your scheme manager

Each scheme has a designated scheme manager, employed by the council to deliver our sheltered service to you. Some scheme managers work between two smaller schemes and some live on site.
2.1 Your scheme manager’s working hours

Your scheme manager is on duty from 8.30am until 5pm Monday to Thursday, and from 8.30am until 4.30pm on Friday. At the weekend, or when the scheme manager is away for the day, a limited relief service will be provided.

Your scheme manager does not work in the evenings or over the weekend and we would ask you to respect their privacy when they are not at work.

2.2 Contacting your scheme manager

Your scheme manager has an office in the scheme, normally situated on the ground floor. If your scheme manager is not in their office, you can contact them using the alarm system.

The alarm system is activated by use of red communication pull cords. These are found in your home and throughout the scheme. If you need help at any time, pull these cords or press the button on the speech module in your home. This will call the scheme manager, who will be able to speak to you.

Your scheme manager has a notice board - either outside their office or in the common way - which will inform you of their whereabouts and any changes in the service we provide on a daily basis.

2.3 Our ‘out-of-hours’ service

When your scheme manager is not on duty or is off-site, the call will go through to our CareLink Control Centre. You will then be able to talk to a CareLink operator in exactly the same way. The CareLink service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

CareLink will have your personal details (such as your name, next-of-kin, etc) on computer and they will either call in the service you need or send someone to help you. This might be your scheme manager if they live on-site, a mobile officer or a contractor if there is a serious maintenance problem such as a flood. All calls to CareLink are recorded.

If you use the alarm system by mistake, please wait until you hear a response, as no reply will alert staff to attend.

All information held by CareLink is confidential and is covered by the Data Protection Act.
If you have any comments about the CareLink service, please contact:

The CareLink Control Centre
6A Patching lodge
Park Street
Brighton BN2 0AQ
Telephone: 01273 673105

2.4 Your scheme manager’s duties

The role of your scheme manager is to manage the scheme effectively and meet the needs of the residents, enabling them to live independently. Your scheme manager’s duties include:

- monitoring your wellbeing, for example, by conducting a daily call if requested, and by ensuring that your needs are continually assessed - this includes liaising with appropriate health, statutory and voluntary agencies
- responding to emergency calls
- consulting with residents over issues affecting the schemes and encouraging tenant participation
- facilitating communal activities (social, leisure, recreational, therapeutic and educational) for the involvement of residents and, where appropriate, older people in the community
- reporting and monitoring repairs and maintenance in the communal areas (this could include your repairs if you are unable to do so yourself)
- ensuring that the scheme provides a safe and secure environment, and for carrying out regular checks on fire alarms, smoke detectors and pull-cords
- monitoring contracts such as cleaning and grounds maintenance to ensure standards are maintained
- assisting with the letting of sheltered properties, such as carrying out viewings of properties with prospective tenants or assisting with the assessment of applications

Your scheme manager is unable to carry out certain tasks, such as personal care or handling your money. They do not undertake domestic tasks such as cleaning, cooking or shopping. They also cannot carry out medical duties, such as injections, giving drugs or changing dressings, in any circumstances.
Section 3 - Your housing officer

Each resident has a designated housing officer. Your housing officer is based at the Oxford Street Housing Office and is responsible for all the housing management and tenancy issues, such as lettings, rent arrears and neighbour nuisance. The housing officer’s duties include:

- managing sheltered housing vacancies and lettings
- tenancy enforcement and all other aspects of housing management (including instigating legal action where required)
- working directly with individual residents, tenant associations, councillors and local voluntary and statutory agencies to improve service standards and provide effective solutions to housing management problems
- managing, supporting, supervising and developing sheltered staff including your scheme manager
- ensuring that health and safety obligations are met for staff and residents

If you have any worries about your tenancy, such as the payment of rent, please speak to your housing officer on 01273 293255. Your housing officer can arrange to visit you at home, if required.

Your housing officer’s normal working hours are 9am until 5pm in the afternoon Monday to Thursday, and from 9am until 4.30pm on Friday. However, your housing officer works a flexi-time system, which means that they could work outside of these hours.

Section 4 - Care and support

The role of sheltered housing is to enable older people to live as independently as possible. Your scheme manager has an important role in helping you live independently.

4.1 The regular call

The scheme manager will call each resident using the alarm system. The call is normally made each morning between 8.30am and 12 noon.

The call enables the scheme manager to monitor your wellbeing. If you are unwell or need assistance, the scheme manager will be able to help you.
You can choose which days you wish to be called or can opt out of the service all together if you want to. When you move into the scheme, your scheme manager will talk to you about the service and arrange which days you wish to be called. This can be changed at any time.

If you do not respond to a call or do not tell the scheme manager if you are going out, the scheme manager will check to make sure you are alright. This may include coming into your home using a master key.

4.2 Assessing your needs

Your scheme manager will visit you in your home at least once a year to talk to you about your needs. This might happen more frequently if your circumstances change.

Your scheme manager will give you the opportunity to talk about your needs in your own words. You will not be asked a lot of needless questions or have to fill in any complex forms.

Your views are important and the scheme manager will actively listen to what you have to say. The depth and length of this conversation will be in proportion to your needs.

So nothing is missed, your scheme manager will keep a written record of the conversation. This means that they will be writing notes during the meeting and you will be given a copy of this record shortly afterwards.

You will be given the opportunity to comment upon this record to make sure you agree with what has been written down.

4.3 Planning your support

Once the scheme manager has listened to your needs, they will take steps to meet them. This is called ‘care planning’.

Your scheme manager will write a ‘support plan’ based on the information you gave them. They will always work in your best interests and will always discuss any plans with you. The support plan will help us provide you with the most appropriate services to help you keep your independence and health. Your scheme manager can help to co-ordinate these services and link to new ones where necessary.

You will be given a copy of the support plan showing what action is going to be taken to help meet your needs. If you don’t agree with the information on the support plan, please tell your scheme manager.
4.4 Working with other care and support agencies

Your scheme manager is used to working with other care agencies, such as social services and the health authorities. If you have any needs that your scheme manager cannot meet, they can liaise with these other agencies who may be able to help you. However, your scheme manager will respect your confidentiality and will normally only share this information with others with your permission.

4.5 The alarm system

All sheltered properties come supplied with our alarm system. However, you may need extra help if you are frail. Your scheme manager has a stock of pendant alarms, which can be worn around the neck and enable the wearer to summon help wherever they are in the scheme. Please speak to your scheme manager if you feel that you need a pendant alarm.

Section 5 - Confidentiality

Any information you provide is confidential. This means that the only people who have access to this information are you and our staff on a ‘need to know’ basis. This includes information that you tell us and information that we hold in writing or on computer. We will normally only share this information with others with your permission.

So that we can provide you with a good standard of support, we will ask you to sign a ‘Confidentiality Form’ giving us permission to act on your behalf.

5.1 Right of access to information

We comply with the Data Protection Act regarding the protection of information we have about you.

You have the right to see any information we have about you, unless we believe that there may be a threat to your safety or the safety of others.

You have the right to request information about any of the policies or procedures relevant to the support service we provide you. Please speak to your scheme manager for further information.

Section 6 - Protecting you from abuse
Sheltered Housing Resident’s Guide

We have a duty to protect you from abuse of any kind. There are many types of abuse, including financial, emotional, psychological, and physical. If you are unsure, or feel you or someone else may be suffering in any way, please ask your scheme manager, who will try to help you in the best way possible.

If for any reason you feel unable to speak to your scheme manager about something concerning you, please phone or write to your housing officer at the Oxford Street Housing Office, telephone number 01273 293255.

Alternatively, you can contact social services on 01273 296399 or the police on 0845 60 70 999. If you are in immediate danger, you should call the police on 999.

You might also wish to speak to the ‘Action on Elder Abuse Response’ help-line on 080 8808 8141 - this is available from 10am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday. This is a confidential, national helpline service providing information and emotional support to anyone concerned about the abuse of older people.

If you need any assistance in communicating your needs, we can arrange for someone to help you.

The council’s Tenants’ Handbook has information about what you can do if you are facing nuisance and annoyance from your neighbours.

Section 7 - Your health and safety

We take your health and safety very seriously. We undertake regular checks of your scheme and maintain our equipment to ensure your safety.

Your scheme manager has a very important role to play in the day-to-day health and safety management of your scheme. Please speak to your scheme manager if you:

- have an accident or ‘near miss’
- notice something unsafe, such as fire doors being wedged open
- are unsure what to do in an emergency situation such as fire
- require any further guidance about a health and safety issue

7.1 Fire safety

Your scheme has a full fire system with smoke alarms and fire doors. These are regularly tested to ensure that they work properly.
As fire is so dangerous, please co-operate with the sheltered service to ensure that the safety of the scheme is not compromised - please do not wedge open fire doors, for example.

7.2 What to do if there is a fire

In the event of a fire, ensure that your front door is properly closed and stay in your flat - it is the safest place to be. Only leave or evacuate if told to do so by the emergency services.

If the fire is in your home, you should leave immediately, closing the front door behind you and go to the communal lounge if it is safe to do so. Never use the lift in the event of a fire.

Your scheme manager keeps a list of residents, including details of any mobility problems or other disabilities. This information will be given to the fire brigade when they attend. If you do not understand these instructions, please speak to your scheme manager, who will be happy to explain them to you.

Section 8 – Security

8.1 Access to your home

Our properties are mostly designed to be self-contained and, while you have your own front door keys, your scheme manager has a ‘master key’ so they can gain access in an emergency, such as if you do not respond to the regular call.

However, the scheme manager will only enter your home as a last measure and will always leave a note to explain their entry.

8.2 Door entry systems

Door entry systems provide you with added security. However, for these systems to be effective, you should never give access to strangers.

8.3 Keys and key fobs

Do not have your address with your keys as someone could use them to get into your home if you lose them. You may wish to give a spare copy of your key to a trusted neighbour, friend or relative.

If you have a mortice style lock, this should only be used when you go out. If you lock yourself into the flat using a mortice key, it will be difficult for the scheme manager or the emergency services to gain access in an emergency.
8.4 Protecting the security of the scheme and your home

Never let anyone into your scheme or your home unless you are absolutely sure that you know who they are.

Any genuine caller will have an identification card with a phone number you can call. Always check first before letting anyone in. If you have any doubts, use the CareLink pull cord to call the scheme manager or the CareLink control staff. A genuine caller will not mind waiting while you check their credentials.

If you do let someone in and then have doubts, use the CareLink alarm to call for assistance.
If you see anyone acting suspiciously in or around the scheme, please speak to your scheme manager or CareLink.

Section 9 - Respecting others

Our sheltered housing services are for everyone, irrespective of race, colour, ethnic or national origins, creed, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and disability, and we welcome this diversity in our community.

We deliver our services in a fair and accessible way, and take positive action to improve services to meet the needs of the many groups that make up our community. If you feel that our service is not culturally appropriate, please let us know and we will address your concerns.

Your scheme manager has a directory of local cultural and multi-faith groups, and will be happy to provide you with a copy.

The council is opposed to all forms of discrimination and racial harassment. Racial harassment is hostility towards people because of their ethnic origin. It includes physical assault, threats, verbal abuse, name calling, racist graffiti, letters or posters. If you are suffering from racial abuse, harassment or bullying please speak to your scheme manager or housing officer as soon as possible. The council's Tenants' Handbook has information about what you can do if you are facing harassment and discrimination from your neighbours.

Section 10 - Facilities and activities

Your scheme may include facilities such as a communal lounge, launderette, guestrooms and refuse rooms. When you move into your home, your scheme manager will tell you about these facilities.
Please use the communal areas with care and respect so that other residents can enjoy them at any time. The launderette is for the use of residents only and should not be used to wash the clothes of friends or relatives.

Your scheme should have an active social calendar and your scheme manager will be able to tell you about this. Your scheme manager will facilitate some activities, while a tenant association or social club will run others. Activities are often advertised in a regular newsletter produced by your scheme manager or on the communal notice boards. These activities are open to everyone and we hope you join in and enjoy them.

If you have any ideas about social activities, please talk to your scheme manager, tenant association or social club.

Section 11 - Comments and complaints

Your views are important to us and we would like to hear from you when things go wrong and when you believe we have done something well. Your comments help us learn both from our mistakes and from our good practice.

11.1 How to raise problems with us

We hope that you are satisfied with our sheltered service. We recognise that we may not always get things right and we would like you to tell us when things go wrong.

For the majority of day-to-day problems, please speak to your scheme manager, who will aim to resolve the problem there and then, whenever possible. This may involve the scheme manager contacting other colleagues or departments in the council and in this case, the scheme manager will agree a time with you when you will be contacted again. If the scheme manager needs to contact anyone else, this will be done with your consent.

Alternatively, you may wish to speak to your housing officer, especially if the problem relates to tenancy issues such as neighbour problems and rent arrears. Your housing officer can always visit you at home to discuss your concerns. Alternatively, you may wish to speak to the older peoples housing manager, especially if the problems are serious or relate to staff issues.

You can contact your housing officer and the older peoples housing manager at:

The Oxford Street Neighbourhood Office
20-22 Oxford Street
Brighton, BN1 4LA
Telephone: 01273 293255
If you have access to e-mail, you can contact the sheltered housing team using the address: sheltered@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

We will keep a log of any complaint or compliment that you raise with us.

### 11.2 The council’s corporate complaints procedure

We hope that our sheltered staff will be able to sort out your problems quickly. However, if you have tried this and are still dissatisfied, you can make a formal complaint to the council’s Complaints & Standards Team. This team investigates complaints about all council services.

Complaints can be made by:

- Phoning the Standards & Complaints Team on 0500 291229.
- Writing to:

**Standards & Complaints**  
Brighton & Hove City Council  
FREEPOST SEA2560  
Brighton, BN1 1ZW

- Completing the ‘Complaints, Comments & Compliments’ leaflet
- By e-mail - complaints@brighton-hove.gov.uk

The council has a two-stage corporate complaints procedure. If you’re still dissatisfied, you can raise your complaint with the Local Government Ombudsman.

You might also wish to raise any concerns with your local ward councillor. You can find out who you councillor is by contacting the council’s switchboard on 01273 290000.

### 11.3 Complaints about staff

Our staff follow a Code of Conduct and we expect them to maintain the highest professional conduct and standards.

If you have any worries about the conduct or behaviour of staff working in your scheme, please let us know and we will investigate your concerns further. We will do this respectfully, discreetly and in confidence, taking your views into consideration as to the action we take.
Sheltered Housing Resident’s Guide

For allegations of abuse, please see Section 6 of this guide for further advice.

11.4 Right to advocacy and representation

If the scheme manager is unable to assist you directly, or should the matter be better dealt with by someone more independent, they should be able to point you in the right direction as to where you can get further help and advice.

Section 12 - Useful phone numbers

Council services

Community Meals 01273 296399
Council switchboard 01273 290000
CareLink 01273 673105
Housing & Council Tax Benefit 01273 292000
Home Care 01273 296399
Mental Health (Community Advice and Support Team) 01273 295940
Occupational Therapy Service 01273 296256
Repairs Hotline 0800 052 6140
Out-of-hours repairs 01273 699988
Sheltered Housing Services 01273 293255
Social Care Emergencies 01273 295555
Evening/weekends 07699 391462
Social Services Information Line 01273 295555

Other services

Accident and Emergency (Royal Sussex County Hospital) 01273 696955
Action on Elder Abuse 080 8808 8141
Advice, Information and Mediation Service (AIMS) 0208 765 7465
Age Concern (Brighton) 01273 720603
Age Concern (national) 0800 009 966
Alzheimer’s Society 01273 726266
Carers’ Centre 01273 234045
Cruse Bereavement Care 01273 234007
Daily Living Centre 01273 731208
Disability Advice Centre 01273 203016
Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247
Help the Aged Senior Line 0808 800 65 65
NHS Direct 0845 4647
Memory Screening service 08880 505051
Mind 01273 749600
Samaritans 0845 790 9090
Stoke Association Information line……………………………… 0845 3033100 / 01622 351960
Sussex Deaf Association………………………………………… 01273 671899
Sussex Interpreting Services……………………………………… 01273 702005
Sussex Lantern……………………………………………………… 01273 507251