



Your tenancy, your home

Sheltered housing

Tenant handbook



NORWICH
City Council

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Illustrations by tenant Jean Boone

Introduction

This handbook provides guidance for tenants who have been offered or have recently moved into sheltered housing owned by the council. It gives you important information about the sheltered housing service. The legal agreement between you and the council is set out in your tenancy agreement – please refer to that document for a statement of your rights and obligations.

What is sheltered housing?

Sheltered housing is a group of flats or bungalows specially designed and built for people over the age of 60 who are able to live an independent life, but who would benefit from additional security and support.

Your property is fitted with an alarm system that will enable you to contact help in an emergency, 24 hours a day.

Your sheltered housing scheme may have communal facilities such as a lounge or dining room, kitchen and laundry for tenants' use. There may also be a guest room where relatives or friends can stay for a small charge.

Aims of our sheltered housing

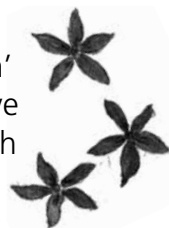
- To provide rented accommodation where people over 60 years of age can feel safe and secure.
- To facilitate opportunities for tenants to enjoy activities.
- To enable tenants to receive a level of support that allows them to successfully maintain their tenancy and live independently.



What you can expect from us

The following standards and aims tell you what you can expect from the sheltered housing team.

- Our staff will always be courteous, helpful and ensure you are treated fairly and with respect.
- We will always wear our identity badges, and introduce ourselves to you in a polite and friendly manner.
- We will leave you our name and contact number so you can get in touch with us when you need to.
- Our sheltered housing officers will sign up your new tenancy with you and tell you all you need to know about your new home and the sheltered housing scheme facilities.
- Within four weeks of the start of your tenancy, sheltered housing officers will carry out a 'settling in' visit with you, to answer any questions you may have about the service, and make sure you are happy with your new home.
- Within two weeks of moving into your new home, support workers will complete a support plan with you to ensure you are provided with the level of help you need to enable you to live independently in your home.
- Your support plan will be reviewed with you every 12 months, or sooner if your needs change.
- We will provide you with an alarm pendant that will enable you to contact help in an emergency 24 hours a day.
- We will regularly consult and work with residents to continuously improve, develop and shape services you receive to meet your needs.



We will report to you how we perform against these various standards through the sheltered housing involvement panel (SHIP).

What happens when I move in?

When you have signed your tenancy agreement and moved into your home you are responsible for any bills, meals, cleaning, contents insurance and internal decorating.

You are also responsible for your garden maintenance if you have an individual garden area rather than a communal garden.

Your sheltered housing officer will visit you to make sure you are happy in your new home and know where all your local amenities are.

A member of the support worker team will also visit you in order to complete your support plan.

Please refer to your tenancy agreement (orange document) for more information.

What does my support worker do?

Support workers will:

- work as part of a team providing flexible housing related support to everyone who needs it;
- carry out a needs and risk assessment with you to identify what help and support you need;
- develop a support plan with you to agree how they can best support you;
- work in partnership with other agencies, carers and support networks to help you access services you need to live independently;
- signpost and support residents through challenges and crises;
- help you to achieve positive outcomes by completing an individual support plan with you.



What does my sheltered housing officer do?



A sheltered housing officer will:

- provide housing management and tenancy services to you from completing your sign up to inspecting communal areas;
- assist you to manage your tenancy by providing help and advice on tenancy management issues;
- carry out health and safety inspections, and monitor the condition of your property (and help you to report repairs if necessary);
- carry out assessments and viewings when a property is offered to you, and sign you up to your new tenancy;
- monitor communal areas and buildings on sheltered housing schemes and work with contractors and partner organisations to ensure schemes are maintained and upgraded appropriately;
- keep you up to date with information via tenants meetings or newsletters;
- monitor the cleaning and hiring of communal facilities.

Your sheltered housing officer and support worker cannot:

- carry out duties which are the responsibility of other organisations, such as social services;
- act as a carer, nurse or night sitter;
- administer drugs or medication of any kind;
- do your washing, shopping, cleaning or cooking;
- look after your valuables;
- accept gifts for personal gain;
- look after your pets;
- dispose of domestic/clinical waste.

However, they will direct you to any services you need.

When are my support worker/ sheltered housing officer on duty?



Support worker

Your support worker works Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 5.15pm but won't be at your scheme all of the time.

From time to time support workers are required to attend meetings and training.

When your support worker is not at your scheme, Norwich Community Alarm Service (NCAS) provides assistance via the alarm in your property or your alarm pendant.

Contacting your support worker

You can contact your support worker during office hours by calling **01603 213711**.

Sheltered housing officer

The sheltered housing officers work Monday to Friday from 8.45am to 5.15pm and cover an area of Norwich.

Contacting your sheltered housing officer

You can contact your sheltered housing officer by calling **01603 213711**.



What is the alarm call system?

The alarm service is managed by Norwich Community Alarm Service (NCAS). Your home has a two-way alarm call system that allows you to get help or assistance – you can pull one of the cords in your home or push the personal pendant issued to you when you move into the property. Your sheltered housing support worker will show you how to use the system.

You will have been asked to sign a form to acknowledge receipt of the door entry fob and the alarm pendant. When you end your tenancy the fob and pendant must be handed back to the council. A charge will be made for fobs and pendants that are lost or not returned.



The alarm system is there for you to use at any time of the day or night if you need assistance. If you think you need an ambulance and are able to call **999**, or have someone with you who is able to, then please do so. The NCAS operators will always assist you if you are not able to do this yourself.

If you are planning to go away from your property for any significant length of time (holidays etc.) please let NCAS know by using your alarm system.

How does the service continue when a breakdown occurs?

Sheltered housing and NCAS have continuity plans in place to ensure the service continues at all times. This includes during extreme weather and power failures. A leaflet entitled 'Be better prepared for an emergency' is available from your sheltered housing officer.

Repairs and maintenance



Please refer to part eight of your tenancy agreement for information on repairing and maintaining your home. Faults or repairs should be reported as soon as possible.

Reporting a repair for your home

When you need to report a repair, you should call the **customer contact team** on **0344 980 3333**. By selecting the housing repairs option you will be transferred to our repairs team who will make an appointment for a workman to visit. Alternatively you can report repairs on line by completing the request form on the council web site or in person by visiting the council.

Out of normal working hours (5pm to 8am) on weekends and on bank holidays, please call 01603 412180 if you have an emergency repair. Alternatively, report an emergency repair at any time to NCAS by pulling the alarm cord.

Reporting a repair to a communal area

If you need to report a repair to one of the communal areas, please report this to your sheltered housing officer or call the council on **0344 980 3333** and follow the options to report your repair.



What are the communal facilities?

A **no smoking** policy strictly applies to all communal areas. It does not apply in tenants' own homes, but please refrain from smoking if we are visiting you at home.

The lounge/dining area

This is for use by tenants for social events, meetings, parties or just for a cup of tea. Other people living nearby may be invited to activities and some schemes provide a base for day opportunities or lunch clubs run by outside organisations. Appropriate groups and committees may also rent the room at a charge. To book the communal space for an event please call **01603 213711**.

The laundry

This has washing machines and tumble driers for tenants' own laundry. The charge for use is incorporated into your service charge. The laundry can be used anytime during the opening hours, but your scheme may have a rota.

Your support worker or sheltered housing officer will be able to show you how to use the machines.

These machines are for the use of the tenants and their carers **only** and must not be used for family or friends' laundry.

The guest room

If your scheme has a guest room you can hire it for use by visiting relatives or friends. If your scheme does not have a guest room you may still be able to hire a room for visitors to stay close by at a neighbouring scheme. Your sheltered housing officer can give you information on costs and availability.

The kitchen

The kitchen is for the use of tenants using the communal dining space. In some schemes the kitchens are used by organisations which manage day opportunities or lunch clubs for tenants and people living outside of the scheme.

Access to communal areas

You will have been issued with two door entry fobs which will enable you to gain access to the communal areas. This system ensures that only authorised people can access the facilities.

You will have been asked to sign a form accepting responsibility for the door entry fob issued to you. If you lose a door entry fob you must report it to your support worker or sheltered housing officer immediately so we can take action to maintain the security of the buildings.

At the end of your tenancy you are required to hand the door entry fob back to the council. There will be a charge for any fobs that are lost or not handed back.

Car Parking

Some schemes have car parking facilities; spaces are not allocated and can be used by all tenants and their families. Some schemes have permit parking only.



What else do I need to know?

Security

All properties are fitted with high quality security locks which are individual to each scheme, no master keys are held by our staff. We fit a key safe to each property and tenants have the choice of whether to place a key in the safe to allow for emergency access or not. If you fit your own door chain, please only use it when you answer the door otherwise it could delay access in an emergency.

You should always ask for identification from any caller you do not know. If you are suspicious in any way **do not** open your door and please pull the alarm cord to get advice from the alarm service.

Residents of block schemes (flats) are requested not to allow access to anyone who they are not expecting or do not know. This will ensure the security of everyone living at the scheme.

Insurance

You are responsible for insuring your contents and possessions. The council runs a scheme available to tenants only that you can choose to join – please talk to your sheltered housing officer for more information. Other insurance providers who offer home contents insurance are available.

Pets

Sheltered housing schemes are not designed for animals and you should seek advice from your sheltered housing officer before keeping a pet. The following block schemes do not allow the keeping of pets at all (except confined small pets like budgerigars and goldfish):



Britannia Court, Douro House, Lakenfields, St James' House, Silkfields, Singer Court and Stone Road.

With the exception of sensory support dogs, pets are not allowed in communal lounges or dining areas.



If you do have a pet you are responsible for its well-being. Your support worker must be aware of the arrangements for its care if you have to go into hospital, however support workers and sheltered housing officers will not look after a pet if you are away.

Television

A television licence is required for all properties with a TV. If you are aged over 75 the licence is free. Your sheltered housing officer will be able to give you advice on this matter.

To report a fault with a TV aerial please call the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333**. Please note if you request a repair and the fault is found to be with your equipment, no fault is found or you don't keep the appointment the council will place a re-charge to the tenant.

Noticeboards

Each scheme has a noticeboard with useful information and telephone numbers. If you require any other information, please ask your support worker or sheltered housing officer. Tenants are permitted to place

information on the noticeboards, however please consult your support worker or sheltered housing officer before doing so. Information placed on the notice board is regularly monitored.





Mobility scooters

We will do all we reasonably can to support and promote responsible use of mobility scooters. If you have a mobility scooter, or find that you need one after moving in, please discuss it with your sheltered housing officer as soon as possible. This will enable us to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the safe use of the scooter, in accordance with the tenancy agreement. In particular, please note the following requirements.

- You may only store a scooter in either one of our designated stores or, provided that it is done safely, in your home.
- You must not make any alterations or additions to your property to accommodate your scooter unless you have received our written permission to do so.
- Scooters (including visitors' scooters) must not be left (even temporarily) in communal areas.
- You must arrange to have a PAT (Portable Appliance Test) carried out on your scooter and charging unit at least once a year.
- You must use your scooter safely and in accordance with manufacturers' instructions, so as not to endanger anybody, cause a nuisance or damage property.

How can I have my say?

You can get involved in what you would like to see happening in sheltered housing by:

- participating in tenant meetings held regularly at your scheme;
- by becoming a tenant representative of the sheltered housing involvement panel (SHIP).

For more information please contact the tenant involvement team on 0344 980 3333 or email tenantinvolvement@norwich.gov.uk

What if I have a complaint or compliment?

If you want to make a comment about the service you receive you can speak to your support worker or sheltered housing officer who will be able to assist you. Alternatively, you can speak to a team leader or the tenancy support services manager by calling the customer contact centre on **0344 980 3333**.

If you prefer, you can write to:

Norwich City Council

City Hall

St Peters Street

Norwich, NR2 1NH

Email: **listening@norwich.gov.uk**

Website: **www.norwich.gov.uk**



Details of the council's complaint procedure can be provided by any member of staff and can also be found on our website.

What you can do to help us

Treat us as you would like to be treated, with courtesy and respect, and let us know if your circumstances or contact details change, so we can ensure you are supported appropriately.

Confidentiality

The only people who will have access to your personal information are you and employees of the council on a 'need to know' basis. We will only share this information with other service providers where you agree that we can. You have the right to discuss matters with sheltered housing employees in confidence and the right to be treated fairly, equally and with respect.

Data protection

Data Protection Act 1998

As per your tenancy agreement; you may inspect the information we hold about you. Please ask us for details.



Safeguarding adults

Anyone can be at risk of harm from another. Abuse might be physical, sexual, psychological, financial, neglect, discriminatory, domestic abuse, professional abuse or institutional abuse.

Abusers can be someone you know, family friends, carers, staff members or anyone who may come into your home.

If you feel you are being abused or know a person you believe is at risk then it is important to tell someone. Any concerns you have can be discussed with your support worker or sheltered housing officer. You can also call Norfolk county council Safeguarding adults team on **0344 800 8020**.

Useful contact numbers

- Norwich Community Alarm Service (NCAS) **01603 213700**
- Sheltered housing office **01603 213711**
- Emergency repairs **01603 412180**
- Norfolk County Council Community Services (Social Services) **0344 800 8020**
- Customer contact team **0344 980 3333**
- JLA washing machines **01422 824688**
- Safeguarding Adults **0344 800 8020**
- TV aerials **0344 980 3333**
- Age UK **01603 496333**



Emergency services contact

Ambulance **999** (non emergency **111**)

Fire **999**

Police **999** (non emergency **101**)

Gas **0800 111 999**

Electricity **0800 783 8838**

The information contained in this handbook is a guide to the services available at the time of publication.

If you would like this information in another language or format such as large print, CD or audio cassette or Braille please contact Norwich City Council

Norwich City Council · City Hall · Norwich · NR2 1NH

t: 0344 980 3333

f: 01603 213000

e: info@norwich.gov.uk

www.norwich.gov.uk

