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01235 515900.

**Bengali** আশ্রয়দানকারী আবাসন

যদি আপনি এই তথ্য একটি ভিন্ন ভাষায়, বড় অক্ষরের ছাপায় অথবা সি.ডি'তে  
চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 01235 515900 নম্বরে আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ  
করুন।

**Chinese** 庇護住屋

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訊，請致電 01235 515900 聯絡我們。

**Albanian** Strehimi me përkrahje

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ne CD, ju lutemi te na kontakton ne numrin 01235 515900.

**Slovakian** Prístrešky

Ak požadujete túto informáciu v inom jazyku, vytlačenu s veľkými  
písmenami alebo na disku CD, kontaktujte nás na čísle 01235 515900.

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# Sheltered housing



26 06/09

## What is sheltered housing?

The aim of sheltered housing is to provide comfortable, convenient and secure accommodation for people aged 60+ (or younger but with health needs) which allows people to keep their independence.

A sheltered housing scheme consists of a group of unfurnished flats or bungalows which are designed for older people or people with disabilities who do not need constant or intensive help. Our schemes contain a mixture of 1 and 2-bedroom flats, studio flats and bungalows. Some flats and bungalows have their own gardens; others may have shared gardens and an assisted bathroom facility.

You have your own front door and own keys to the block and your flat. You can come and go as you wish.

Our sheltered units have an emergency alarm system so you can get through to one of our operators 24 hours a day. A Scheme Manager will visit Monday – Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) 8.30am – 5.00pm.

## What sheltered housing is not

Sheltered housing is not the same as residential care or nursing homes. Tenants moving to sheltered housing schemes are normally expected to be reasonably fit and able to care for themselves, and to lead fully independent lives.

Our schemes are intended for people who need a low level of support. Our Scheme Managers do not provide personal care.

Sheltered housing is also not intended for people who are very independent. For example, if you are still

working it may be that you do not need the support of a Scheme Manager at the moment.

## When you move in

When you move in to sheltered housing, your Scheme Manager will meet you and help you fill in a support plan. This lets you indicate what visits you would like. It will be reviewed with you twice a year, but you can request that the visits be started at any time during your tenancy. Scheme Managers will regularly visit tenants (as agreed), arrange help in an emergency, help tenants get support services and encourage social and recreational activities. They will not enter your home without being invited, except in an emergency.

Your scheme's notice board will tell you which Scheme Manager will be on duty that day.

Scheme Managers aim to visit tenants before 2.00pm. The visits are to make sure all is well, to provide daily contact for people (where agreed) and to discuss any problems or worries.

All tenants have a support plan recording details of each tenant's health and well-being. Please give your Scheme Manager the name, address and phone number of your nearest relatives or friends and doctor so he or she can act quickly in an emergency. It is important that you tell us about any changes to this information.

Information in the plan can be used to get support services if a tenant needs care in the future. Any relevant daily information will be written in your support plan.

All information kept about you is strictly confidential

and governed by the data protection laws. Scheme Managers must keep all the information you give them confidential. This is to protect you and your privacy. This means that they will not be able to answer your genuine concerns about your neighbours. You have a right to see any information we hold about you.

### **A Scheme Manager at Soha cannot assist with:**

- Giving medication
- Nursing tenants
- Lifting tenants who have fallen
- Helping tenants use the toilet
- Preparing meals
- Cleaning

### **Keys**

Scheme Managers have a master key and will only use it to get into your home in the following circumstances:

- If you ask the Scheme Manager in or
- To respond to an emergency situation or where there is reasonable cause for concern

If the control centre call 999, the emergency services do have access to a master key.

If you lose your key, you have to order a new one from your Scheme Manager. It usually takes a couple of weeks to get a new key cut. There is a charge for this service.

If you are locked out and the Scheme Manager is at the scheme, he or she will be happy to let you back in. However, you should not rely on your Scheme Manager.

Leaving a spare key with a relative or neighbour and always taking your keys with you is a good idea and can save a panic later on. If you are locked out when the Scheme Manager is off duty, you can call Soha and we will let you in - but you will be charged for this service.

### **‘Supporting People’**

Soha receives a grant from Oxfordshire County Council to pay for some of the support costs involved in providing the Scheme Manager Service. This grant is called ‘Supporting People’.

Each new tenant will have to complete a form to see if they qualify for the grant. The eligibility concerns your support needs.

From 2010, support will be available to adults aged 18 and over who meet the funding criteria. This support will be assessed on need rather than on whether you live in sheltered accommodation.

### **Where to get help within Soha**

Your Scheme Manager can help you to report repairs, get the doctor, get help at Home or help with anything you are worried about.

The Sheltered Housing Coordinator manages all the staff in the sheltered housing Service. S/he will carry out regular visits to the schemes and can help if you have any queries or concerns.

Soha has a formal complaints procedure. You can make a formal complaint on a form, by letter, in person or by phone (see separate leaflet).

## Services and facilities

Most of our sheltered or supported housing schemes have some shared facilities. These can include a guest room, kitchen, laundry and lounge.

The shared areas are cleaned regularly. The shared lounge, kitchen, laundry, guest room, halls, stairs and toilets should be kept clean at all times. Let your Scheme Manager know if you are not happy with the cleaning of the shared area. The outside of all your windows, and the inside of the windows in shared areas, are cleaned by one of our contractors every two months. The windows, frames and sills should all be cleaned and wiped down each time.

Shared gardens are maintained by one of our contractors, who take care of the grass, borders and trees. From April – October the grass is cut regularly, the cuttings removed and the edges trimmed.

- **Guest room**

A guest room is usually provided for your relatives and friends to use for short periods of up to 7 days. There is a small charge for using it. If you want to use the room please let the Scheme Manager know as soon as you can. We will give priority to relatives or close friends visiting a tenant who is ill. Guest room user guidelines are available for all visitors.

- **Kitchen**

A shared kitchen is available if there is a lounge.

- **Laundry**

Some schemes have a laundry or a washer and dryer available in the shared kitchen. These are for tenants

only. The cost of running the laundry is included in your service charge. In busy laundries, the Scheme Manager may suggest a rota.

- **Lounge**

Some schemes have a lounge for social and recreational activities. Tenants are encouraged to plan activities they are interested in.

Older people and groups in the community who do not live in retirement housing may be able to use the lounges and some other facilities. We will normally charge outside organisations for using the facilities (which helps reduce tenants' service charges).

Soha staff may also occasionally use the lounge and other facilities for meetings.

## Fire Regulations

We have a responsibility to keep everyone safe. In order to do this we will regularly test the fire alarms.

We need to keep corridors clear as they are your escape route if there is a fire.

We also need to keep the lounge furniture up to fire regulations. This means that we cannot accept offers of second-hand furniture.

## Going away or into hospital

Your Scheme Manager needs to know if you are not going to be at home. So if you are going away please tell your Scheme Manager how long you will be away and contact numbers if relevant.

## Insurance

We strongly advise you to have home contents insurance as we are responsible for buildings and maintenance, but not contents.

## On-call service

All sheltered homes have a 24 hour alarm system connected to a call centre alarm service, which is activated if you pull the red cords attached to the boxes on the walls. You can activate the alarms at any time to make sure it works. The operators will not mind at all and will be glad to speak to you.

The on-call service is there for you in an emergency.

The on-call centre holds information on all our tenants so the operators know who to contact in an emergency. They have details of your next of kin, GP, carers, illnesses and so on. They also have a system that records every call made to them so that if they don't catch exactly what you say they can listen to it again.

## Pets

All schemes with communal areas have a pets policy in place. This was updated in November 2008 and is valid for 3 years. Please ask your Scheme Manager what the policy is for your home.

## Security

If you are not sure who someone is when they contact you asking for access, please do not let them in.

## TV licences

The Government, through the TV Licensing Authority, runs a Concessionary Licence Scheme. Some tenants in our sheltered housing schemes are entitled to a concessionary licence. This concessionary licence currently costs each tenant £7.50 a year.

Details of how to contact the TV Licensing Authority are at the end of this leaflet, called 'Other sources of help'.

Schemes have to fulfill certain criteria to qualify for a concessionary licence. Your Scheme Manager will be able to tell you if the scheme qualifies. All tenants over 75 can be included on the free licence if the scheme has one.

## Social activities and getting involved

Most schemes have social activities going on. You do not have to take part in the social activities but your Scheme Manager and neighbours would appreciate your help and support.

Activities provide a variety of interests for tenants and an opportunity to meet new people. It is often harder for older people to get out and meet others so social activities aim to bring contact and entertainment to tenants.

Scheme activities try to reflect the interests of the tenants living there. If there are any occasions that you would like to be marked by an event, please let your Scheme Manager know. Examples of such events include Christmas, Hanukkah, Ramadan, birthdays, anniversaries.

We have a range of ways for tenants to get involved (see 'How you can get involved' leaflet). One of the

specialist groups of our Tenants' Forum is a Seniors' Group which works to improve services for older residents.

We will have tenants' meetings at your scheme if we are going to change anything. For example, subjects we have held meetings for so far include: reviewing the Scheme Manager service and redecorating shared areas, including choosing colours and furnishings.

## Sources of help

Here are some organisations which older people may find it useful to know about:

- **Elderly Accommodation Counsel**  
General information, guidance and advice about all forms of accommodation for older people across the UK  
Tel: **0207 820 1343**
- **Help The Aged Seniorline**  
General advice on issues affecting older people, such as welfare and disability benefits, care, housing, and health services  
Tel: **0808 800 6565**
- **Dialability**  
Advice, information, services and products available  
Tel: **01865 763600**
- **Disability Living Foundation Helpline**  
Advice and information on all types of adaptations and equipment for disabled people  
Tel: **0870 603 9177**
- **War Pensions Helpline**  
General advice on new and ongoing claims  
Tel: **0800 169 2277**

- **Age Concern**  
Advice and help with a host of problems. There are branches in most towns and cities  
Tel: **0800 328 7154**
- **CarersLine**  
Information and advice on caring, financial help and local carers branches in the UK  
Tel: **0808 808 7777** (Monday to Friday, 10am to midday and 2pm to 4pm)
- **Pensions Direct**  
General advice about state retirement pensions and widows' benefits.  
Tel: **0800 0151 613**
- **TV Licensing**  
Bristol BS98 1TL  
Tel: **0844 400 6790** Minicom: **0844 800 6778**

## Agencies who provide care

The main caring agency is the Social and Health Care Services. They are in contact with people who need various forms of care through Social Workers and Care Managers.

Your Scheme Manager can refer you to the Access team for your area. You may have to pay for any services you receive, but the Care Manager will carry out a financial assessment to see if there are any benefits you may be able to get to help reduce the costs of your care.

If you think you could benefit from other specialist advice, please contact your Scheme Manager or Soha's main office on 01235 515900.