

# Sheltered Housing Handbook



January 2010

This leaflet is designed to inform you of the different types of information that we can provide to you. Spire Homes has many useful information leaflets for tenants. These can be about company policies and procedures, explaining tenants rights, etc. There are also some leaflets designed to give specific information to sheltered housing tenants.

## 1) What is Sheltered Housing?

Sheltered housing is a group of flats or bungalow's designed to assist elderly or disabled people to lead independent lives. They provide certain facilities that ordinary housing does not include, in particular, 24-hour emergency cover and access to a support worker who will visit you as agreed following an assessment.

## 2) The Support Worker's Role and Responsibilities

The support worker is employed to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and well being of the tenants, and helping them to remain as independent as possible. Their role is that of adviser, friend and advocate. The essential role of the support worker:

- To make contact with the tenant in line with the tenants support plan.
- Respond to emergency calls.
- Arrange for other services required by the tenant, eg. medical or nursing assistance. The support worker will liaise with the assessment/support officers who will contact the necessary people to give these services. For safety reasons, the actual dispensing of medicines by any of the support team is not allowed.

When you first take up your tenancy, the assessment/support

officers will need to take some details, eg. date of birth, next of kin, doctor and health details. This is confidential and assists our staff and Call Care in the event of an emergency and could save your life. The support team will supervise the running of the scheme and the inclusion officer will encourage tenants to organise activities in the communal lounge, such as bingo, whist and coffee mornings. Except in an emergency, the support worker is, unfortunately, not able to act as Home Help, Night Attendant, collect prescriptions, provide transport or do shopping.

They will be only too pleased to assist in collecting pensions, prescriptions, shopping, etc, if:

- the resident is unable to do so.
- there are no other persons available to assist, eg relatives, home help.
- in assisting in this way, it does not hinder the support worker in carrying out the essential duties to other residents.
- it is only a short-term solution.

The support team will do everything to ensure the welfare of the resident. The support given by relatives is, however, recognised as being extremely beneficial and comforting to the residents. This will be strongly encouraged by the support team. Due to the large number of residents, the support worker is not able to provide this added support, except in very exceptional circumstances. The support team work 2 shifts, 9am-5pm and 5pm-9am. The scheme is connected to call care and they will respond to all calls and contact the appropriate person.

### **3) Call Care**

This is the tenant's emergency link, when the support worker is on or off duty. An emergency button or pull cord, with a two-way

speech facility, is fitted in your accommodation. This is to enable you to summon help at any time on a 24-hour basis. This help may come from either the support team, relatives or the emergency services. The emergency call care system should only be used if a genuine emergency should arise.

#### 4) Resident Committees

Most schemes have a Committee to help raise funds for outings and Christmas dinners, etc. Although your inclusion officer will encourage this, giving advice and assistance where required, they **must not** act as the Chair or Treasurer. The inclusion officer will not be responsible for holding the Resident's social fund and residents will be encouraged to open a scheme bank account.

#### 5) Keys

In most schemes, the support worker has a master key to your property which will only be used at the support workers discretion to ensure your health and safety. It is also advisable for a friend or a relative to have a spare key to enable them access. **Please ensure the support team are told who is keeping this key.**

#### 6) Facilities

Most schemes have a communal lounge, kitchen, laundry and guest room. Some schemes have lifts to first and second floors.

#### 7) Delivery of Goods

Delivery of goods, eg. milk, papers and mail, are made in the normal way, although some blocks of flats have purpose-built lockers. You must arrange for the security of any goods delivered to the scheme for you, as Spire Homes does not take any responsibility for loss of items.

## 8) Pets

Pets are not allowed on schemes unless the tenants have their own front door and do not share a communal entrance or walkway. Dogs are only allowed in properties where the tenant has direct access to his or her own garden. It is the responsibility of the resident to ensure that secure fencing is erected to keep the dog in the garden and that the dog complies with the Dangerous Dogs Act, 1991. For further information on keeping pets, consult your supported housing officer.

## 9) Television License

Some schemes, where the accommodation is within a common boundary, are entitled to a concessionary TV License. This is currently £7.50 per property per year. Contact your support worker for further details. If you are aged 75 years or over there is no License fee to pay.

## 10) Laundry

Most schemes have a laundry room for use by residents. Although the support worker will not actually do the washing for you, you will receive every assistance and guidance on how to use the machines.

## 11) Guest Room

A number of schemes have a guest room which may be used by a resident's relative or close friend. Priority is given to relatives who need to stay owing to a tenant's illness. Then consideration can be given to relatives and friends who just wish to visit residents. The booking of the room is done through the support team and on a first come first served basis, subject to their discretion if a resident is ill. A small charge is normally made for this facility.

## 12) Fire Prevention

Instructions relating to fire precautions must, at all times, be observed. You will be advised of these by a member of the support team when you are moved in to your property.

## 13) Smoke Alarms

It is advisable to fit smoke alarms in your home. It is the resident's responsibility to install and maintain them.

## 14) Nature of Tenancy

Apart from the special arrangements made for ensuring the resident's safety and well-being, the tenancy is a perfectly normal one. The rent is paid in the normal way and the resident is free to come and go as they please. However, it is essential to let the support worker know, for safety reasons, if you are to be away over night. If you have visitors staying in your property overnight, you will need to let the support worker know due to Fire Regulations.

## 15) Complaints

The support worker can report any complaints or repairs for you to the relevant department. If any problem cannot be resolved you may contact your housing officer, telephone **0845 603 5399**.

# Sheltered Scheme Facilities

Scheme	Lounge	Pay Phone	Kitchen	Laundry	Lift	Guest Room
Crispian Court, Rushden	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Cordwainers, Rushden	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Nippendale, Rushden	✓					
Kilburn Place, Rushden	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Rowlett Close, Higham Ferrers	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Spring Gardens, Higham Ferrers	✓		✓			
The Forresters, Raunds	✓		✓	✓		
Manor Close, Thrapston	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Home Court, Thrapston	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
The Shrubberies, Woodford	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Harpers Court, Brigstock	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Stronglands Court, Oundle	✓		✓		✓	✓
The Hawthorns, Higham Ferrers						
Windmill Road, Irthlingborough						

This leaflet is available in various formats, i.e. different languages, braille, audio formats etc. Please contact us for further information.



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### **Rushden Office**

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