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Scheme manager Tel .................................................................
Havering Council would like to welcome you to your new home. We hope you will be very happy and that you will make full use of all the facilities and activities your new home offers.

Introduction

We understand that when it comes to housing and support everyone has different needs. That’s why we tailor our services to meet your needs and design them to help you keep your independence through choice, involvement and control.

Our sheltered housing is designed for people who are over 60. We have 19 schemes across the borough. We believe that sheltered housing helps to remove any fears of isolation and loneliness that many people experience as they become older. Knowing that other people live in the same building in similar circumstances can help to relieve these fears.

Each scheme is made up of self-contained flats which have their own front door. A sheltered scheme manager is on duty from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday to manage the schemes and to provide any extra support tenants may need. Your scheme manager also covers another scheme and will spend some of the working week at the other location.

Each flat has an emergency helpline service for those times when you need help. The alarm is linked to the 24-hour response service.

Most schemes have a communal lounge and kitchen where we encourage residents to meet and socialise with each other. They also have a garden for you to enjoy, and a shared laundry.
Our vision for sheltered housing
To provide a safe place for older residents to live, and to support sheltered communities to thrive.

Housing and the Care Act 2014
The right home environment is important for everyone’s general health and wellbeing. The Care Act 2014 says local authorities must promote wellbeing and suitable accommodation is a key part of that. Havering Council’s care and support and housing services will work with other local housing and health care providers and do everything within its power to provide suitable accommodation, particularly for older and vulnerable Havering residents.

Rent and service charges
The weekly amount you pay for your flat is made up of a number of different charges:

» Rent – this covers the cost of your flat

» Service charges – this covers the cost of the shared services in your scheme (for example lifts, door-entry systems, shared lighting, heating, TV aerial and the lounge and laundry)

» Heating and hot water – this covers the cost of all gas heating and hot water in your flat

» Scheme manager – this covers the alarm system equipment

» Water charges – the Council collects your water charges on behalf of the water company

» Helpline – this covers the cost of operating the 24 hour alarm service response.

The following services are not included in the weekly amount you pay, and you will be charged separately for them.

» Electricity usage in your home

» Phone charges

» Council tax

» TV licence (if you need one).
Paying your rent by monthly Direct Debit is a very convenient way for you to pay as it takes away the burden of having to remember to pay your rent. It also only costs us a few pence to process, compared to tenants paying by ‘Allpay’. This means that if more tenants pay their rent by Direct Debit or debit card, we will have more money available to spend on tenants’ homes.

You can claim Housing Benefit to pay for your rent. The amount of Housing Benefit you can claim depends on your income. You can make an application for Housing online. Your scheme manager will be able to give you further information.

If you do receive Housing Benefit, it is still your responsibility to make sure that your rent is up to date.

**Online benefits calculator**

You can carry out an online benefits calculation on the Housing Services section of the Council’s website at [www.havering.gov.uk/benefitsapplication](http://www.havering.gov.uk/benefitsapplication)

This will let you know what benefits, such as disability living allowance, tax credits and housing benefit you may be entitled to.

Our Welfare Benefits Team can help you to claim benefits. They offer free, confidential advice on pensioner benefits, rent, council tax rebates and financial problems. You can phone them on **01708 432537**.

**Home contents insurance**

We strongly advise you to arrange enough insurance cover for the contents of your home such as furniture, carpets, clothing, cooker, fridge, TV, decorations, and include any garage or other outbuilding. The Council cannot be held responsible for any uninsured loss where we are not shown to have been negligent. You should also ensure that, as occupier of the premises, you have adequate insurance to meet claims against you by other people.
The Council has its own insurance scheme which can cost as little as £1 a week. The cost of the insurance is collected on a weekly basis with your rent. If you would like a Housing Services insurance policy booklet, please contact your scheme manager.

**Keys, locks and door chains**

When you move in we will give you two keys to your flat. If you add a chain to the door, please only use this when answering the door. A chain at other times may delay access in an emergency. If you add a chain or a new lock to your front door and the door is damaged when getting access during an emergency, you may have to pay for the repair.

**Master keys**

Most of our sheltered schemes have master locks in place. The master keys are stored in the scheme office. We will only use the master key to your flat in an emergency or when you have clearly agreed this. Some examples of when we may use the master key include:

» If you have used your alarm to ask for help but you cannot get to the door to let the Emergency Response Officer in

» If you have used your alarm but the Central Control cannot get a reply

» If you don’t respond to any of the statutory services who have visited your home and/ or your neighbours haven’t seen you

» If you are away and we need to get into your flat to carry out an emergency repair for example if there was a flood or a gas leak.

The master keys are securely locked away at all times.
Your security

If you are concerned about your security, please speak to your scheme manager.

Please keep your front door locked at all times (but not with a chain). Do not feel that you need to leave the door open for the scheme manager as they will use your key from the key box on the wall outside your front door. Do not put yourself at risk of being burgled.

Door entry systems

Every sheltered housing scheme has a secure door entry system. Your scheme manager will show you how the system works and how to report any faults. You should use the system correctly to make sure the scheme is safe and secure. Please make sure you do the following:

» Close the door properly behind you
» Ask for identification from visitors
» Avoid letting people into the scheme if you don’t know them
» Never wedge the door or leave it open.

Pets

You can keep small caged animals or fish but you must have our prior written permission for a cat or a dog. You may only keep one cat or one dog.

Please do not let your dog off its lead inside the scheme and your cat should not be allowed to roam any internal communal areas.
Rubbish
If there are rubbish chutes in your block, please put any rubbish in the chute. It is then automatically put into the main rubbish bins. If you have larger items to dispose of please speak to your scheme manager.

Visitors
We are happy for people to visit you at any time but you are responsible for making sure that your visitors do not cause a nuisance or annoy your neighbours.
If your visitors behave in an unacceptable way, we will have to ask them to leave.

Fire and health and safety
We want you to stay safe in your home and sheltered housing scheme.

Fire precautions
Every flat has a smoke detector which is usually in the hallway of your flat. The smoke detectors are connected to the 24-hour central control service. If the detector is set off, the alarm will sound in your flat and it will automatically call the 24-hour control centre. The control centre will then check with you whether there is a fire in your flat or it is a false alarm. If there is a fire the Fire Service will be called. If the fire is in your flat, you should leave immediately by the nearest fire exit. **Do not wait for us to contact you back.** If it is a false alarm and you have confirmed this the call will be closed. If there is any doubt the Fire Service will come to your home.

If you hear the fire alarm and the fire is not in your flat, you should stay in your flat and wait for instructions from the Fire Service or a Council officer.
There are also smoke detectors in the shared areas of the block which are linked to the main fire-alarm system. If any of these detectors is set off, the fire alarm will also sound in your flat. The 24-hour central control service will contact the Fire Service.

If you hear the fire alarm and the fire is not in your flat, you should stay in your flat and wait for instructions from the Fire Service or a Council officer.

Your scheme manager will give you a copy of the fire procedure for your scheme, and will remind you about the Council’s ‘stay put’ policy during support plan meetings.

This means that you should stay in your flat unless:

» The fire is in your flat
» You are in one of the shared areas or
» You are in danger.

We test the fire alarms every week to find out how people respond. If you don’t know what to do in an emergency, please ask your scheme manager.

Please do not prop open any fire doors and do not interfere with or remove the self-closing system on the doors inside the scheme. They are designed to stop any fire from spreading.

Each scheme has a health and safety manual which sets out how often health and safety inspections and risk assessments should take place.

**Other safety matters**

To keep everyone safe, please do not leave wheelchairs, walking frames and walking sticks or bags of rubbish outside your front door.
Mobility scooters

Mobility scooters pose a fire hazard. Please do not keep these in your flat or in any part of the building. After all, you would not store a motor bike in this way. There have been several fires caused by scooters in sheltered schemes. We will provide mobility scooter shelters to each scheme where this is feasible.

Social events

Scheme managers will encourage you to attend the activities provided for residents at your scheme. There are often events, parties and trips that are run jointly with our other sheltered housing schemes. Please see the section on activities on page 21.

TV licence

Sheltered scheme residents over 75 years do not have to pay for their TV licence. Residents below this age who live in our sheltered schemes have to pay a concessionary fee of £7.50 each year. We have introduced a weekly charge of 16p for 48 weeks to cover the concessionary fee.

Shared facilities

Your scheme has facilities that are available for all sheltered-housing residents to use.
All our schemes have a communal lounge. The lounge is for residents to use but people who live in the surrounding area can join in any activities if they have been invited.

The lounge is used for regular activities such as coffee mornings or bingo, as well as a place for you to meet other residents.

In some schemes you may be able to use the lounge for a private party. Please speak to the Community Engagement Team if you would like to arrange this. They will let you know whether the lounge is available. Contact them on 01708 434688.

Laundry - most schemes have a laundry room with washing machines and tumble dryers. These are for residents’ use only and are covered by the service charge. You will need to provide your own washing powder and fabric conditioner. You are not permitted to do any washing in the laundry room for family members as the cost of this service is paid for by tenants as part of their rent and any increased electricity costs would impact on the rents we have to charge. Please try to use the machines only when you have a full load as this will help to reduce costs.

Gardens - our contractors look after any shared gardens and grounds. If you would like to do some planting you will usually be able to but please ask your scheme manager first.

Guest rooms

Some schemes have a guest room which you are welcome to use free of charge. You can book the room in advance through your scheme manager. You will need to supply your guest with bed linen and pillow cases and to remove your own items when your guest has finished using the room.

We will give priority to people who need to stay to look after residents who are ill.
Do you need somebody to do those little jobs around your home?

The Council’s Handy Person scheme is a free service to carry out minor repairs and DIY in your home. Our handy persons (we have two) can carry out the following for you:

» Changing light bulbs
» Minor repairs to taps
» Moving small items of furniture
» Putting up shelves, pictures or mirrors
» Fixing sticky doors or windows
» Fixing/replacing doorbells
» Fixing/replacing toilet seats
» Fixing curtain rails or blinds
» Hanging curtains
» Putting together flat pack furniture
» Securing carpets.

This is not an exhaustive list of things the handyman can carry out for you. For more information or to ask for help from the Handyperson, call us on 01708 434087.

Your Scheme Manager

Your scheme manager is usually on duty from 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday excluding Bank Holidays. Their telephone number is on the inside cover of this handbook.

Your scheme manager will make sure that you have access to services and facilities that help you to maintain your independence. They will give you advice and information about the care you receive and help you get as much support as you need.

They are responsible for your scheme and will also be responsible for:

» Housing management, such as changes to tenancies and management of nuisance or breaches of tenancy (but not rent or arrears)
» Managing the housekeeper
» Carrying out viewings and tenancy sign ups with prospective new tenants
» Carrying out block inspections, including ensuring communal repairs are carried out
» Chasing/reporting repairs in your home if you are unable to do this or if you encounter any delays
» Carrying out care needs assessments for Social Services (for example, if a tenant feels they need help with their mobility or in looking after themselves)
» Ensuring every tenant in their scheme is contacted regularly to check on their wellbeing (some tenants will be visited on a daily basis)
» Working closely with the Community Engagement team to support the activities/clubs held at the sheltered schemes.

If you are ill they will contact your doctor (and your family if they have your permission to do so) and will help to make the best arrangements for your care.

They will help you stay in contact with your relatives and with Social Services, health services and other organisations that can help you. If you want to talk, they are there to listen.

They will always respect your privacy and your right to confidentiality.

If you need your home to be adapted, your scheme manager can help by contacting Social Services.

They will give you advice about the 24 hour helpline or telecare services.

They can also help you with other things such as applying for Housing Benefit. They have information about the services available through Social Services and other health and voluntary organisations.

Each scheme manager is responsible for around two sheltered schemes so it is not possible for them to be at your scheme all day every day. However they will be in their office at your scheme for around half of each working week.

**Tenancy information and advice**

Your scheme manager can give you advice on your rent account, tenancy matters and moving home.
What the scheme manager doesn’t do

Although scheme managers will do a lot of things for you there are some things they cannot do.

Scheme managers are not nurses so they are not allowed to change dressings or give you any kind of medication. Instead they will make arrangements with your doctor or the health authority, for example arranging for the district nurse to visit you regularly.

Cooking and shopping are not part of your scheme manager’s normal duties. However, if you urgently need a prescription or cannot do your own shopping or cooking for a while because you are ill, they will try to arrange for someone to give you the help you need, whether this is a neighbour, family member or the home care service.

Finance

Scheme managers are not qualified to give advice on your financial affairs although they may give you general advice such as the best way of receiving your pension or how to pay your rent. They can give you general advice on the types of welfare benefits available. They can also refer you to someone who will be able to help you.

Holidays

Please let your scheme manager know when you are going away so that if there is a fire alarm or the building has to be evacuated they will know not to look for you.
Personal information

It is very important that we have contact details of your next of kin, which we will use in an emergency or if you need us to contact them. You should tell your scheme manager if any of your details change. This will make sure the records are up to date. Your scheme manager may keep other records about your tenancy, for example, copies of benefit forms or important medical information.

Support plans

We strongly recommend that you have a support plan which your scheme manager will carry out with you. This plan will detail your health and social needs such as the provision of home care, your medication and the activities you undertake, and aims to make sure that you are getting all the support you need. We will work to identify how you would like to be supported with daily living and personal care, your ability to move around, socialising with friends and family, your health and finances.

It is really important that you are involved in support planning as this is your chance to control how you would like to be supported.

You do not have to have a support plan but we will still need some basic details, such as your doctor’s and your close relatives’ details so we know who to contact in an emergency.

If your needs change, the support you receive can be increased or reduced to meet your new needs.

We will review your support plan at least every six months or more often if we need to, for example on your return home from any hospital admission. You can also ask for an update at any time. We will give you a copy of the plan.

24 hour alarm system

We provide a round the clock helpline alarm call service for all sheltered residents to contact us if they need our assistance. The 24-hour alarm call system is in every flat to make sure you can call for help in an emergency. There are pull-cords in every room in your flat which set off the alarm.
When the alarm is set off, a call will be made to the Council’s Emergency Response Team or to your scheme manager.

We aim to answer 80% of all calls within 30 seconds and 98.5% of calls within 60 seconds.

90% of emergency calls which require a visit are responded to within 45 minutes and 100% are responded to within 60 minutes.

The alarm is very simple to use. You speak through the speech unit in your hallway. The microphone is very sensitive and you can be heard from every room in your flat. It has been designed this way to make sure that you can be heard if you fall or have an accident in another room.

When you pull the alarm cord, you will hear a long beep followed by someone answering your call. You should wait for a couple of seconds after the person has finished talking to you before you reply. This is to allow the person to hear you fully. You do not need to shout when you answer.

The control centre may also use this system to contact you to check that you are OK.

Your pendant/bracelet alarm

We encourage you to wear your pendant or bracelet at all times during the day and keep your pendant within reach, next to your bed at night, in case you need help in an emergency or have a fall, and are unable to get to a pull cord for assistance.

If there is an emergency or any problems you can push your pendant or bracelet or pull the alarm cord in your property or in any of the communal areas. The control centre will respond to your call, and will ask someone to attend if necessary.

We encourage you to wear your pendant or bracelet at all times in case you have a fall and are unable to get to a pull cord to ask for help.
Care services

If you become infirm you can employ a care service (using your own money or a Personal Budget if you are eligible). For more information on Personal Budgets, please contact Adult Social Care customer services team on 01708 432000. Your scheme manager can help you do this.

Aids and adaptations

We will adapt a property to suit your needs where possible, for example by installing grab rails or a level access shower.

An Occupational Therapist will assess you in your home to identify the type of adaptations you might need.

If you are having difficulties getting in and out of your home or with moving around your rooms our Occupational Therapists can:

» Carry out an assessment
» Recommend equipment or adaptations to help with your daily routines
» Advise on changing your routine to increase your independence
» Support you with re-housing to increase your independence
» Liaise with other agencies to support your needs.

If you would like an assessment or to discuss your needs, you can contact Havering Social Services Direct:

Telephone 01708 432000
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
Email adultsocialcare@havering.gov.uk
Text Relay 18001 01708 432000 for deaf & hearing impaired residents

Occupational therapy service standards

» Once you have contacted Adult Social Care you will be allocated an Occupational Therapist within seven days and will be advised in writing.

» Your named Occupational Therapy worker will aim to contact you within 21 working days to complete an initial assessment.

» They aim to inform you in writing, within 15 days of the assessment, the outcome of your assessment providing details of the agreed plan and timescales.
» They aim to provide standard equipment within seven working days of assessment.
» They aim to provide standard adaptations within three months of assessment.
» For residents with complex needs, they aim to identify extended timescales appropriate to the specialist assessment and provision.
» They aim for your adaptation or equipment to be reviewed by a member of the Occupational Therapy team within seven working days of provision and instruction on its use will be given.

**Cleaning**

If you are having difficulty managing your housework, please speak to your scheme manager. They will try to arrange for someone to help you.

**Housekeepers**
*(cleaning service for communal areas)*

A housekeeper is employed at every sheltered scheme to keep the communal areas clean. Your housekeeper will:

» Clean communal toilets and replace items
» Clean the communal kitchen (cooker, work tops, floor, sink, plates, cups)
» Empty all bins and replace bin liners
» Clean communal lounge (tables, floors)
» Clean all communal areas (corridors, stairwells and entrances)
» Clean guest room and facilities
» Clean the lift car
» Clean laundry room
» Remove any net curtains on communal windows, wash and re-hang (every three months)
» Clean external communal areas.

Your housekeeper will also report:

» Running overflows
» Health and safety issues
» Communal repairs
» Lighting defects
» Anti-social behaviour
» Abandoned vehicles
» Nuisance.

**Vulnerable adults**

We will do everything we can to safeguard you from abuse which includes:

» Physical abuse – this may include hitting, pushing, kicking, shaking and misusing medication
» Sexual abuse – any sexual activity that a person does not understand or want
» Psychological abuse – this includes threats of harm or abandonment, emotional or verbal abuse, humiliation and intimidation
» Financial abuse – this may include theft, fraud, denying a person access to their money or belongings or putting pressure on someone in connection with their inheritance or will
» Neglect – this includes failing to provide health-care and social-care services or food, or ignoring someone’s needs for medical or physical care
» Discrimination – this includes any harassment associated with, for example, a person’s race, sexuality, disability, gender.
What you should do

If you or someone you know is a victim of any form of abuse, it is important that you tell someone.

You can report abuse to us confidentially:
» By phone on 01708 432000 (Social Services)
» By speaking to your scheme manager
» By pulling your alarm cord
» By email safeGuarding_Adults@havering.gov.uk

You can also call any of the following organisations:
» The Police by phone on 101 or 999 in an emergency
» Age Concern by phone on 01708 796600

These agencies will work with you and other people to make sure you are safe.

If you want a copy of our policy on vulnerable adults, please let your scheme manager know.

Confidentiality

We shall try to ensure that all of your information remains confidential. However there may be times when we need to disclose information to a third party to make sure that your needs are met and that you and other people are kept safe from harm. You have the right to see your file at any time.

Social activities

There are regular meetings to discuss any issues which residents have about the scheme and we encourage you to come and take part in these meetings. You can also suggest social activities that may interest the group. If you have any ideas for social events, please talk to our Community Engagement Team who are responsible for facilitating social and healthy living activities at our sheltered schemes.

We will help you to arrange social activities and cater for a wide range of interests. Some events and trips are run jointly with our other sheltered housing schemes.
You can also organise your own activities. If you have any ideas or want to help with any activities please contact the Community Engagement Team.

Our Community Engagement team can also assist you to book the communal lounge for an event and the staff will update the scheme calendar in order to avoid double booking.

Please call 01708 434668 to book the lounge or speak to the Community Engagement Team.

Getting involved

We are committed to involving and empowering our residents in how we run our service.

As part of our vision to ‘support our sheltered communities to thrive’ we have a range of opportunities for our residents to get involved with, and are continually looking at innovative new ways for engagement.

We believe that our residents should be at the heart of everything we do and we want you to be able to tell us what you think about our services and suggest how we can improve them.

We recognise that everyone is different and you may want to have your say in a different way from another of our residents. We want you to be involved at a level that suits you and gives you as many ways as possible to have your say in how we run our service for you. There are many ways in which you can get involved.

When we make changes to our services we try and work with you as best we can. We may do this at discussion (‘focus’) groups, Residents’ Conference, regular residents’ meetings and the Sheltered Tenants’ Forum (SHOUT).

We are committed to involving and empowering our residents in how we run our service.
A number of our estates also have community housing or action groups which meet to talk about local issues on the estate and to ask for the matters to be resolved. If you are interested in joining your local group, please contact the Community Engagement team on 01708 434668.

**Sheltered Tenants Forum (SHOUT)**

SHOUT is a group of sheltered-housing residents (normally two from each scheme) who meet with senior staff from Housing Services every three months. The meetings take place at various locations in Havering or at a sheltered-housing scheme. The aim of the meeting is to get your feedback on our services and to speak with you about any new policies and procedures and any changes that may affect our service to you. If you are interested in being a member of this forum in the future, please speak to our Community Engagement Team or your scheme manager.

**Notice boards**

You are welcome to use the notice boards designated for residents although we would like to approve notices first. This is to ensure notices are valid and would not cause offence or any misunderstanding. Please contact your scheme manager.

**Car parking**

If your scheme has its own car park in a secure area, please ensure its gate is kept closed or locked. If gates are left open, this could reduce residents’ security and encourage intruders.
Useful contacts

Age Concern
T 01708 796600
E reception.smh@achavering.gov.uk

Aids and Adaptations
T 01708 432000
E adultsocialcare@havering.gov.uk

Carepoint – for independent, confidential, free advice
T 01708 752435
E info@haveringcarepoint.org

Contact Centre
To report repairs, general housing matters
9am - 5pm Monday to Friday
T 01708 434000 or
Freephone 0800 151 3444
Text Relay 18001 01708 434000
(for deaf or hard of hearing people)
W www.havering.gov.uk/askhousing

Council Tax
T 01708 433997
E CouncilTax@havering.gov.uk

Dial a Ride
T 0845 999 1999
E DAR@tfl.gov.uk

Havering Association for People with Disabilities (H.A.D)
T 01708 476554
E admin@hadhavering.co.uk

Havering StreetCare
T 01708 432563
E info@havering.gov.uk

Housing & Council Tax Benefits
T 01708 433996
E benefits@havering.gov.uk

Housing Emergencies
Outside normal office hours
T 01708 756699/760387

Lettings Team
Housing Register and Transfers
T 01708 434130
E lettings@havering.gov.uk

Main switchboard
T 01708 434343
E info@havering.gov.uk

Mobile Support Worker
T 01708 725312

NHS 111 service
To obtain urgent medical advice if it’s not a life-threatening situation.
Dial 111

Police Stations
Dial 101 or 999 in an emergency

Romford Citizens Advice Bureau
T 01708 763531
E advice@haveringcab.org.uk

Social Services – Adult Social Care
T 01708 432000
E adultsocialcare@havering.gov.uk

Telecare
T 01708 756047
E royaljubileecourt@havering.gov.uk

Welfare Reforms team
T 01708 432537
E Welfare.reforms@havering.gov.uk