



Mobility Scooters in Council Properties

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Tenant Services

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Agenda Item 12
Appendix A

Document Responsibility		
Name	Document title	Service
Lynne Mansell	Mobility Scooters in Council Properties	Tenant Services

Document Version Control			
Date	Version	Issued by	Summary of changes
August 2023	1.1 Minor Revisions	Lynne Mansell	First draft

Policy Review			
Updating frequency	Review date	Person responsible	Service
2 years	September 2025	Independent Living Manager	Tenant Services

Document Review and Approvals		
Name	Action	Date
Housing Committee	E.g. consulted, reviewed, approved	Date of review or approval

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This Mobility Scooters in Council Properties Policy is intended to assist Stroud District Council (SDC) how it will consider requests from tenants and leaseholders to keep electric mobility scooters and the factors it will take into account when granting or refusing permission. The policy applies to current tenants, applicants, transferred tenants, mutual exchanges and leaseholders.

SDC recognises that several of its tenants/leaseholders need to use a mobility scooter to allow them to be fully mobile and live independently.

SDC is committed to maximising choice and independence whilst recognising the value of mobility aids such as mobility scooters to tenants. At the same time, the Council has duties to ensure high standards of Health and Safety within blocks of flats, maisonettes and Independent Living sites for tenants, leaseholders, staff and visitors. The Council has limited storage and charging points for mobility scooters which are becoming more common, especially people living in Independent Living accommodation.

This Policy aims to balance the needs and aspirations of tenants and leaseholders to keep mobility scooters with its duties to maintain a safe living environment, particularly in relation to potential fire risks.

Fire Risk: to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, SDC carries out fire risk assessments and checks at Independent Living sites and general needs blocks. The increasing presence of mobility scooters in SDC buildings has become apparent and requires management.

1.2 Terms and definitions

In this Mobility Scooters in Council Properties a mobility scooter is defined for the purpose of this policy as an electric scooter or electric wheelchair designed specifically for outdoor use. This does not apply to lightweight wheelchairs suitable for indoor use.

Powered scooters are defined as 'Invalid Carriages' under the Use of Invalid Carriages on Highways Regulations 1998. The regulations divide these machines into three classes:

- **Class 1** – Manual wheelchairs (not covered by the Policy)
- **Class 2** – applies to motorised wheelchairs, designed for use on the pavement travelling at speed of up to 4mph. They may also be used to cross the road or where there is no pavement.
- **Class 3** – applies to machines that can be used both on the pavement where, like class 2 vehicles they are limited to 4mph, and on the road where they can travel up to 8mph. These vehicles are required by law to be registered with the DVLA for road use. These vehicles will be licensed in the disabled taxation class and must display a nil tax disc. Insurance is not a legal requirement but is essential if the vehicle is to be stored in an Independent Living site.

2 AIMS

- (a) Ensure the Council takes a consistent approach to granting permission to tenants and leaseholders to keep a mobility scooter.
- (b) Ensure tenant ask for written permission before obtaining a mobility scooter.
- (c) Accommodate all requests for permission to keep a mobility scooter where practicable and not to refuse permission unreasonably.
- (d) Carry out a full assessment prior to a decision on whether to grant permission.
- (e) Ensure that, where permission is granted the tenant has been advised in relation to adequate insurance and understands and commits to the terms and conditions they are required to adhere to.
- (f) Provide clear information on the term's permission is granted.
- (g) Provide a clear explanation, in writing of the reason(s) for refusing permission.
- (h) Manage the number of scooters in any one site so as not to compromise the safety of tenants, leaseholders and other users of the site.
- (i) Ensure that tenants and leaseholders are aware of their responsibilities.

3 REQUESTING PERMISSION

- 3.1 SDC's Tenancy Agreement sets out the rights and responsibilities of the tenants and the Council. **Section 5 – Vehicles and Driveways 5.4.5** *If you wish to keep a mobility aid such as a scooter, motorised wheelchair (or any type of similar mobility aid) you must get written permission first. This permission will not be unreasonably withheld and will be based on the relevant Health & Safety requirements being adhered to.*
- 3.2 This policy sets out the circumstances in which the Council will grant permission to keep a mobility scooter or motorised wheelchair. The Council will generally grant permission, provided the aid can be stored and charged safely.
- 3.3 This policy will apply to all new requests to keep a scooter, to customers considering moving into a council property and retrospectively to existing tenants and leaseholders who already have a scooter without permission.
- 3.4 Tenants and leaseholders who wish to obtain a mobility scooter must apply in writing to SDC for permission as stated at 5.4.5 of the Tenancy Agreement.
- 3.5 The Council will respond to requests within 28 days of receipt. The terms and procedures in force at the time of applying for permission will determine whether permission is granted.
- 3.6 Requests to keep a mobility scooter will be considered by SDC in conjunction with the Health and Safety team who will carry out a risk assessment prior to permission being granted or refused. This may involve a visit to the property in some circumstances. This can be carried out prior to obtaining a scooter providing the tenant/leaseholder can provide details of the model they are planning to get.

- 3.7 In considering whether permission should be granted, account will be taken of potential impact on other people and will only be granted where the needs and wellbeing of other tenants, residents and other users of the building are not adversely put at risk.
- 3.8 The Council will consider requests based on the information received from the tenant or leaseholder. The Council will assess whether there is an approved safe area to store and charge the scooter.
- 3.9 Permission may be refused where:
- There is no safe storage in the tenant or leaseholders flat and no alternative safe storage and charging space can be provided.
 - A major physical alteration to the premises is required which the Council believes to be unreasonable in terms of cost and/or disruption to other service users.
 - A tenant/leaseholder fails to take out the necessary insurance cover. If the scooter is too large to fit through the internal or external doors.
 - If the tenant wishes to keep more than one scooter. This list is not exhaustive.
- 3.10 Examples of safe storage and charging spaces may include:
- A designated room within the property
 - A designated area within the property that does not impede escape.
 - A designated communal scooter storage area.
 - A suitable charging unit is used for outdoor use e.g. a waterproof transformer.
- 3.11 Where permission is refused, the Council will explain the reasons and give details of the appeal process which is online with the complaints process. Where permission is given, this will be conditional and will outline the storage and charging arrangements available.

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERMISSION

- 4.1 Where permission is granted, this will be based on certain conditions. The letter granting permission will specify the size and type of mobility scooter that can be kept. It is tenants'/leaseholders' responsibility to ensure that their mobility scooter will fit in the external doors, lifts and internal doors where appropriate.
- 4.2 Tenants who apply for permission will be expected to have the relevant insurance and tax registration as necessary which must be produced. Absence of inadequate insurance may result in the permission being refused or withdrawn.
- 4.3 Permission may be withdrawn if these conditions are not adhered to, and/or if the tenant/leaseholder purchases an additional or larger scooter or if the policy is updated to meet new regulatory requirements.
- 4.4 The Council will undertake periodic checks to ensure the policy is complied with.

5 STORAGE AND CHARGING

- 5.1 Mobility scooters must not be stored or charged in communal hallways, stairwells or communal lounges at any time because they could increase the risk of fire or obstruct a fire escape route.
- 5.2 If a mobility scooter is stored within a tenant/leaseholder's property they must ensure there is sufficient space within the home to store the scooter safely and the battery must be Lithium.
- 5.3 As part of the assessment, the Council may provide minor adaptations such as small ramps, smoke alarms, electrical charging sockets and an internal fire door as required to flats to enable the mobility scooter to be stored safely when not in use.
- 5.4 Tenants/leaseholders will need to gain permission for any alterations, for example the provision of storage facilities, ramp, access path or hard standing. The Council will not unreasonably withhold permission for alterations, however there may be instances where it is not feasible to provide adequate facilities due to the layout of the property. Leaseholders may be recharged for the cost of any such alterations.
- 5.5 In some Independent Living accommodation, there are designated storage and charging facilities. The storage areas for scooters will be allocated on a first come, first served basis and permission is still required for the scooter. Where designated, storage and charging facilities for individual use are available for rental, there will be a monthly charge attached to this. The cost will be available at the time of the enquiry.
- 5.6 Service charges may apply for the use of scooter stores supplied. These charges cover the cost of the electricity supply for charging scooters with the exception of those who have a monthly charge.
- 5.7 Tenants and leaseholders are responsible for ensuring their mobility scooter is serviced and maintained regularly, and for having an annual Portable Appliance Test (PAT). This is something the Council can do when notified to do so. If any charging equipment fails the PAT, it is the tenant's responsibility to repair or replace it before using it or the electricity supply.
- 5.8 Visitors should leave their mobility scooters outside the property, ensuring they are not blocking access and/or fire exits. If this is not possible, the mobility scooter must be taken into the visiting accommodation to ensure zero tolerance in communal areas, walkways and corridors.

6 BREACH OF MOBILITY SCOOTERS POLICY

- 6.1 The Council understands the positive difference to quality of life a mobility scooter can make. However, the Council's Tenancy Agreement requires tenants obtain written permission to keep a mobility scooter. Where there is a breach of the agreement, the Council will take appropriate action.
- 6.2 The Council will endeavour to identify a safe and secure storage and charging area as set out in section 3.10 above. Where it is not possible, the Council will consider alternative options including assisting with a move. Whenever possible, the Council will seek to negotiate a satisfactory outcome with the tenant/leaseholder.
- 6.3 Where a mobility scooter is stored or charged on Council premises without permission, or outside of the term of permission granted, the Council reserves the right to remove

the scooter to ensure Health and Safety which may result in a recharge for the tenant/leaseholder.