



# Mobility Scooter Storage Policy

01 April 2018

Title	Mobility Scooter Storage Policy
Users of Policy	Colchester Borough Council tenants and leaseholders, staff at Colchester Borough Homes
Date Adopted	Aril 2018
Date last Reviewed	February 2018
Review Frequency	Every 3 years
Best Before Date	31 March 2021
<b>Scheme of Delegation</b>	
Formation of Policy	Portfolio Holder(s) with delegated responsibility for the Financial Management of the Housing Revenue Account
Amendments	Portfolio Holder(s) with delegated responsibility for the Financial Management of the Housing Revenue Account
Monitoring	Housing Client Co-ordinator
Implementation	Housing Client Co-Ordinator
Approval of requests	Housing Asset Manager, Head of Housing Management and Older Persons Services Manager, Colchester Borough Homes

## 1. Aims of Policy

- 1.1 The aim of the Mobility Scooter Storage Policy is to set out Colchester Borough Councils approach to requests from the Council's tenants to store mobility scooters within their home and to ensure requests are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner.

## 2. Definition of Scooter

- 2.1 The policy defines mobility scooters as being electrically powered mobility vehicles. They can be broken down into two groups:

Class 2 – with a top speed of 4mph and are either 3 or 4 wheeled

Class 3 – with four wheels with a top speed of 8mph or above

This policy does not apply to electric wheelchairs. It is recognised that tenants and leaseholders that have a disability which necessitates the use of a motorised wheelchair to enable them to carry out normal day to day functions would need to have a wheelchair stored in their property. Electric wheelchair provision will be considered on a case by case basis separate to this policy.

### **3. Legislation and Guidance**

- 3.1 It is a legal requirement under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 that we must ensure that “routes to emergency exits from premises and the exits themselves are kept clear at all times and that we take such general fire precautions as may reasonably be required in the circumstances of the case to ensure that the premises are safe.”
- 3.2 Controlling the presence of combustible materials and ignition sources not only reduces the potential for accidental fires to start and develop in the common parts, it also significantly reduces the scope for deliberate fires. It ensures escape routes are free of obstructions that might hinder the evacuation of people from the building and access for fire-fighters. The ignition of combustible material within the common corridors, stairways and landings will give rise to the presence of smoke in escape routes and the possibility of fire-spread into flats. Even if combustible material is present in a room separated from escape routes, there is still a danger that any resultant fire could eventually threaten the escape of occupants.
- 3.3 To this end the policy will establish procedures for the safe use, storage and charging of mobility scooters or other similar electrical mobility devices. This is not designed to inconvenience users of scooters in any way, but to reduce the risk of a fire starting and spreading within Colchester Borough Council flats, communal areas and sheltered schemes.

### **4. The Policy- general provisions**

- 4.1 In some circumstances Colchester Borough Council may provide assistance to its tenants for the provision of a hard standing with a ground anchor and an electric charging point following a formal H&S risk assessment. It is the tenant or leaseholders responsibility to purchase, install and maintain a store and ensure they gain any planning permissions that are required.
- 4.2 For the Council to provide assistance, the tenant must be in receipt of **one** of the following:
- Blue Badge
  - Disabled Person's Bus Pass
  - High Rate Mobility Disability Living Allowance/Enhanced rate Mobility and Personal Independence Payments
  - An Occupational Therapist Assessment
  - A letter of support from a medical professional

Verification of the documents will be required.

In some cases the Council retains the right to give assistance to tenants not meeting the above criteria if extenuating circumstances apply.

- 4.3 If a tenant doesn't meet the criteria for an adaptation under the Adaptations Policy they may apply to build a storage area themselves. Permission is to be gained from Colchester Borough Homes by requesting an alteration to your home as per the Tenant Alterations Policy.

### Scooter Storage in General Needs and Leasehold Properties

- 4.4 Under the Conditions of Tenancy and conditions contained within a lease all tenants and leaseholders are required to gain the permission of the landlord to store a mobility scooter in the grounds of a Council property. This should be done prior to the purchase of the scooter.
- 4.5 The overall suitability of the property for the tenant, both in the present and the future, will be taken into account when an application to keep a mobility scooter is made.
- 4.6 Scooters and batteries cannot be stored within a tenant's property or within a communal area unless a designated scooter storage has been identified and approved by the Landlord.
- 4.7 Where permission is granted, within the boundaries of a tenants property (i.e. garden), it is the responsibility of the tenant to ensure there is adequate storage provision which can be safely accessed within their own boundaries and outside any communal areas before acquiring a mobility scooter.
- 4.8 The location of the storage area must not block any fire exit routes or create a trip hazard.
- 4.9 Scooters cannot be used in lifts or stored in any location other than the designated scooter storage area which has been identified and approved by the landlord.

### Scooter Storage in Sheltered Accommodation

- 4.10 Colchester Borough Council aspires to the 'Colchester standard in sheltered schemes' which includes the provision of a mobility scooter storage and charging area where appropriate. Stores may be internal or external to the scheme.
- 4.11 Appropriate scooter storage provided in Sheltered Accommodation will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Permission will be granted for one scooter only.
- 4.12 Tenants will be required to make their scooter available for a visual assessment and annual Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) which will be undertaken by the Landlord.
- 4.13 Scooters cannot be used in lifts or stored in any location other than the designated scooter storage area which has been identified and approved by the landlord.

## **5. Enforcement**

- 5.1 The Conditions of Tenancy state under paragraphs 24, 37 and 40 that:
  - i. in flats you must keep all shared stairways, hallways and landings clean. You must not leave any personal belongings or rubbish in these areas. We will remove items left in these areas and charge you for the work

- ii You must not obstruct shared areas or leave dangerous items in shared areas
  - iii. You must not park a vehicle in the garden of your home without first getting our written permission
- 5.2 Tenants or leaseholders who store mobility scooters in communal areas which block access & emergency evacuation routes and/or present a fire risk will be asked to remove the scooter immediately.
- 5.3 Enforcement action will be taken by gaining an injunction for the Landlord to remove the mobility scooter from the communal area, or if the risk is high & presents immediate danger the scooter will be removed and stored safely. Failure to comply with service guidelines and testing of vehicles will revoke any permission previously granted and vehicles will be removed.

## **6. Appeals Procedure**

- 6.1 Appeals will be considered by a Colchester Borough Homes Officer where additional information is provided to support the applicants request to store a scooter or there is a material change of circumstances. A more senior Officer will review the decision made taking into account any new supporting information provided by the applicant. The Reviewing Officer may consult with the Officer whom made the original decision.
- 6.2 Where an applicant is appealing against how the policy and procedure have been applied a Senior Officer will investigate the case and respond.

## **7. Service Standards**

- 7.1 Acknowledgement, including name and telephone number of the Officer dealing with the application – within 5 working days of receipt.
- Outcome of Policy Test (if Refusal) – within 28 working days.

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

- 8.1 We will monitor our performance in meeting the Service Standards set out in this Policy.
- 8.2 The policy will be reviewed after one year to ensure that it working properly. Future reviews will be conducted every 3 years to make sure the policy continues to be efficient and effective, whilst ensuring it still meets current legislation and the Council's Constitution.

## **9. Communicating the Policy to Staff**

- 9.1 Managers and staff involved in the implementation of the Policy will receive a copy of the policy including:

Colchester Borough Homes Managers, Housing Officers, Visiting Officers, Asset Management, Adaptations, Customers Services, Colchester Borough Council Members and relevant staff and social care staff

- 9.2 Colchester Borough Homes will provide sufficient training to enable staff to understand and comply with the Policy.
- 9.3 A copy of the Policy will be placed on the internal 'Hub' of Colchester Borough Council and Colchester Borough Homes.
- 9.4 Any amendments to the Policy will be communicated, in a timely manner, to managers and staff involved in implementing the policy. Revised Policy documents will be circulated and placed on the 'Hub'.

## **10. Communicating the Policy to Customers**

- 10.1 The policy will be communicated to customers using the following methods:

- Articles regularly in Housing News and Views
- Sheltered Scheme newsletters
- Colchester Borough Council and Colchester Borough Homes websites
- Social Media