

Seniors Housing Independent and Community Living



The council has 23 Senior Housing schemes across the city. Senior housing offers:

- **Building and facilities:** including self-contained flats and communal areas for the benefit of residents, such as lounges and gardens.
- A **secure and structured environment**, with 24 hours community and fire alarm provision, managed main entrance door access and CCTV as well as on-site scheme manager support.
- A **named scheme manager** who normally works Monday to Friday and who will engage with residents and the community.
- A **sociable community** of older people, who can offer their time, skills friendship and knowledge.

Eligibility

Seniors Housing is a positive choice for older people who want to age well and participate in a sociable community.

We are part of the choice based letting scheme, which means that applicants need to complete a housing register application form to be assessed by Homemove. There is an additional support need assessment form for those interested in Seniors Housing.

The service currently operates a Local Letting Plan to help existing sheltered tenants move to another (council) sheltered home.

All new tenants are offered a year introductory tenancy.

Mission Statement

To provide a responsive and consistent housing management service for older people that ensures that all schemes provide a safe, enjoyable and well maintained living environment with effective referrals where additional support needs are identified.

Aims and Purpose

In meeting our mission statement, the aims and purpose of our service are to:

- Provide well-designed and maintained housing enabling residents to live comfortably as they age.
- Enable residents to live and age well so they can keep well and remain independent, safe and happy at home.

- Offer opportunities for residents to comfortably maintain or improve their health, care, resilience and wellbeing.
- Build vibrant, sociable and compassionate communities so residents can sustain friendships and feel a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- Create opportunities for residents to enjoy using their own personal skills, creativity, interests, knowledge and abilities.
- Intervene in a timely and sensitive way where someone isn't thriving so they receive the help, care and/or support they need to enable them to do so.
- Work collaboratively and creatively with a wide range of people and organisations to improve the lives of people and the communities in which they live.
- Ensure that the most vulnerable residents are properly supported, and particularly those at risk from harm or those who feel socially isolated and lonely.

Our Service Approach

In delivering our service:

- Each home is let unfurnished, although an electric cooker and fridge can be provided where needed. Each home is supplied with an in-built community and fire alarm enabling a 24 hour response in a fire or other emergency. A pendant alarm is provided to those who need one. CCTV is provided in flats so that residents can identify their callers using their television.
- Each scheme has a range of communal facilities which may include a communal lounge, garden, guest-room, car-parking areas and hobbies room. These facilities vary from scheme to scheme. These facilities are cleaned and maintained by contractors, details of which are publicly displayed on our notice boards.
- Each scheme has its own dedicated and named scheme manager(s).
- Each resident is offered the opportunity of a wellbeing call from the scheme manager, Monday to Friday. This is personalised both for those who would like less contact or those who need a little more support. Our commitment is that everyone is accounted for by the end of each working week.

- Each resident has the opportunity of completing a wellbeing plan to encourage active ageing. This is a self-managed plan so that it can be completed by the resident in their own time, or with the support and encouragement of the scheme manager. A more personalised plan is provided for those at a point of crisis and is focused towards re-enabling them to live independently again.
- Each scheme has a planned series of activities, events, meetings, guest speakers and promotions to encourage and promote good health, active living and wellbeing. Residents and staff are actively involved in developing and participating in these together.
- Each new resident is offered the opportunity of attending an induction session to introduce them to living and ageing well in sheltered housing.

The service is managed by a specialist team based at the Housing Centre in collaboration with other housing staff.

Details of the service are described in a service handbook to complement the council's tenant handbook and maintenance guidelines.

Valuing Ageing

Seniors' Housing operates within the council's values of respect, collaboration, efficiency, customer focus, creativity and openness. These values inform all what we do as a service.

And as our customers are older people we value what it is to age. In particular we believe:

- In an active approach to ageing. Our residents should be able to age well and enjoy an active, meaningful and satisfying life with the help and support of our services.
- In a positive approach to ageing. The service focuses on what people can do as they grow older, on their strengths and capabilities, rather than simply what they are not able to do.
- Everyone is unique and has their own personal life story. Our service treats our residents with dignity and respect and recognizes their own unique personalities - their life history, wishes and aspirations, likes and dislikes.
- In the value of personal relationships. Our service recognizes the importance of our residents' friends, family and carers and the community in which people live.

Sociable and Compassionate Community

Although residents have the privacy of their own home, a seniors housing scheme is at heart a sociable and compassionate community.

A sociable and compassionate community is one where residents share a sense of neighbourliness, connectivity and belonging. This might be expressed by someone coming along to a social event, being supportive when someone is bereaved or lonely, or simply having a chat with a neighbour.

We encourage a sense of community by:

- Having communal areas, such as lounges, gardens, and other shared facilities.
- Seeing what residents would like to do, how they would like to get involved and contribute to the life of the scheme and the wider community, particularly where people can use, share and develop their own personal skills, abilities, interests and knowledge.
- Encouraging and supporting tenant participation, particularly those where residents take the lead, such as tenant associations, social clubs and resident led social activities and initiatives.
- Promoting a wide range of activities and events which foster a sense of community, not only within the scheme but also within the wider neighbourhood and beyond.
- Coordinating activities and events across the city so that residents can benefit from activities and opportunities in other schemes and beyond.
- Collaborating with other organisations in the city, especially those which have special programmes for older people or those which are set up to address social isolation.
- Recognising the value of diversity, and encouraging residents to contribute and benefit in what-ever ways they can.
- Remembering and celebrating the life of the community and those who are and have been part of it.

We take a creative approach to developing a sociable community. This means that alongside more traditional social activities, we'll also seek to develop those which encourage personal creativity, such as art, writing or book groups; those which encourage activity and personal wellbeing, such as gentle exercise classes or complementary therapy; those which promote good health such as health checks and screenings; and those which reflect a more diverse community, such as activities that appeal to an increasing population of older people in the BME or LGBT communities.

We are committed to ensuring our schemes work well with the community and will support activities and events which are open to older people living nearby. We hope that a dynamic relationship will be fostered between a scheme and its local neighbourhood.

Of course, in building sociable communities we'll take special care to support those who, for whatever reason, might feel unable or unwilling to participate in the life of the scheme e.g. by providing more individual and therapeutic support, or by working collaboratively with befriending organisations.

Customer Focus

We want a more dynamic and active relationship with our residents as we believe that this is essential in delivering good local services and creating sociable communities. Listening and responding to what our residents tell us at a local and service level is an important part in helping us developing this relationship. To do this we'll:

- Hold regular 'house meetings' and meetings with tenants associations.
- Support 'house newsletters', particularly those produced by residents, and use letters, posters and notice boards to keep people updated.
- Conduct and actively use customer satisfaction and other surveys.
- Use the council's complaints process to learn where we can improve the service where things go wrong.
- Work with our Resident Involvement Team to support the Sheltered Housing Action Group and the tenant participation movement.
- Support wider participatory groups supporting older people and local neighbourhood groups.
- Listen to the individual as well as the community voice.
- Involve residents more in the delivery of our service at a local level.

Each community is different, and we are committed to helping each scheme develop and celebrate its own unique and local flavour.

Encouraging Good Health and Wellbeing

Our work helps people keep well and prevents them from becoming frailer and less independent while supporting those already unwell or frail. In particular we aim to:

- Increase the healthy life expectancy and well-being of residents.
- Delay and reduce the need for residents to have additional care and support.
- Enhance the quality of life for residents with long term conditions and those with care and support needs.
- Support residents during their recovery from ill-health or at times when they temporarily need more care and support.
- Safeguard residents whose circumstances make them more vulnerable and protect them from harm.

We do this by working more closely with Health, Public Health and Adult Social Care along with other organisations that support the good health and wellbeing of older people. In particular, as a preventative service, we:

- Work closely with local G.P practices, and ensure that residents are registered with their local doctor and dentist.
- Support good health promotion, such as stop smoking services, winter flu vaccination, health checks and cancer screening.
- Encourage more physical activeness and activities.
- Encourage activities that promote good mental wellbeing and social engagement, such as learning, volunteering, and participation.
- Encourage ways to tackle feelings of loneliness and isolation.
- Use the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' (connect; be active; take notice; keep learning; give) in our approach to encouraging and promoting good mental wellbeing.

However well the service prevents or delays residents from becoming more unwell or frail, there will always be times when people develop more complex or severe health and care needs.

Supporting Differing Needs

Our approach to residents who are more frail is to facilitate additional personal and practical support to help them lead a full and active life; to maintain their safety, independence and dignity, and for them to have choice and control over the services they receive.

This additional support may be provided by the city's health, social care and housing support services, or specialist organisations. The service will work especially close with any integrated health and care services ('Better Care') developed to address frailty.

We identify and make best use of these allied services to ensure a rapid and complete response to the housing and support needs of people with higher or more complex need, and particularly those in crisis. Our teams work in an effective and co-ordinated way with these allied services to ensure timely interventions that result in clear and agreed outcomes.

We work closely with carers, both paid and unpaid. We ensure that residents who are carers themselves are properly supported, for example, by arranging a carer assessment or emergency back-up plan.

The time may come when residents are unable to live independently or thrive comfortably in Seniors Housing, even with support. Where this is the case we'll work sensitively with allied services to enable residents to move onto more suitable housing with care and support.

We aim to work closely with palliative and other health and care services, along with family, to support those at the end of life who wish to die at home.

In line with our approach to ageing, we recognise that people with high or complex needs are of course unique individuals – two individuals with the same condition or diagnoses may have very different lives, needs, preferences or aspirations. We always ensure that we don't label people by any diagnoses or condition and treat people as individuals.

Good House Management

We want our schemes to be accessible, spacious, safe, age-friendly, and enjoyable places in which to live. This means good house and building management.

We ensure that our schemes are well maintained, that health and safety checks are carried out and that communal areas are accessible for all tenants.

Seniors Housing staff are responsible for liaising with our maintenance teams (including both day-to-day and planned maintenance), car parking team and cleaning and grounds maintenance services. We include residents in the selection of contractors and monitoring the quality of these services, wherever possible.

Our Seniors Housing schemes were built between the 1960s and 1990, and the fabric and facilities are reviewed constantly to ensure they meet the needs an ageing population. Future investment, improvement and development are planned systematically through an asset management approach. Our asset

review and investment plans are made available to all residents and tenant associations. The latest Seniors Housing Stock survey has been carried out in parallel to this service review.

We adopt 'One Planet Principles' in the overall management of our schemes, particularly in our approach to saving energy, reducing waste and having a sustainable approach to materials and water. In gardens and other external spaces we encourage a more sustainable approach to land use and wildlife and support local food production.

Cost and Value for Money

A weekly intensive housing management charge is paid as part of the weekly rent for our Seniors Housing services. It is eligible for housing benefit. To ensure transparency and value for money we:

- Provide an annual value for money statement.
- Are clear on the cost of the service.
- Are clear on what is being delivered and how well we are delivering.
- Regularly evaluate the cost, value and quality of our service through surveys and other evaluation methods.

To ensure good performance, we:

- Listen and respond to tenants' views through the consultative structure and house meetings.
- Contribute to housing quarterly and annual reports.
- Promote good work in the housing Homing In magazine and through tenant meetings and newsletters.
- Conduct customer satisfaction surveys and use them to improve our service.
- Involve and report to residents on cleaning standards.
- Use the council's Tenant Scrutiny Panel to look at particular service areas and recommend change and improvement.
- Listen and respond to the views of the wider community.

Seniors Housing Staff

Seniors Housing staff focus on our purpose and values, putting people first and working flexibly, creatively and locally to help our residents age well.

They have a range of different skills, knowledge and experience, and all members of the team have worked in front-line positions during their careers. The service has a strong commitment to professional development. Many staff have a recognised housing qualification.

Scheme Managers

Each scheme has a named scheme manager who acts as the first point of contact for Seniors Housing tenants. The scheme managers work Mondays to Thursdays, 8.30am to 5pm and Fridays 8.30am to 4.30pm (although there may also be some flexible working arrangements to account for childcare or other individual circumstances).

Our scheme managers are responsible for:

- Carrying out the daily call service.
- Being the first point of call in an emergency.
- Acting as a 'professional observer' on-site, and keeping regular contact with tenants and those who support them.
- Supporting tenants to age well through low level tenancy support.
- Intervening when tenants are not able to live independently and collaborating with allied services where necessary to enable them to do so.
- Facilitating and promoting communal social events and activities and encouraging a sociable and compassionate community.
- Managing the premises including site checks, liaising with contractors and health and safety.

As each scheme is a very different community, the service may vary from scheme to scheme depending on local issues and priorities.

Our scheme managers work across the city in small teams, each managed by a team manager. Staff will work to support each other across the teams and across the city, covering absence, for example. The team manager is responsible for decisions regarding the day-to-day operation of the scheme managers.

Seniors' Housing Management Team

Our management team have day-to-day operational management for the service and are based at the Housing Centre in Moulsecoomb.

Our team managers have an essential role in supporting our scheme managers deliver the service. In particular they are responsible for:

- Line management such as staff recruitment, supervision, appraisal, performance management, absence management, team support and development, and dealing with capability and disciplinary issues.
- Supporting staff to improve the systems for delivering the service well.

- Low level tenancy support and liaising with other housing staff to manage issues of anti-social behaviour, complex need management and safeguarding.
- Health & Safety management, such as undertaking the site risk assessment and accident investigation.

The Senior Housing Manager is responsible for the overall service management of the service, including:

- Budget management
- Strategic management including business planning.
- Strategic collaborative working
- Service health and safety and business continuity.

The Senior Housing Admin Officer provides administrative support to the sheltered service including:

- Responding to calls and e-mails.
- Processing sheltered invoices and bills.
- First point of contact for sheltered empty properties.

All staff are employed by Brighton & Hove City Council and adhere to all policies and procedures of the council. Agency staff may be used as a short-term measure and are expected to comply with all policies and procedures.

Contacting Us

A list of all our schemes and scheme managers is enclosed as an appendix. All schemes have a telephone and each scheme manager is on the council's e-mail system.

The management team is located at:

**Housing Centre
Unit 1
Fairway Trading Estate
Eastergate Road
BRIGHTON BN2 4QL**

**Phone: 01273 293255
E-mail: sheltered@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Website: www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sheltered**

