

Battery powered mobility scooters, electric or manual wheelchairs

Things you should know

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Introduction

This document sets out the users and Cornwall Housing's responsibilities for the use of (on Cornwall Housing managed property):

- Battery-powered scooters and buggies
- Electric or manual wheelchairs

There is also information on user competency, useful contact details if you are unsure about any part of this document, and tips and pointers on maintenance of your vehicle.

Scooters and buggies are designed for use by people who have a reasonable degree of mobility. If you want a scooter or a buggy, you will have to buy it privately.

Neither the NHS nor Cornwall Housing supply scooters or buggies, as they are not a medically assessed piece of equipment.

1.0 Battery powered mobility scooters and buggies

In law, mobility scooters are divided into 'class 2' and 'class 3' vehicles based on where they're intended to be used. There are some key differences between the two classes:

Class 2 - scooters can only be used on footpaths, pavements, and to cross roads. They have a maximum speed of 4mph (6.4kph).

- Can be used indoors
- Small, lightweight and compact
- Basic driving controls
- Some can be dismantled/folded up to fit into a car boot
- Shorter battery life means they travel shorter distances

Class 3 - scooters can be used on roads and pavements. The maximum speed limit of these vehicles is 4mph on the pavement and 8mph (12.8kph) on the road. You must be 14 years old or over to drive a class 3 vehicle.

- For outdoor use
- Large and robust
- Equipped with a rear-view mirror and reflectors, and extra controls for driving on roads: indicators, headlights, a horn and hazard lights
- Require a ramp or lift to transport them into a vehicle
- Longer battery life and tougher tyres means they can travel longer

1.1 Storage

Before you choose to buy your vehicle, you will also have to consider where you are going to store it.

If you are thinking of purchasing or have already purchased a scooter or buggy, you will be responsible for its storage. Cornwall Housing has no responsibility to supply storage for your vehicle.

If you want to build a shed or garage, you will need consent from your landlord if you are a tenant. You may also need permission from the Council's Planning Department.

Remember, the arrangements for charging the batteries for your vehicle must meet health and safety requirements.

For further information, contact the supplier of your vehicle, your landlord and/or the Planning Department.

1.2 Access

Before you choose to buy your vehicle, you will also have to consider what you need to do about access.

Cornwall Housing has no responsibility to provide access ramps, driveways, pathways or other aids for access. If you want to build ramps, pathways, driveways etc, you will need consent from your landlord. You may also need permission from the Council's Planning Department dependant on the extent of the works.

To obtain consent forms please contact your landlord.

1.3 Driving safely

Stay safe whilst using your vehicle. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are competent and confident in your ability to use your vehicle.

The following organisations have produced useful guides to the Highway Code for mobility scooter users:

- BHTA - [Get wise to using electric scooters and wheelchairs](#)
- Department for Transport - [Mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs on the road - some guidance for users](#)
- Road Safety GB - [A Highway Code for mobility scooter users](#)

2.0 Electric or manual wheelchairs

Some wheelchairs can be used indoors and outdoors, and others indoors only. You can buy them privately, or the NHS may have supplied you with one as part of their support to you.

2.1 If you have an electric or manual wheelchair supplied by the NHS or if you have bought your own.

If you have a wheelchair that has been supplied by the NHS or if you have bought your own, then you can request an assessment from the Council to put in a ramp. For more information on help getting a ramp, contact the Access Team of Adult Care and Support.

If you are assessed by an Occupational Therapist and it is decided that you need a ramp, then Cornwall Housing will provide one for you in line with building regulations. If it is not feasible to meet the required regulations a ramp will not be provided and your options explained.

If you do not have an assessment, or the Occupational Therapist does not recommend a ramp, you can choose to build a ramp at your own expense.

If you want to build ramps, pathways, driveways etc, you will need consent from your landlord if you are a tenant and maybe permission from the Council's Planning Department.

2.2 Electric or manual wheelchair storage

Cornwall Housing is not responsible for providing storage; you will also have to consider where you are going to store it.

If you want to build a shed or garage, you will need consent from your landlord if you are a tenant. You may also need permission from the Council's Planning Department.

3.0 Fire safety, insurance, maintenance and property damage

Following recent fire safety issues surrounding the use and maintenance of mobility scooters, it is important for you to know it is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with Cornwall Housing's conditions and maintain your equipment.

3.1 Fire Safety

There have been number of fires in Cornwall involving mobility scooters, therefore the fire service insist that these are not left in any fire escape routes. A fire escape route is any enclosed corridor, foyer or hallway between an inner flat front door and the shared exit door to the outside.

Tenants and visitors are required to co-operate with Cornwall Housing in maintaining the fire safety of our premises, failure to do so may result in prosecution by the fire service.

Therefore residents and visitors to flat blocks managed by Cornwall Housing must either keep their mobility scooter outside of these areas or within their own dedicated storage area.

3.2 Insurance

Legally, you don't have to insure your scooter but it's a very good idea to do so. You should get third party insurance, which covers for other people making a claim against you if you're involved in an accident or cause some damage.

Other policies will also insure against injuries to yourself and loss or damage of your scooter.

It is your responsibility to appropriately insure your vehicle in respect of any potential circumstance that may arise.

Cornwall Housing will not be responsible for your vehicle in the event of theft, fire damage, malfunction or damage to your property.

3.3 Maintenance

It is your responsibility to ensure your vehicle is regularly checked and maintained appropriately to protect yourself and others from injury.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) should be routinely carried out on a twelve month basis by an approved tester to check the safety of your charging equipment. Your charger should have an up to date 'Passed Safety Test' sticker.

In the event of a fire, you will be requested to provide evidence of a record of the test.

Basic weekly checks are advised:

- All plugs and wires are connected properly
- No bare wires are exposed
- Tyres are inflated to the correct pressure (if necessary)
- All locking pins and assembly mechanisms are locked
- The seat is adjusted and locked in place
- The battery is fully charged
- The brakes are in working order

3.4 Property damage

Should you damage (accidental or not) a Cornwall Housing property with your vehicle, you will be held liable for any repair costs associated with the damage.

4.0 Useful contact details

Cornwall Housing Ltd – 0300 1234 161

- Consent form for path, ramping works: 'Application for house alteration' (Appendix A)
- Consent form for storage (i.e. shed): 'Application for a temporary structure' (Appendix B)
- Fire safety advise

Adult Care and Support – 0300 1234 131

- Occupational Therapy assessment

Cornwall Council Planning Department – 0300 1234 151

- Planning permission enquiries

Appendices

Appendix A - Application for house alteration

Notes and conditions

Please complete this form and return it to:

Cornwall Housing Ltd,
Chy Trevail,
Beacon Technology Park,
Bodmin,
Cornwall. PL31 2FR

Conditions to be observed in connection with structural and other alterations to a council house

1. An approval may be either permanent or temporary.
2. Any approval given by Cornwall Housing is only in its capacity as landlord. It is for you to obtain any necessary planning permission or building regulation approval.
3. You must not commence any work until approval is given.
4. You must inform us when the work has been completed
5. The work must be carried out by an experienced tradesman entirely at your own expense. For certain works, you must use tradesmen registered to certain bodies. These are:

Type of work	Registered body	Information
Gas appliance and fittings	Gas Safe Register	www.gassaferegister.org
Electrical works	NICEIC	www.niceic.com
Solid fuel appliances and flues	HETAS	www.hetas.co.uk
Replacement uPVC windows	FENSA	www.fensa.co.uk

6. The alteration must be of suitable materials and must be kept in good order at all times.
7. Cornwall Housing will not be liable for future maintenance of the work.
8. The work must be finished within the time approved and to the complete satisfaction of Cornwall Housing. If not completed within the prescribed period, Cornwall Housing reserves the right to finish the works and recover its expenses from you.
9. Any damage to the property must be made good to the satisfaction of Cornwall Housing.
10. You must comply with any additional conditions that are given at the time of approval.
11. If permanent approval is given, the works and fitting will become property of Cornwall Council and must not be removed at the end of the tenancy.
12. If temporary approval is given, the works and fitting must be removed at the end of the tenancy and the property restored to its original condition.

About you

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email address:

Details of proposed work

Location of the proposed work:

Description of the proposed work:

Please use the space on page 4 to provide a sketch of the works if applicable

Time required for completion of the works:

Name and address of person(s) carrying out the works:

Declaration

1. I/We have read the notes and conditions on page 2 of this form and agree not to carry out any works until approval is given.
2. I/We agree to comply with the conditions relevant and any additional conditions that may be imposed on approval.
3. I/We understand that failure to comply with the conditions may constitute a breach of the Conditions of Tenancy.
4. I/We agree to repay Cornwall Housing any costs it may incur following failure to comply with the conditions.

Signed tenant 1:

Receipt date:

Signed tenant 2:

If joint tenancy, both tenants to sign.

Appendix B - Application for a temporary structure.

Notes and conditions

Please complete this form and return it to:

Cornwall Housing Ltd,
Chy Trevail,
Beacon Technology Park,
Bodmin,
Cornwall. PL31 2FR

Conditions to be observed in connection with the erection of temporary structures in gardens

1. A plan must be submitted giving dimensions of the proposed structure, indicating its position in the garden and distance from the house, boundaries, other structures and any manhole covers. You must also state from what material the structure is to be made and for what purpose it is to be used.
2. It must be used only as a summer house, aviary, greenhouse, coal shed, garden tool shed or cycle shed and must be wholly detached from any other building and must be only single storey.
3. In the case of a pigeon loft for homing pigeons, you must be a member of the Homing Union and comply with the recommendations made by that organisation concerning type of loft, number of birds kept and their exercise.
4. The maximum floor area of the structure must not exceed 30m² (320 sq ft) and must not be in excess of 30m³ (1,000 cubic feet).
5. The structure must not be less than 2m (6'6") from any building, 0.914m (3') from any boundary and 3.6m (12') from a window of all rooms except bathrooms. (If you wish to reduce these minimum distances you must make an application to the a Cornwall Council Building Control Manager for a relaxation of the relevant Building Regulations).
6. Permission for the structure must be obtained before any work is commenced.
7. Permission can only be given for a maximum of 2 structures in a garden at any one time.
8. Permission can only be given on a temporary basis and the structure, together with any base, must be removed and the ground made good immediately at the request of Cornwall Housing, or in any case at the termination of the tenancy, unless arrangements are made for the ingoing tenant to take over the structure. In this case, formal consent from Cornwall Housing must be first obtained.
9. You must comply with any extra conditions made by Cornwall Housing regarding the structure.
10. The structure must be constructed of good quality suitable materials and must be kept in good order at all times.
11. Sufficient anchorage must be provided to prevent the structure damaging any property through the structure's instability. Should any damage be caused to any property managed by Cornwall Housing as a result of the presence of the structure, you will be held liable for paying for the cost of remedying the damage.
12. Should any nuisance or annoyance be caused to neighbours by the structure or its contents, Cornwall Housing reserves the right to require the immediate removal of the structure.

About you

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email address:

Details of proposed work

Location of the proposed work:

Description of the proposed work:

[Please use the space overleaf to provide a sketch of the works if applicable](#)

Time required for completion of the works:

Name and address of person(s) carrying out the works:

Declaration

1. I/We have read the notes and conditions on page 2 of this form and agree not to carry out any works until approval is given.
2. I/We agree to comply with the conditions relevant and any additional conditions that may be imposed on approval.
3. I/We understand that failure to comply with the conditions may constitute a breach of the Conditions of Tenancy.
4. I/We agree to repay Cornwall Housing any costs it may incur following failure to comply with the conditions.

Signed tenant 1:

Receipt date:

Signed tenant 2:

If joint tenancy, both tenants to sign.

Prepared by:

Ben Nevitte, BA (Hons)

Adaptations Manager

Assets

9 March 2015

If you would like this information
in another format please contact:

**Cornwall Council
County Hall
Treyew Road
Truro TR1 3AY**

Telephone: **0300 1234 100**

Email: **enquiries@cornwall.gov.uk**

www.cornwall.gov.uk