



SAFETY IN SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION

This leaflet contains information for residents living in sheltered accommodation about how to ensure your safety in your flat, in the communal areas of your block, as well as advice on what to do in the event of a fire.



COMMUNAL AREAS

As your landlord, Winchester City Council has statutory responsibilities for the dwelling in which you live, including making sure the structure of the building is safe and the communal areas meet fire safety requirements.

Why do communal areas need to be kept clear?

The Council has a legal duty to ensure your communal areas are kept in a safe condition and to ensure:

- The risk of fire is minimised
- Trip hazards are removed
- Fire exits are not obstructed
- Staff & contractors can work safely and unhindered

What are your responsibilities?

As a resident, you have a responsibility under the terms of your tenancy or leasehold agreement to keep the communal areas clear. This includes:

- Keeping the landing outside your home clear of items at all times
- Keeping your balcony free of flammable items, such as gas bottles
- Not storing items in electrical & meter cupboards
- Not leaving unwanted household items, such as furniture, appliances, carpets, in bin areas

Items such as bicycles, pushchairs, wheelchairs, mobility scooters, electrical appliances (redundant & in use), rubbish bags, recycling, pot plants, furniture, pictures and children's toys should all be stored inside your flat to comply with your responsibilities. **Any items, such as these, in communal areas could make it difficult to get out in the event of an emergency and as such, landings and corridors must remain clear at all times.**

The communal areas provide access to your home; they do not form part of your home.

WHAT IS THE COUNCIL DOING?

Housing staff regularly visit and carry out inspections of blocks of flats. If you are storing or leaving items in the communal areas or using electrical and meter cupboards for storage, you will be asked to remove the items immediately, to minimise the risk of fire and/or to ensure fire escape routes are unobstructed. If you don't, the Council will make arrangements to remove and dispose of the items. You may be charged for the cost of doing this if we determine the items belong to you.

The Council also carries out regular Fire Risk Assessments to assess whether the state of the communal areas meets the requirements of Fire Safety law.

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR FURTHER ADVICE?

Contact the Sheltered Housing Team on **(01962) 855 335** or at **shelteredhousing@winchester.gov.uk** for advice on managing the communal areas.

FIRE SAFETY ADVICE

There are measures you can take in your home to keep you and your family safe in the event of a fire.

- You should have at least one smoke alarm in your home – test it once a week and replace the battery every year
- Your home is fitted with a smoke alarm, which is connected to the Care line. In the event of an emergency, the Care line will be aware and will summon the emergency services immediately
- Plan your escape route out of your home now – don't wait until an emergency arises

Advice on fire safety within the home can be found at **www.gov.uk/firekills** which details National Fire Safety guidance for homes.

FIRE ADVICE

WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

Please read this essential advice about how to keep you and your family safe in the event of a fire.



If a fire breaks out in your flat, remain calm, act quickly and get everyone out of the property. Shut the front door of your flat as you leave. Don't return to collect valuables or to investigate the fire.



If a fire breaks out in a neighbour's flat or in the communal area, you should again remain calm, act quickly and get everyone out of the building. When escaping the building, keep low to the ground, as the air will be clearer. Do not use lifts or your balcony as an escape route.



You should gather at the assembly point outside the building, if you have one.



Call 999 to report the fire. Await instructions from the Fire Service before going back into the building.

If you have any particular needs which affect how you are able to use or be involved in our services or how you would like to receive information for example:

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| translation | interpreters |
| braille | audio tape |
| large print | sign language |

Contact the Customer Service Centre
01962 840 222

customerservice@winchester.gov.uk

REMEMBER - GET OUT AND STAY OUT

Why not like us on Facebook for regular updates and events!

telephone: 01962 855 335

email:

shelteredhousing@winchester.gov.uk

website: www.winchester.gov.uk

