

Mobility Scooter Policy

Uttlesford District Council 2010

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Introduction

Uttlesford District Council recognises that a number of our service users may wish to own a mobility scooter which allows them increased mobility, improving their independence.

Due to an ageing population and increase in ownership of mobility scooters it is important that a policy is put in place to ensure scooter users understand what is required of them while living and using facilities in council-owned properties.

Uttlesford District Council has a duty to ensure that sheltered housing residents take full responsibility for the use of their mobility scooters. Residents must comply with the council's conditions relating to the storage and use of their mobility scooters.

Definitions

Powered scooters are defined as 'invalid carriages' under the Use of Invalid Carriages on Highways Regulations 1988. The regulations divide these machines into three classes:

Class 1 manual wheelchairs (not covered by the policy)

Class 2 machines designed for use on the pavement, travelling at speed of up to 4mph. They may also be used on the road to cross from one pavement to another or where no pavement is available.

Class 3 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 at speeds of 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 duty tax disc. Class 3 vehicles can only be used by a disabled person aged 14 or over.

Class 3 mobility vehicles should not be stored or driven inside council-maintained properties due to the high speeds and higher risks to other tenants, visitors and property. These vehicles should be stored in a safe external area.

Training

It is advised that all mobility scooter users undergo training on the usage and control of the scooter they are purchasing. The company selling the scooter should provide the training. If the scooter is second-hand please ensure that you receive adequate training on its control before use and that it meets your needs.

Advice is available through the **Essex Road Safety Officer** based at Uttlesford District Council. A copy of the Highway Code will help you learn the various traffic signs and signals.

Safety

The council's biggest concern is that tenants keep themselves and others safe while using mobility scooters. With this in mind, where scooter access is available in the scheme and you are able to safely enter your property without causing damage, please try to ensure that it is stored safely. Do not store in way of doors or in front of the exit routes, so that if an emergency does occur inside the premises you are able to get out safely and emergency services can enter safely. When charging your scooter at home take care not to overload the electrical points. Scooters should never be plugged into extension leads.

Insurance

Although it is not a legal requirement, any mobility scooters kept at an Uttlesford District Council sheltered housing schemes must have appropriate insurance in place. This should include liability insurance in case of either damage to buildings and grounds, or injury involving council staff and other people who may be living at or visiting the sheltered scheme, as well as covering damage to the scooter and the user of the scooter.

Please be aware that any damage to any Uttlesford District Council property caused by a mobility scooter will be recovered through the owner's insurance company. If the owner does not have a current insurance certificate, they will be personally liable for all costs, and asked to remove the scooter from the scheme immediately.

A copy of each scooter user's current insurance certificate must be given to the Senior Sheltered Housing Officer, and subsequently each year a renewal certificate must be supplied.

Access and Storage

Tenants are advised that storage and charging facilities for their mobility scooters may be installed at their own cost after a request in writing is received and approved by the building services manager at Uttlesford District Council.

The building services manager will advise you on the specifications required when you make a request for storage facilities. This will be relayed back to you in writing once you have submitted a written request for the facility to be installed. Please ensure that the specification standards are met or you may be asked to remove the storage facility and rebuild one which is to the standard specified.

Outdoor storage and charging facilities will only be available at certain schemes. If you are moving into one of the council's sheltered housing schemes and require a mobility scooter, you should ensure that the scheme has facilities available before accepting your tenancy.

You may request the installation of storage and charging facilities for a mobility scooter at any scheme, but this will depend on the outcome of an individual survey to establish that installation would be safe and suitable.

Fire safety regulations prohibit the storage of mobility scooters in communal corridors and communal areas.

Mobility scooter use in other buildings for which the council is responsible

It is the council's intention to support the use of mobility scooters wherever possible in its public buildings and areas.

Mobility scooter users are responsible for any damage caused to persons or property whilst in buildings for which the council is responsible.

The use of mobility scooters in buildings for which the council is responsible is allowed only if the building is accessible for scooters and it is medically necessary for the user to use the scooters inside the buildings. This is for the comfort and convenience of other users of the facilities and to reduce the risk of accidents.

The use of mobility scooters in buildings for which the council is responsible is at the owner's own risk.

Note: Please contact the building you wish to visit before arrival to check the accessibility for scooter use.

Storage of scooters outside buildings will be at the owner's own risk and vehicles must be stored away from entrances and exit routes so not to cause any obstructions to other service users and to be compliant with fire safety regulations. Storage in corridors and communal areas is not allowed.

Please note that Uttlesford District Council staff are not responsible for ensuring safe transfer of service users from mobility scooters to standing position or wheelchairs unless trained to do so. If help is required please contact the relevant building you wish to visit to check that assistance is available or make arrangements for your own safe transfer.

Please ensure that consideration is given to other service users in the sheltered housing schemes, day centres or public areas when using your mobility scooter.

If you have a complaint regarding this policy please put it in writing to:

Head of Housing Services
Uttlesford District Council
London Road
Saffron Walden
Essex
CB11 4ER

Your complaint will be dealt with and you should receive an acknowledgement of your complaint within 10 working days of receipt by Uttlesford District Council.

If you require this document in another language or format please ring 01799 510510 or email uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk

Uttlesford District Council
London Road
Saffron Walden
Essex
CB11 4ER

Tel: 01799 510510
Fax: 01799 510550
Textphone users: 18001

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References

The following documents have been referred to in the preparation of this policy:

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| ▪ Use of Resources Assessment criteria | Audit Commission |
| ▪ A Risk Management Standard | Federation of Risk Management Associations |
| ▪ National Performance Model for Risk Management in the Public Services | Alarm (The Public Risk Management Association) |
| ▪ BS 31100: Code of Practice for Risk Management | British Standards Institute |
| ▪ Health & Safety Policy | Uttlesford District Council |
| ▪ Fire Safety Policy | Uttlesford District Council |

