

Booklet
No. 23



Housing

A photograph of an elderly couple smiling. The woman is in the foreground, wearing a leopard print top and a necklace. The man is behind her, wearing a light-colored shirt. They are outdoors with green foliage in the background.

A Guide to Sheltered Housing

Tandridge
District Council

We can provide this document in a range of languages and formats on request.
Please contact Tandridge District Council on 01883 722000.
It is also available on the Tandridge website: www.tandridge.gov.uk

Sheltered housing

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Tandridge District Council provides sheltered housing for older people throughout the District. Sheltered housing aims to support people to maintain their independence and look after themselves, whilst getting additional support when they need it. Our schemes are supported by Sheltered Scheme Co-ordinators (SSCs) whose working hours are:

- Monday to Thursday: 8.30am-5pm with an hour for lunch (1pm-2pm)
- Friday: 8.30am-4.30pm with an hour for lunch (1pm - 2pm)

Tandridge District Council has about 700 sheltered properties for older people, arranged within schemes of various sizes of between 6 to 38 properties. Most are 1 bedroom flats, but we also have a limited number of studio and 2 bedroom flats and a small number of bungalows. Lifts are also available in some of our larger schemes. All properties are self-contained, each with a kitchen and bathroom. Some schemes have communal facilities on site, such as a lounge, laundry and guest room. Some have active social clubs, which organise activities and outings. All properties are linked into a 24 hour alarm system, linked to a member of staff and/or a call centre enabling residents to summon appropriate assistance at all times.

The Sheltered Scheme Co-ordinator's role

The role of all SSCs is to provide support, encourage independence and recognise residents' rights to privacy and dignity at all times. SSCs cover more than one scheme.

They can access a range of services as and when residents' circumstances change. However, there are limits to the support SSCs can provide and they cannot replace the vital support of family and friends.

The SSCs' main duties include:

- Day to day scheme management
- Monitoring the welfare of residents
- Security
- Monitoring of cleaning services
- Administration and paperwork

Three levels of support service are available and are charged for accordingly:

- Full time – these tend to be larger schemes where daily (Monday to Friday) contact/visits is made by the SSC, dependent on the individual needs of the residents. These schemes often have communal facilities like a common room and laundry

- Peripatetic – these are usually smaller schemes. The SSC makes visits on a fortnightly basis only but is also available to deal with emergencies or other support issues during normal working hours and provide additional personal visits on a short term basis
- Alarm only – these are schemes where residents have 24/7 access to the alarm system only. **No SSC visits or response is provided**; residents receive a 6-monthly visit only for an SSC to check the alarm equipment in the property and to check personal details for the call centre – such as emergency contacts’ name and phone details. These properties are only suitable for more active older people. Please note the charge is for the alarm service only and does not cover any additional SSC services.

Before bidding for a property it is important that you understand the level of service offered at the scheme. In all cases, before a sheltered property is formally offered to you, a Pre-allocation Assessment will be undertaken by TDC officers to establish that the property and the service offered will be appropriate for your needs and to answer any question you may have about the sheltered service.

Support Plans (not applicable in ‘alarm only’ schemes)

Shortly after you move into your home, the SSC will arrange to meet you to agree a support plan for you. This plan will help the SSC work closely with you to find out what support you need to help you live independently. The information you will be asked for will be treated confidentially and will only be disclosed by staff, if necessary, to professionals and agencies such as your GP and the ambulance service.

All new tenants to sheltered housing have to pay a weekly support charge for the SSC and/or the alarm. You may be eligible for financial assistance with this; ask your Sheltered Scheme Co-ordinator or Housing Management Officer for more information.

The Sheltered Scheme Co-ordinator will:

- Maintain regular contact with all tenants, depending on their support needs and wishes.
- Provide support in an emergency situation, call for the necessary assistance and notify relatives or close friends – as agreed on your support plan.
- Ensure tenants are aware of support services in the area. Some services require referral from a GP. The SSC may be able to help by acting on tenants’ behalf.
- Contact tenants’ listed next-of-kin if necessary. SSCs are not allowed to be tenants’ next of kin or executors to wills.
- Introduce new tenants to the sheltered scheme, outlining the facilities and services available locally.

- Help with social events where applicable and encourage tenant participation in communal activities both in and outside the sheltered scheme.

The Sheltered Scheme Co-ordinator will not:

- Administer drugs or medication of any kind.
- Clean, cook or shop for tenants except for short term emergencies, eg discharge from hospital.
- Nurse, bath or help bath any tenant or provide any personal care.
- Lift any tenant should they have a fall.
- Handle a tenant's financial affairs. Staff are not allowed to be involved in a tenant's financial affairs. They may help or give advice in the completion of forms such as housing benefits. SSCs cannot act as witnesses to a tenant's signature for any purposes, other than those which relate directly to sheltered housing.
- Enter a tenant's home without permission unless there is an emergency.
- Transport a tenant to a hospital or doctor's appointment.

Emergency alarm system

An emergency alarm system in each sheltered scheme gives two-way speech communication.

SSCs can also provide push-button pendants which are worn around the neck, so if someone has a fall they can call for help. Some schemes also have pull cords in communal areas. Pressing the pendant button or pulling a cord will automatically alert the SSC or the alarm centre.

The alarm system is there to summon help in an emergency. If it is set off by accident, the SSC or alarm centre operator will check everything is OK and re-set the system.

The alarm equipment should not be used for routine enquiries. This could prevent a genuine emergency receiving immediate assistance. If tenants are away from home overnight or on holiday, they should let the SSC know. This avoids causing concern and saves time if there is an emergency.

The alarm centre is staffed 24 hours a day. If an alarm is activated outside normal working hours, the operator will alert your nominated contacts or the emergency services, so you receive the appropriate assistance. The alarm centre cannot organise a personal visit for a member of staff outside normal working hours or under any circumstances other than an emergency at 'alarm only' schemes.

Housing management

In addition to the service provided by your Sheltered Scheme Co-ordinator, tenants also have access to a Housing Management Officer (HMO). They are responsible for giving information and advice about rent details, rent account queries, repairs to the property or scheme and also deal with neighbour disputes, general tenancy matters and resident participation.

The Sheltered Scheme Co-ordinator will give you the contact details for the HMO covering the scheme.

HMOs do not visit the schemes on a daily basis, but you can make an appointment if you have a housing management issue to discuss.

More information

By post: Community Support Team
 Community Services
 Tandridge District Council
 Council Offices
 8 Station Road East
 Oxted RH8 0BT

By telephone: 01883 732819 or 01883 732868

By e-mail: shelteredhousing@tandridge.gov.uk

Our website: www.tandridge.gov.uk/housing

To enquire about allocations to sheltered housing:

Tel: 01883 732825/732826

Email: housingneeds@tandridge.gov.uk

www.tandridge.gov.uk



Tandridge District Council's website is a comprehensive source of information about council services and the community.

You can find information about businesses, councillors, council tax and benefits, housing, jobs, planning, leisure, rubbish & recycling collections and much more.

www.tandridge.gov.uk

Follow us on Twitter: @TandridgeDC

