



## **Mobility Scooter Policy**

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## 1. Policy

Mobility Scooter Policy

## 2. Purpose

North Devon Homes (NDH) works to support the occupants of its properties right “to a quality of life” which may include the use of a mobility scooter.

With the changes in demographics, the increase of older individuals within our properties and the widespread availability of different mobility scooters in the market there has been an increase in requests for the use and storage of mobility scooters; not only within our sheltered schemes but within all of our properties.

NDH has a duty to consider the impact that this increased demand will have on residents living within the immediate area and the safety of the Neighbourhoods in which services are delivered.

## 3. Principles

The following principles will apply to this policy:

- It will be open, fair and transparent
- It will be reviewed every three years

## 4. Review

We will review this policy at least once every 3 years to ensure that it continues to operate within best practice, achieve measurable results, and achieve continuous service improvement.

Alternatively, the policy and all associated procedures will be reviewed immediately following any relevant change to government policy, regulation or legislation.

The Chief Executive will be responsible for ensuring that policy reviews are undertaken, that appropriate consultation takes place and that revisions are reported to the Board for its approval.

## 5. Application

North Devon Homes' Board will approve this policy and delegate responsibility to the Independent Living Manager for ensuring that this policy is communicated and implemented.

The Independent Living Manager and Head of Housing will provide training for staff to ensure that they fully understand the wider issues surrounding this policy and the procedure.

## 6. Policy Statement

- Mobility scooters were developed to allow outdoor mobility to those who would otherwise be confined to their home. Mobility vehicles can help individuals maximise their independence. Whilst an individual must meet the costs of ownership or leasing privately, we have a duty to ensure that vehicles are being used legally and without affecting the quality of life of others who may live in our properties.
- We recognise that customers have differing needs regarding mobility scooters – for some it may be their only means of accessing facilities beyond their immediate surroundings, whereas for others it may be more of a “lifestyle” choice and enable them to extend or enhance their mobility.

### SCOPE

- The policy relates to all residents of North Devon Homes rented properties. The principals of this would apply to leaseholders and shared owners, although the funding of such provisions would be dependent on the terms of each individual lease.

#### *Definitions*

- There are a wide range of electric vehicles available to the general public, not all of which are mobility scooters. A mobility scooter is not an electric vehicle that is designed solely for use on the road. They are:-
  - Class 1 invalid carriage: applies to manual wheelchairs.
  - Class 2 invalid carriage: applies to machines designed for use on the pavement, travelling at speeds up to 4mph.
  - Class 3 invalid carriage: applies to machines that can be used both on the pavement (where they are limited to 4mph) and on the road where they can travel at up to 8mph. These vehicles are required by law to be registered with the Driver and Vehicle

Licensing Agency (DVLA), for road use, and will be licensed under the disability taxation class which is currently free of charge. Insurance is not a legal requirement, but NDH requires the vehicle to be insured if it is to be stored on NDH premises.

## **POLICY**

- Health and Safety: As a Landlord NDH has a responsibility to ensure that all such vehicles used on NDH land are safe and stored in locations that will not impede the health or safety of all its customers, whether occupants or their visitors. In considering request for permission to store a mobility scooter we may take advice from the Fire Service and / or other agencies and / or any guidance that is available from them at that time.
- It is not always possible for scooters to be stored close to an individual's home or for charging to be from an individual's power supply. In these instances reasonable adjustments will be considered to accommodate scooters, but if adjustments cannot be made in a cost effective way (which could involve a contribution from the resident) a request for a scooter will be refused.
- Unless there are charging points specifically provided by NDH, then the resident will be expected to charge their vehicle from their own power supply. This is conditional on there being no trailing cabling that will cause hazard to other occupants. Scooters should not be left on permanent charge, only charged for the manufacturer's recommended time and must be maintained within the manufacturers' guidelines by a suitably qualified technician by the resident who must retain evidence of maintenance for inspection if required.
- Scooters may not, under any circumstances, be stored in corridors or other communal places other than designated charging and storage points. They must not under any circumstances block any fire escape route for any period of time.
- Where possible they must be stored within the individuals home or boundaries, where it is safe and practical to do so, however, this is not always possible and permission may be declined if appropriate storage is not available.
- NDH will remove vehicles stored in communal areas where there is a health and safety risk or permission has not been granted or has been revoked. Fourteen days' notice will normally be given to residents before removal. However if the scooter presents a risk to residents it will

be removed immediately. NDH reserve the right to dispose of scooters removed from the premises.

- All vehicle charging points and cables need to be regularly tested to ensure electrical safety of the equipment (as specified through the risk assessment). NDH undertakes regular electrical testing for all its communal areas and equipment and will undertake this for residents on request; however, there will be a charge for this facility, which can be confirmed by the Neighbourhoods Team or Independent Living Team. It will be the customers responsibility to provide evidence of this to the Neighbourhood Officer or Independent Living Officer annually.
- Vehicle Tax: All class 3 vehicles must have valid DVLA registration which should be sent to the Neighbourhood Officer or Independent Living Officer each year as proof of validity.
- Insurance: All class 3 vehicles must have valid vehicle insurance (including third party damage) which should be sent to the Neighbourhood Officer or Independent Living Officer each year as proof of validity.
- Use in lifts is not permitted, so any access to the individual's home that requires access via a lift will be refused.
- Individual users of scooters are responsible for taking care when using around NDH premises and land. Any costs incurred as a result of damage caused by individuals using scooters will be passed back to the resident as it is unreasonable that other residents should incur the repair costs of making good decoration or damage. NDH recommends that individual owners have their own insurance and that this includes damage protection. Failure to pay any repair costs associated with damage may result in permission being revoked.
- It is the responsibility of the owner to ensure that they know how to use the vehicle and that they understand highway and road safety rules and are compliant with them. They must make sure that they are safe and able to use the vehicle that they have purchased. NDH will not accept any liability for accidents or damage caused by residents using their scooters.
- NDH may request an inspection by an expert if it appears that the vehicle is unsafe. We may charge for this inspection. If the vehicle proves unsafe and the resident refuses to make the vehicle safe again, permission to store and charge the vehicle will be revoked.

- Failure to comply with these requirements will result in refusal of permission or the withdrawal of permission for the use and storage of the scooter on NDH's Land.

## 7. Implementation

The Head of Housing and the Independent Living Manager are responsible for ensuring that this policy is communicated and implemented.

## 8. Equality Impact Assessment

8.1 Who has been consulted in developing the Policy?

Date	Consultation methodology	Challenge / impact / result

8.2 Identify potential impact on each of the diversity "groups"

Strand	No impact	Negative impact	Positive impact	Comments / evidence	
Race	X			NDH are seeking to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where there is an evidenced need for a mobility scooter. Priority is given to those who have a need against those who are making lifestyle choices.	
Disability			X		
Gender	X				
Gender Reassignment	X				
Sexual orientation	X				
Religion or belief	X				
Age	X				
Rural issues	X				
Social Inclusion issues			X		By encouraging responsible ownership we are helping to tackle some social isolation issues.
Pregnancy and maternity	X				
Marriage and civil partnership	X				

- 8.3 Does the Policy promote equality of opportunity?  
N/A
- 8.4 If “adverse impact” identified in the table above, please state how this policy addresses this.  
N/A
- 8.5 A full EIA is not required for this policy.
- 8.6 If suggestions for improvement have been suggested, what should the positive outcome be for North Devon Homes’ customers and stakeholders?

<b>Next review date</b>	
Every three years Next review date: May 2020	
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## Appendix

### Mobility Scooter guidance for NDH officers

- Any customer wishing to keep a mobility scooter must complete a permissions request. The request should include explanation about the type & size of scooter, the method of storage and charging. Where adaptations are requested these should be included within the initial request.
- When assessing the request to store a mobility scooter we will not unreasonably refuse a request but we will:
  - Take reasonable steps to ensure residents can keep mobility vehicles in or close to their home.
  - Ensure that other occupants are not unduly inconvenienced by other people's mobility scooters.
  - Ensure the health and fire safety of all its occupants whilst on NDH's land.
  - Carry out a risk assessment prior to permission being granted.
  - Seek advice on an assessment of need for a scooter
  - Ensure an understanding of the users responsibilities to their neighbours and to NDH.
  - Not permit storing or charging in any communal hallways; landings or stairwells
  - Not permit use in lifts, so any access to the individual's home that requires access via a lift will be refused.
- If there is insufficient capacity on schemes to allow storage of all scooters for which requests are made, priority will be given to those for whom the scooter is a fundamental aid to mobility, rather than a "lifestyle" choice.