



Castlehill Sheltered and Very Sheltered Housing

Castlehill provides sheltered housing for people over 60 years of age in Aberdeen City and various settlements in Aberdeenshire and Moray. We also have very sheltered schemes at Craigielea Gardens, Aberdeen Victoria Grange Dyce, Aberdeen and Dalvenie Gardens, Banchory which are linked to other facilities provided by the local Councils, including the provision of midday meals.

Sheltered and very sheltered housing allows older and/or infirm people to live independently for as long as possible with appropriate support in a warm, comfortable and secure environment. It is particularly suitable for people who may find it difficult to maintain a totally independent lifestyle, perhaps through increasing frailty or unsuitable accommodation.

The range of services and facilities available varies between our schemes but the following information details what you can expect to find.

THE HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICE

Housing Support is a term used to refer to a range of services which are provided in a variety of ways with the aim to help people to set up home and to support them to live there. The largest group of people who receive Housing Support are older people living in sheltered and very sheltered housing provided by Housing Associations like Castlehill and other landlords such as local Councils. As a Housing Support provider Castlehill Housing Association is registered with the Care Commission which is the national organisation in Scotland responsible for the registration, inspection and monitoring of Housing Support and other National Care Standards issued by the Scottish Executive. Castlehill also receives funding from Local Councils to provide the Housing Support service and these Councils monitor that contract conditions are being followed and also carry out service reviews.

Castlehill staff are employed at sheltered housing schemes to provide a Housing Support service for tenants, to deal with any identified needs and to provide security. At Dalvenie Gardens in Banchory the service is provided by Castlehill's Housing Support Workers and at the other two other very sheltered housing schemes and at the sheltered schemes at Richmondhill Court and Fountville and Tanfield Courts in Aberdeen the service is provided by other agencies.

An important part of the Housing Support service is the contact between staff and each tenant on a daily basis to check on their general health and welfare, and offer advice and assistance as necessary. This is done by a home visit, and / or by use of the call system or by other contact within the scheme.

Our staff will also, in consultation with tenants identify and assess any particular needs, and act as a link to other agencies and individuals such as relatives, GP's, Homecare and other Social Work and Health Services. Staff are not expected to undertake any nursing or care duties but may be able to help for a short period of time until alternative arrangements can be made. Similarly, staff are not expected to help with shopping or collect pensions or prescriptions except in an emergency.

You may find that your need for support and assistance will vary and our staff will regularly discuss this with you to ensure that you receive the service that you require. We complete a Housing Support Plan with each tenant / service user which records information about the individual and their personal circumstances. The Plan also advises on how we provide our Housing Support service and records specific service needs. You will receive a copy of this Plan and it will be regularly reviewed.

Further information about our Housing Support service is contained in our Housing Support Service Brochure. This also contains information about contacts for the Care Commission and local Council Supporting People offices details of which are also included in the Telephone Numbers and Contacts section of this Handbook.

Sheltered and very sheltered staff also liaise with Castlehill's Maintenance Service for any repairs or other work, and you should report any repairs required in your property to scheme staff. In addition to this, our staff also have a responsibility for the overall safety, security and maintenance of individual schemes and for duties such as regular fire drills and testing the emergency call system.

You should recognise that in providing a Housing Support service Castlehill cannot take the place of tenants friends and relatives whom we would hope will continue to provide assistance and support in the sheltered / very sheltered housing environment.

STAFF HOURS OF DUTY

Our staff hours of duty vary according to the size of the scheme and you will receive further information about this from scheme staff and in our Housing Support Brochure.

In our very sheltered housing schemes staff are on duty 24 hours each day.

All our sheltered housing schemes are linked to the Community Alarm Centre in Aberdeen at all times when staff are "off site" or off duty. Trained operators are employed at the Centre to respond to any calls made and further details are provided below.

ALARM CALL SYSTEM

In all of our sheltered and very sheltered housing schemes modern call systems are installed which allows two way speech contact between staff and tenants. The systems incorporate pull cords in individual properties which can activate the system speech module which is normally located in the hallway of the property. In addition, personal body worn alarms can be provided for tenants at risk to allow them to activate the system.

Staff will advise new tenants on the use of the system and obtain relevant personal information which will be passed to the Community Alarm Centre for their records.

If the call system is activated when staff are on duty, you can speak to him/her via the speech module and appropriate action can be taken. If staff are not on duty your call will be directed to the Community Alarm Centre and you can speak to the duty operator in the same way as you would to a member of staff. They will have your personal details available and initiate action by calling out someone to help you, contact your GP and/or call out an emergency service you may need.

Any calls made to the Centre are recorded to ensure that they are properly dealt with, and will be kept for a period of three months, after which the tapes will be wiped.

MASTER KEY

Our sheltered and very sheltered staff have use of a master key which will open the door of each property at the scheme. This key can only be used in an emergency or with your express permission. If, for example, our staff cannot get an answer from your property and have reason to believe you may be ill or have had a fall, they can use the key to get access. The key could also be used in the case of an emergency such as a burst pipe if you are not at home. **In no other circumstances can staff enter your property without your permission.** You should also note that staff cannot let anyone else, even family members, into your property unless you have specifically asked them to do so.

Help in an emergency is an important part of being in sheltered / very sheltered housing and for this reason we do not allow the fitting of door chain or additional locks or bolts as these would prevent the master key being used.

RESIDENTS' LOUNGE

Most Castlehill sheltered / very sheltered schemes have a lounge, with a small kitchen, for use by residents and their friends and visitors.

The room is for both formal organised activities and informal uses such as meeting with other tenants or friends. Although scheme staff will be able to help organise events we wish tenants to be as involved as possible and many schemes have set up tenants groups or committees to help organise activities in the lounge and other events such as scheme outings. The residents lounge is part of your home so please feel free to make as much use of it as you wish.

GUEST ROOMS

Most schemes have a guest room or rooms which are available to tenants' relatives or friends who are visiting for short periods. There is a small charge for this service and bookings should be made through scheme staff. Priority will be given to relatives who are caring for a tenant who is ill. In such circumstances it be necessary to cancel prior bookings.

In some schemes, the guest room is also used by the Relief Manager to 'sleep over' when on duty.

THE LAUNDRY

Most sheltered schemes have a laundry which is provided for residents washing only. When you move in, staff will explain how to use the machines and times of availability.

Most schemes have washing machines and tumble dryers. It helps to keep running costs down and prolongs the life of the machines if you only use them when you have a full load of laundry, rather than one or two items.

GARDENS

Castlehill is responsible for the upkeep of any landscaped and garden areas. If tenants are interested in looking after a small area we will try to accommodate this wherever possible. In most schemes, however, it is not possible for individuals to have their own garden for their exclusive use.

CLEANING

Castlehill employs a cleaner to clean the common parts of the building such as the residents lounge, laundry and corridors. In some schemes this cleaning will be part of the Manager's duties. Cleaning of windows in the common areas is also Castlehill's responsibility.

TELEVISION

Castlehill provides a communal television receiver linked to a socket outlet to each property in sheltered and very sheltered housing.

In schemes where the Manager **lives on site**, tenants qualify for a composite licence and do not require individual TV licences. In this case, if you are under 75, you may have to pay a £5 fee when you move into your property, and a £5 fee will be charged each time the annual composite licence requires renewing. If you are 75 years or over, you are entitled to a free licence and will not be charged anything.

If your scheme has a **Visiting Manager** you will need to have your own TV Licence in the normal way. Remember, if you are aged 75 years or over you will be entitled to a free licence (contact TV Licence Authority for relevant form to complete).

There are variations to this in some of our schemes and since the rules of a composite licence are set by the TV Licence Authority Castlehill has no say over which schemes qualify. If you are any doubt about whether you need your own licence please contact our office.

LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

In some schemes in Aberdeenshire, Castlehill employs a Local Representative providing another link between you and the Association. If your scheme has a Local Representative they will introduce themselves to you when you move in. The Representative visits regularly and can help with matters such as form filling, Benefits advice or other matters relating to your tenancy.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

In this section of the Handbook we have provided information about Castlehill's sheltered and very sheltered housing and the Housing Support service which we provide. Castlehill recognises the importance of self monitoring through regular contact between our staff and our Housing Manager (Sheltered). We also recognise the importance of tenants/ service users being involved in making decisions about the services which they receive and having access to relevant information and advice from Castlehill and other sources to achieve this. Our staff work in accordance with policies and procedures contained in our Staff Handbook and other documents. You can access these by contacting our scheme staff or our main office in Aberdeen. Our staff can also assist in providing information and advice about other services available to meet needs and liaise with other individuals and agencies as necessary.

Tenants living in sheltered and very sheltered housing as users of Housing Support services also have a right to make a comment or complaint about such services to the Care Commission or local Council who commission these services from Castlehill. Contact details are given in the Telephone Numbers and Contacts section of this handbook.

Independent information, advice and advocacy services are also available from a range of sources and further details of these are included in the Telephone and Contacts section of the Handbook. Our staff can assist you in accessing these and other services to meet your needs.