



Housing Support Service brochure
Sheltered and Very Sheltered housing

January 2008

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this brochure is to advise you about Sheltered Housing and Very Sheltered Housing provided by Castlehill Housing Association, how the housing support and other services that we provide operate and your rights and responsibilities as a service user.

WHO IS CASTLEHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION?

Castlehill Housing Association was formed in 1970 and is a non-profit making charitable organisation controlled by a voluntary Committee of Management. The association owns and manages around 1500 properties in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Council areas. This includes sheltered housing, very sheltered housing and amenity housing for older people, other properties suitable for single people, couples and families and shared ownership properties on a part rent/part ownership basis. Castlehill also provides a 'Care & Repair' service for older people in Aberdeen City, Moray and Aberdeenshire Council areas. Castlehill is registered with Communities Scotland as a social landlord and is also registered with the Care Commission as a housing support provider.



Our main office is at:

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AB10 1UT
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WHAT IS SHELTERED HOUSING?

Sheltered Housing provides independent accommodation for older people in a warm, comfortable and secure environment. The accommodation is designed to recognise the particular needs of older people and in each individual property there is normally a living room, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom or shower-room with heating throughout. Most sheltered housing schemes have communal facilities including a communal lounge and kitchen to allow tenants to pursue social activities together. A laundry is normally provided for tenants' use with washing machines and dryers. Most schemes have guest room accommodation for friends or relatives of tenants.

In our sheltered housing schemes, housing support service and security are provided for tenants by a Resident, Relief or Visiting Manager employed by Castlehill. The role of these staff is to provide housing and other support; to ensure the general welfare of tenants; to deal with any identified needs and to provide security. When staff are not on duty, support is provided by the Community Alarm Scheme, which can respond to any call made by a tenant through the alarm system and initiate appropriate action as necessary.

WHAT IS VERY SHELTERED HOUSING?

The accommodation provided in Castlehill's three very sheltered housing schemes in Banchory, Dyce and Aberdeen, is similar to that in other sheltered housing, including communal facilities. In very sheltered housing there are enhanced facilities - tenants have access to daily meal provision in a dining room at each scheme and there are links to Day Care facilities in some schemes and access to other provisions such as assisted bathing. Staff are on duty 24 hours each day to provide support for tenants. This

support is provided in conjunction with individual care arrangements for tenants organised through local Social Work Care Management, and also recognises the rights and responsibilities of individuals. Very sheltered housing offers an opportunity for inter agency working between Castlehill, Social Work and Health Services and Housing Support/Care providers in the schemes. It also provides an alternative option to residential care or nursing homes for older people unable to live in their own homes who require more support and care than normally available in sheltered housing.

WHAT IS HOUSING SUPPORT AND HOW IS IT PROVIDED?

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 set up home and be able to continue to live in their own home. Currently the largest group of people who receive housing support are tenants living in sheltered and very sheltered housing provided by housing associations like Castlehill and other landlords such as local Councils. Housing Support is provided by the Manager, Visiting Manager or Relief Manager in our sheltered housing schemes. In our very sheltered housing scheme in Banchory housing support is provided by our Housing Support workers. These staff also carry out other administrative and management tasks associated with the operation of the scheme.

In our sheltered housing schemes where we employ a Resident Manager, staff are normally on duty five days each week from 9am to 5pm and 'on call' overnight from 11pm to 9am. They are supported by a Relief Manager who normally works two days each week from 9am to 1pm and 'on call' overnight from 11pm to 9am. These hours can vary when the Relief Manager is

providing holiday/sickness cover for the Resident Manager and vice versa, in which case the Relief Manager duty hours rota is worked.

In our schemes with a Visiting Manager, staff are normally on duty five days each week Monday to Friday from 9am to 1pm. In our very sheltered housing scheme in Banchory our Housing Support workers are on duty 24 hours each day.

In our other two very sheltered housing schemes in Dyce and Aberdeen, and two of our sheltered housing schemes at Richmondhill Court and Fountville/Tanfield Court, Aberdeen, housing support is provided by other agencies and they will provide tenants with details of their service.

People who use our services are usually over the age of 60 and have housing and support needs. Priority is given to those people who are most in need of accommodation and the housing support services we provide. Prior to any allocation of tenancy being made we will carry out an assessment and consult with other individuals and agencies to determine the extent of housing support and other services which are required.

When you start your tenancy our staff will discuss with you the support and assistance that is available, and will explain how and when to contact housing support staff. They will also advise you when staff are available to assist you to maintain your tenancy through the range of housing support activities, examples of which are given below.

You may find that your need for support and assistance can vary from time to time, and staff will keep in regular contact to check that you are getting the support that you need. To achieve this, our staff will complete a Housing Support Plan with each tenant/service user that records various information

about the individual and their personal circumstances. The Plan will also advise as to how we provide our Housing Support Service and record specific housing support needs. You receive a copy of this Plan, which is reviewed regularly.

There is an emergency call system installed throughout the scheme, which allows two-way speech contact between tenants and staff when they are on duty. When staff are not on duty the scheme will be connected to the Community Alarm Scheme where trained operators will respond to any call made. At all times a response to a call will be made and appropriate action initiated as necessary.

SOME EXAMPLES OF HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES:

- ❑ General counselling and support including a regular check on your general health and welfare, reminding you about appointments with others, advising on the availability of more specialised support and care if required and other advice and support as necessary.
- ❑ Assisting with the safety and security of your home e.g. reminders if required about locking your door, and providing advice about fire safety and the safe use of domestic appliances.
- ❑ Providing and maintaining an emergency call/alarm system and responding to emergency calls made by yourself as necessary.
- ❑ Encouraging you to socialise with neighbours and others, including our staff, encouraging social activities within the Scheme.
- ❑ Assisting you to speak to and liaise with other people, professionals and other agencies with an interest in your welfare e.g. GP's, Homecare, relatives etc.
- ❑ If you have a problem assisting in an assessment for adaptations to be done at your home to meet your needs, and in arranging for these to be done.

- ❑ Advising or assisting in dealing with relationships and any disputes with neighbours and services available to help with this.
- ❑ Assisting in arranging minor repairs and servicing of domestic equipment and appliances.
- ❑ Advising or assisting you with benefit claims and other tenancy related correspondence.

Housing support services are available to ensure that tenants/service users can set up home and are able to continue to live independently. The needs of individuals will vary depending on a range of factors. If these needs change, housing support can change to meet them.

WHAT ARE THE CHARGES FOR THE ACCOMMODATION AND HOUSING SUPPORT?

Tenants living in Castlehill's sheltered and very sheltered housing are required to pay a monthly rent and service charge to the association. This covers the cost of providing and maintaining the property and also services such as the upkeep of communal areas and equipment. The amount of rent and service charges vary between individual properties and schemes since they are based on the size and type of accommodation and services and facilities provided and are reviewed annually. Further information about this is provided in the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement that every tenant receives when they 'sign up' for their accommodation.

The housing support service which includes the majority of staff time in sheltered and very sheltered housing schemes and the provision and maintenance of emergency alarm is funded by local Councils with payment of grant to Castlehill Housing Association through 'Supporting People'. This funding allows us to deliver our housing support services and contract

agreements stipulate terms and conditions for the provision of such funding. Local Councils are responsible for collecting any Housing Support charges due from individual tenants/service users and will contact tenants directly about this. These charges vary between different Council areas and schemes, and are payable every four weeks. Details of contacts for Council Supporting People teams are provided at the end of this brochure.

WHAT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO MEET THESE CHARGES?

Assistance is available to individual tenants to help to meet rent and service charges payable to Castlehill through Housing Benefit that is administered by local Councils. Similarly, financial assistance is available from local Councils for the Housing Support charge. Councils will make a financial assessment of the circumstances of new tenants and advise individuals of the outcome of this and how much they will have to pay, if anything.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS A TENANT AND SERVICE USER?

All tenants of Castlehill Housing Association receive and sign a copy of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement that sets out their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, and the duties and responsibilities of Castlehill Housing Association as the landlord. Further information is also provided in the Tenant's Handbook. As stated previously in this brochure it is necessary that a Housing Support Plan is completed and agreed with all tenants as housing support service users. This sets out the services that we will provide to meet your needs and the terms and conditions on which we will provide them.

This Plan is required in order to comply with the principles of 9 National Care Standards that have been developed by the Scottish Government from the point of view of people using housing support services. They are based on the principles of dignity, privacy, choice, safety, equality, diversity and realising potential.

The Standards describe what you as a tenant/service user can expect from Castlehill as a service provider and focus on the quality of life that you experience in using this service.

HOW DOES CASTLEHILL USE AND STORE PERSONAL INFORMATION ABOUT ME?

Castlehill retains all the information that you have provided to us including housing application form, assessment reports and correspondence. We also hold copies of letters that we have sent to you and any reports or other correspondence about your circumstances that we may have received from other sources. In our sheltered and very sheltered housing schemes we hold individual Housing Support Plans for tenants/service users, which are reviewed regularly. Information about service users including name, address, date of birth, details of GP and next of kin and any relevant medical information is also provided to the Community Alarm Scheme for their records in order that they can respond to any call for assistance made to them.

It is essential that we hold this information in order to provide you with an effective, efficient and consistent service and to ensure that our obligations to you can be fulfilled. We will ensure that your records are kept securely and are kept up to date and accurate (providing this is within our control) and no unauthorised person can gain access to your information.

All Castlehill staff are required to comply with our Code of Conduct in respect of Data Protection and Confidentiality and also ensure that all tenants/service users are treated equally and fairly.

HOW DOES CASTLEHILL MANAGE RISK AND ACCIDENTS FOR SERVICE USERS?

The association has a comprehensive Health and Safety policy for all staff and recognises the need to provide relevant training for all staff on health and safety issues. Castlehill is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment for its employees and living environment for its service users, and to ensure as far as practical that these persons and others are not exposed to risks to their health and safety in situations or premises within our control. A copy of our Health and Safety policy is available in all of our sheltered and very sheltered housing schemes. This is revised as and when necessary in the event of change of policies and statutory requirements.

The Health and Safety policy requires all staff to ensure that any accident, dangerous occurrence or notifiable disease is reported and recorded in the appropriate way, and notified to their Line Manager at the earliest opportunity.

HOW IS THE HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICE REGULATED?

As a housing support service provider Castlehill 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 Government.

The Scottish Government has established 9 Housing Support Standards that guide our service, and are used by the Care Commission in monitoring the quality of our service.

The Care Commission periodically inspects our service and an inspection report is published. This gives details about the service and may highlight any issues for action or improvement. Such reports are published and can be accessed by anyone.

Local Council Supporting People services contract with Castlehill to provide the housing support service, and also monitor that Castlehill is adhering to the terms of the contract. Local Councils are also responsible for review of housing support services.

Sheltered and very sheltered housing scheme staff also have specific procedures and systems to follow in recording the way they work with each tenant/service user. This includes keeping a record of housing support activities provided for the individual in the Housing Support Plan. These plans are checked by other staff from Castlehill who will also monitor that the association's policies and procedures are being properly followed.

Castlehill also recognises the importance of self-monitoring. This is achieved by regular contact between our Housing Manager (Sheltered) and others with staff in individual sheltered housing schemes both through formal and informal meetings. Where appropriate we also involve tenants/service users and/or their representatives before making decision about changes in our services. We have a Tenant Participation Strategy which recognises the importance of involving tenants in the decision making process. Further information about these aspects of our service is available from our Housing Manager

(Sheltered) who is based at our office at 4 Carden Place, Aberdeen (01224 625822).




WHAT IF I HAVE A COMPLAINT?

If you feel that you have received unfair treatment or you are unhappy about any aspect of our service you should firstly discuss the issue with the appropriate member of Castlehill's staff. If you feel that the issue cannot be resolved then you should contact that member of staff's line manager. Thereafter, if you wish to make a formal complaint to a director of the association we can issue with an appropriate form and further advice. Ultimately, your complaint may be raised with Castlehill's Management Committee.



If you are still unhappy about the response received to your complaint you may wish to contact the Ombudsman. This service is free and impartial but there are limitations to the nature of complaints that can be addressed. A copy of our complaints procedure and further information about this is available from our office at 4 Carden Place, Aberdeen.

Service users also have a right to make a comment or complaint about the housing support service they receive direct to the Care Commission or local Council Supporting People Team whose roles are explained in this brochure.



The Contacts for the Care Commission are:



	Care Commission Headquarters Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee, DD1 4NY
	(01382) 207100
	www.carecommission.com



The North Region of the Care Commission also has offices at:

	Regional Office Johnstone House, Rose Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1UD
	(01224) 793870

The Contacts for local Council Supporting People Offices are;

	Aberdeen City Council Supporting People Team, Strategic Leadership, 74 – 76 Spring Garden, Aberdeen, AB25 1GN
	(01224) 538066

	Aberdeenshire Council Supporting People Team, Housing and Social Work Unit 12, Blackhall Industrial Estate, Burghmuir Circle, Inverurie, AB51 4FS
	(01467) 629034

	Moray Council Supporting People Team, Community Services 149 High Street, Elgin, IV30 1DS
	(01343) 563308