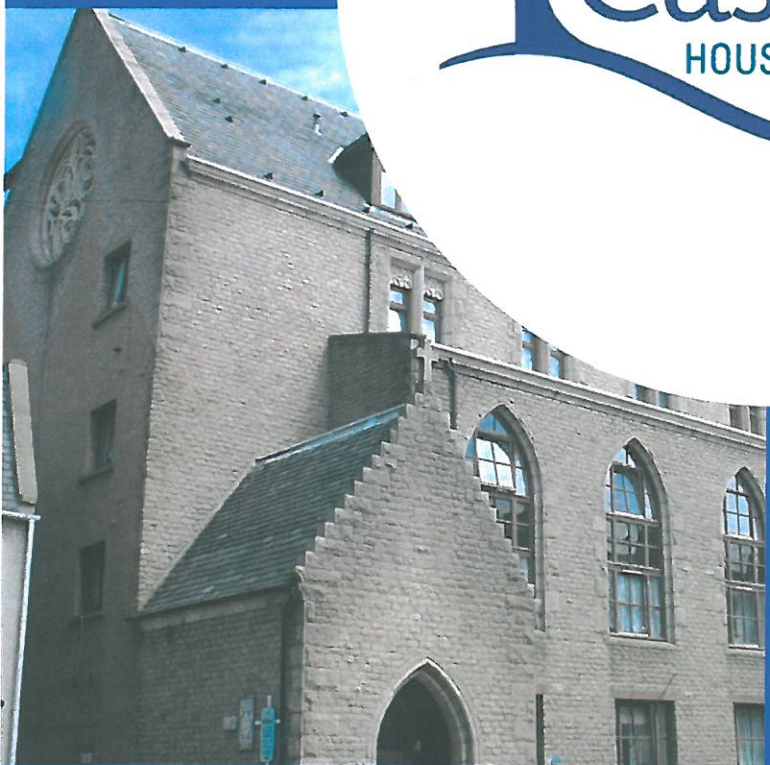


# SHELTERED & VERY SHELTERED HOUSING



## HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICE INFORMATION





The purpose of this Brochure is to advise you about Sheltered Housing and Very Sheltered Housing provided by Castlehill Housing Association (CHA), how our housing support and other services operate and your rights and responsibilities as a service user.

## Who are Castlehill Housing Association?

Castlehill Housing Association (CHA) was formed in 1970 and is a non-profit making charitable organisation controlled by a voluntary Committee of Management. The Association owns and manages nearly 2000 properties in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and The Moray Council areas. This includes Sheltered Housing, Very Sheltered Housing and Amenity housing for older people, General Needs 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 and Aberdeenshire Council areas. Castlehill is registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator as a social landlord and is also registered with the Care Inspectorate as a housing support provider.

Castlehill Housing Association,  
4 Carden Place,  
Aberdeen, AB10 1UT  
01224 625822 [info@castlehillha.co.uk](mailto:info@castlehillha.co.uk)

## What is Sheltered Housing?

Sheltered Housing provides a home for tenants in a comfortable and secure environment with support to allow them to live independently for as long as possible. Accommodation is designed to recognise the needs of older people and properties usually comprise a living room, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom or shower-room with heating throughout. Most Sheltered Housing schemes have communal facilities, allowing tenants to pursue social activities and a laundry with washing machines and dryers and several of our schemes have guest room accommodation for friends or relatives of tenants.

In our Sheltered Housing schemes, there are staff who provide Housing Support to tenants. Their role is to provide housing and other support, ensure the general welfare of tenants, deal with any identified needs and to provide security. When staff are not on duty, support is provided by the Regional Control Centre (RCC)/Community Alarm who can respond to any call made by a tenant through the alarm system and initiate appropriate action as necessary.

## What is very Sheltered Housing?

Accommodation provided in Castlehill's four Very Sheltered Housing schemes in Banchory, Dyce, Mintlaw and Aberdeen is like sheltered housing, in that properties are self-contained flats which have access to communal facilities. The main difference is that in very sheltered housing there are enhanced facilities. Staff are available 24 hours for help and support; tenants have access to daily meal provision in a dining room at each scheme; there are links to day care facilities in some schemes and access to other provisions such as assisted bathing.

This support is provided in conjunction with individual care arrangements which recognises the needs and choices of individuals. The staff providing this care are not Castlehill employees, and the relevant Housing Support/Care providers will give tenants information about their services.

Very Sheltered Housing may provide an alternative option for older people who require more support and care than that available in Sheltered Housing.

## What is Housing Support?

Housing support aims to help people to continue to live in their own home. Most people who receive it are tenants living in Sheltered and Very Sheltered housing. Housing Support is provided by the staff based at the scheme and they also carry out administrative and management tasks associated with the operation of the scheme. Castlehill is only responsible for Housing Support in schemes situated in Aberdeenshire and Moray, with Housing Support in Aberdeen being provided by other agencies. Duty hours will vary according to size and location of scheme and your Housing Officer will provide you with this information.

### Some examples of Housing Support Services are:

- General counselling and support, including a regular check on general health and welfare, reminding 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 in the home e.g. reminders if required about locking doors 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 as necessary.
- Encouraging social interaction with neighbours and others, including our staff, encouraging social activities within the scheme.
- Assisting you with contact with other people, professionals and other agencies with an interest in your welfare e.g. GP's, Homecare, relatives etc.
- If there is a need, assisting in an assessment for adaptations to be done in the home to meet this need, 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.

As a Housing Support service provider there are restrictions as to what sheltered scheme staff can do. Provision of personal care or administration of medication can only be delivered by Social Care or healthcare providers. Our staff are **not** able to be involved in the handling of services users' money and finances.



## How is it provided?

People who use our services have housing and specific support needs. Priority is given to those who are most in need of accommodation and the Housing Support services we provide. Prior to allocation of tenancy an assessment will be carried out and we will consult with other individuals and agencies to determine the extent of housing support and other services which are required.

At the start of a tenancy, staff will discuss the support and assistance that is available and complete a Housing Support Plan. This plan will gather information about personal circumstances and record specific housing support needs and choices. The tenant will receive a copy of this plan for their records and it is reviewed twice yearly. As the Housing Support Plan and other documents contain confidential information, Castlehill will keep them secure and only share the information contained in them on a need to know basis. The Care Inspectorate who regulate and inspect our services have a legal right to look at Housing Support plans to ensure that the service user is receiving services that meet their individual needs and choices.

The delivery of Housing Support services is defined by National Care Standards published by the Scottish Government and this incorporates various principles and rights for service users. These include the need to respect the rights of service users, particularly for personal freedom, choice in daily living, dignity and self-respect, independence, privacy and confidentiality, protection from risk of abuse and harm, and exercise of free will.

The need for support and assistance can vary, so staff will keep in regular contact to check that the tenant is getting the appropriate support they require while enabling them to live as independently as possible.

There is an emergency call system installed throughout all schemes which allows two-way speech contact between tenants and staff when they are on duty. A body worn 'pendant' to activate the call system can be provided to tenants who require one. It should be noted that in responding to an emergency, staff can gain access to any property with the use of a master key, so it is important not to restrict access by leaving keys in your door lock or have a chain fitted. We will ask you if there are other circumstances when you may allow staff to use their master key to allow access for others such as contractors, this will be recorded this on your Housing Support Plan and reiterated at reviews.

When our staff are not on duty the scheme will be connected to the RCC/Community Alarm where trained operators will respond to any call made.

## What is Community Alarm and how does it operate?

When the Scheme Manager/Relief Manager is off duty all calls made on the system go direct to the Regional Control Centre (RCC)/Community Alarm. The Regional Control Centre is staffed 24 hours every day of the year by trained operators who can deal with a range of situations which may arise, including medical and other emergencies.

RCC/Community Alarm hold information about each tenant including name, address, telephone number, certain 'keyword' information e.g. medical or mobility and details of GP and resident's contacts. When the tenancy starts staff will ask you for this information. It is recommended that up to three nominated 'resident's contact' persons are given, and it is important that the people you are putting on this contact list will be available and willing to be contacted in an emergency or incident night and day, when staff are not on duty. Contact telephone numbers for both home and work, and any mobile telephone number if there is one are required as well as the full name, address and status of the 'resident's contact'. This information will be kept secure and will not be given to any other organisation apart from RCC.

A minimum of one 'resident's contact' will be acceptable. If there are any problems with this, please discuss this with scheme staff. Any future changes to contact details should be made known to staff as soon as possible. Scheme staff will check if your 'resident's contacts' have permission to access the property and a key if they have this permission and if not any action to be taken to address this. RCC can allow emergency services access to sheltered schemes, and a master key will allow entry to individual properties, they are unable to do this for individual resident's contacts if they do not have permission.

When the pull cord has been activated by the tenant it sends a call through a dedicated telephone line to staff at RCC/Community Alarm. Most calls will be answered in less than a minute but if operators are busy with other calls it may be a little longer, but your call will be answered. The operator will be able to identify the caller because RCC/Community Alarm hold information on all Castlehill tenants.

The caller will be able to have a conversation with the operator, so it is important to be clear and honest. The operator will then assess the situation and take appropriate action to deal with it. This may involve them calling a nominated 'resident contact' to assist, calling emergency services such as fire, police or ambulance or calling for medical assistance. If the tenant does not respond, they will assume that assistance is required.

Please remember that the service provided by RCC/Community Alarm is for emergencies and should not be used if the situation can wait until a member of staff is on duty. If the alarm is triggered by mistake, please advise RCC of this or they may assume that you require assistance.



Please note that this system is for **emergencies which could include the following;**

- a fall or other accident which requires urgent medical attention;
- any health problems which require urgent medical attention;
- an intruder;
- an assault where the Police need to be notified; or
- fire If the situation is not urgent then please wait until scheme staff are back on duty.

## 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 Castlehill. This covers the cost of providing and maintaining the property and services such as the upkeep of communal areas and equipment. Rent and service charges vary between individual properties and schemes as they are based on the size and type of accommodation, services and facilities provided. These are reviewed annually, and a breakdown of charges is provided with the rent letter which is sent annually.

Further information about this is provided in the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement which every tenant receives when they become a Castlehill tenant.

The Housing Support Service is commissioned by local councils who 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 local Council staff teams are provided at the end of this brochure.

In Aberdeenshire and Moray this funding allows Castlehill to deliver housing support services.

## What financial assistance is available to meet these charges?

Assistance is available to help to meet rent and service charges payable to Castlehill through welfare benefits which is administered by local councils or Department of Work and Pensions. Financial assistance is also available from local councils for the housing support charge. Councils will make a financial assessment of the circumstances of new tenants in relation to payment of the housing support charge and advise of the outcome of this and how much the tenant will have to pay, if anything.

## What are my rights and responsibilities as a tenant and service user?

All tenants of Castlehill receive and sign a copy of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement which sets out their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, along with the duties and responsibilities of Castlehill as the landlord. Further information is also provided in the Tenant's Handbook. It is necessary that a Housing Support Plan is completed by the Housing Support provider and agreed with the housing support service users. This sets out the services which will be provided to meet the tenants needs. This Plan is required in order to comply with the principles of nine National Care Standards which 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 can expect from your Housing Support service provider and focus on the quality of life that you experience in using this service.

## How do Castlehill use and store personal information about me?

Castlehill retains all the information which the tenant has provided to us including housing application, assessment reports and correspondence. We also hold copies of letters which we have sent to the tenant and any reports or other correspondence about the tenants' circumstances which we may have received from other sources. In our Sheltered Housing Schemes where we provide housing support services, we hold individual Housing Support Plans for tenants and subsequent reviews of these. Information about tenants including name, address, date of birth, details of GP, any relevant medical information and details of nominated 'resident's contacts' is also provided to RCC/Community Alarm 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 tenants with an effective, efficient and consistent service and to ensure that our obligations to the tenant can be fulfilled. We will ensure that records are kept securely, are kept up-to-date and accurate (providing this is within our



control) and that no unauthorised person can gain access to your information. All Castlehill staff are also required to comply with our Code of Conduct in respect of Data Protection and Confidentiality and to ensure that all tenants are treated equally and fairly.

## How do Castlehill manage risks and accidents for service users?

Castlehill has comprehensive Health and Safety policies in place for staff and recognises the need to provide relevant training for 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 tenants, and to ensure, as far as practical, that tenants and others are not exposed to risks to their health and safety in situations or premises within our control.

Copies of our Health and Safety policies and procedures are available on request. In all sheltered housing schemes fire notices are displayed in individual properties and in communal areas. It is important that tenants are aware of these and what to do in the event of a fire as this can vary between schemes. Staff will advise you on fire procedures and identify any specific issues or needs which you may require for future reference and action. Our Health and Safety policies require staff to ensure that any incident, accident, dangerous occurrence is reported and recorded in the appropriate way and their Line Manager is notified at the earliest opportunity.

## How is the Housing Support Service regulated?

Castlehill Housing Association is registered with the Care Inspectorate 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 have established nine Housing Support Standards which guide our service and are used by the Care Inspectorate in monitoring the quality of our service.

The Care Inspectorate periodically inspects our service which will involve contact with tenants and our staff and following this 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 any interested person, copies are available on our own website. Local councils commission Castlehill to provide the housing support service and monitor that Castlehill is adhering to the terms of the contract. Local councils are also responsible for review of our housing support services which can also involve contact with tenants and our staff.

Castlehill staff working in sheltered housing in Aberdeenshire and Moray also have specific procedures and systems to follow in recording the way they work with each tenant. This includes reference to the Housing Support Plan and subsequent reviews and keeping an ongoing and confidential record of housing support services and activities provided for the individual. These are checked by other staff from Castlehill who will also monitor that policies and procedures are being properly followed. Our policies and procedures are contained in our Staff Handbook, a copy of which is available in each of our schemes. If you wish information about individual policies and procedures, please contact our scheme staff or our Senior Housing Support Officer.

Castlehill recognises the importance of self-monitoring. This is achieved by regular contact between our Senior Housing Support Officer and staff in individual sheltered housing schemes by telephone, e-mail and meetings at schemes which take place at least three times a year. We consult with and gather information from tenants and/or their representatives by means of questionnaires, meetings and discussions and take account of these before making decisions 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 Tenant Participation Officer, who can be contacted on 01224 625822.

## What if I have a complaint?

Castlehill is committed to providing high quality customer services. We value complaints and use information from them to help improve our services. If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. We have a complaints procedure which details what you can complain about, how you can complain, what happens after you have made a complaint and what you can do if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way that we dealt with your complaint. This includes the option to ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to consider your complaint but only after it has been considered through our complaints procedure.

Further information and a copy of our complaint's procedure is available from our Sheltered scheme staff or our office at 4 Carden Place Aberdeen or on our website [www.castlehillha.co.uk](http://www.castlehillha.co.uk)



If your complaint relates to the Housing Support service which we provide you can choose to complain to us or the Care Inspectorate whose contact details are provided on the last page of this document. You have the right to make a comment or complaint about the Housing Support service you receive direct to the local councils who commission these services from us and whose contact details are found below.

### **Contact numbers:**

Care Inspectorate  
Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive,  
Dundee, DD1 4NY  
Phone: 0345 600 9527  
[www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

The Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care  
Johnstone House, 52-54 Rose Street,  
Aberdeen, AB10 1UD  
Phone: 01224 793870

### **Local Councils responsible for commissioning Housing Support services in Castlehill Schemes**

Aberdeenshire Council Commissioning Team,  
Housing and Social Work,  
Unit 12, Blackhall Industrial Estate,  
Burghmuir Circle, Inverurie AB51 4FS  
Phone: 01467 629034

The Moray Council Commissioning and Performance Team,  
Moray Health and Social Care Partnership,  
Spynie Hospital,  
Duffus Road, Elgin IV30 5PW  
Phone: 01343 567179

ing Support service you receive direct to the local councils who commission these services from us and whose contact details are also given on the last page.





