<table>
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<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Andrew Hazlett</th>
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<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Housing Asset Management, Housing and Building Services</td>
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<tr>
<th>Consultation/Approval Date</th>
<th>Darlington Association on Disability 12/03/2015</th>
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<td>AgeUK 13/03/2015</td>
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<td>Consultation/Approval Date</td>
<td>DBC’s Tenants Board 15/04/2015</td>
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<td>Fire Safety Officers – County Durham &amp; Darlington Fire and Rescue Service 10/03/2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultation/Approval Date</td>
<td>Hazel Neasham – Head of Housing Services 04/08/2015</td>
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<td>Equality Impact Assessment Sign off date</td>
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Appendix
Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear procedures and guidelines for the safe storage, charging and usage of mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs in communal areas. (Communal areas include corridors, stairwells and communal rooms).

Although the council does not have an obligation to provide mobility scooter storage facilities for council tenants, there is recognition of the value that mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs can bring to the lives of some tenants by maintaining and increasing their independence. The provision however, is subject to the practical constraints of the individual sites and the potential costs and funding involved.

1.0 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to keep tenants, guests and staff of Darlington Borough Council’s sheltered schemes, extra care schemes safe, and to set out procedures and guidelines for the safe storage, charging and usage of mobility vehicles within the schemes.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to accommodation covered by the Regulatory Reform Act (Fire Safety) 2005. This includes all sheltered schemes and extra care schemes.

This policy applies to all tenants, as well as their guests who own and use electric mobility vehicles.

3.0 Legal obligations

3.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Darlington Borough Council must comply with the law regarding fire safety.

This law applies to England and Wales. It covers ‘general fire precautions’ and other fire safety duties that are needed to protect ‘Relevant Persons’ in case of fire in and around ‘most premises’.

The order requires fire precautions to be put in place ‘where necessary’ and to the extent that it is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances of the case. Responsibility for complying with the Fire Safety Order rests with the ‘Responsible Person’.
This law applies and covers general precautions and fire safety duties which are required to protect people in case of a fire in common areas in and around buildings. The order requires that risks should be assessed and actions taken to reduce risks to the extent that is reasonable and practical.

3.2 Health and Safety at work

It is an employer’s duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees and other people who might be affected by their business. Employers must do whatever is reasonably practicable to achieve this.

This means making sure that employee’s and others are protected from anything that may cause harm, effectively controlling any risk of injury to health that could arise in the workplace.

4.0 Associated hazards

Inappropriate storage and charging of mobility vehicles will increase the chances of trips and falls, increase fire risks, and could hamper escape routes, especially in communal areas.

5.0 Policy aims

This policy has been put in place to protect and preserve the health and safety of all tenants, guests, and staff living or working in DBC’s sheltered or extra care schemes, whilst allowing and enabling the use of mobility vehicles for independent living.

The policy aims are to:

- Ensure the Council meet their statutory obligations in relation to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- To ensure everyone is aware of the health and safety risks associated with the inappropriate storage of mobility vehicles, and their own responsibilities in relation to this.
- To ensure all mobility vehicles are stored in a way that will not hamper escape in the event of a fire, and will not impact on the fire safety within the building or put the owner or other tenants, guests and staff at risk in any way.
- To provide a process for carrying out any necessary fire risk assessments where there are identified possible health and safety implications for mobility scooter and motorised wheelchair owners and other tenants.
- Ensure that tenants inform the scheme manager prior to purchasing a mobility scooter. This will ensure that before a scooter is purchased, a tenant is advised on their options regarding the storage space available in their housing scheme.
To make all tenants, guests and staff aware of their responsibilities in relation to:
  - Guests to their home that use mobility vehicles
  - Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) for charging equipment
  - Notifying the council prior to acquiring a mobility scooter to ensure sufficient storage space is in place

6.0 Motorised Wheelchairs

Motorised wheelchairs will generally be stored and charged within an individual’s flat. Where the wheelchair is stored and charged within the tenant’s property, there is no requirement for a PAT on the charging equipment, however we would ask for tenant’s to do regular visual inspections on the electrical equipment to look for any faults.

Motorised wheelchairs that are going to be stored and charged in the mobility vehicle storage area will require a PAT, and permission for storage must still be requested and granted.

Motorised wheelchairs must not be stored and charged in any communal area.

6.1 Guests with motorised wheelchairs

As a tenant living in a property with shared communal areas you are responsible for ensuring any guests to your home adheres with this mobility vehicle policy.

Visiting guests are not permitted to use the storage area, or any other communal area for charging their motorised wheelchair.

Guests who are staying overnight or for an extended period of time can request permission to use the storage facilities for storing and charging mobility vehicles, providing an in date PAT has been carried out within the last 12 months and there is adequate space in the storage area. (We would need to see the PAT sticker on the charging block).

Guests who are staying for an extended period of time may store and charge motorised wheelchairs within the guest bedrooms without the requirement of having a PAT carried out on the charging equipment.
7.0 Mobility Scooters

Mobility scooters must be stored and charged within the schemes mobility vehicle storage area. All scooters stored in these areas are subject to a PAT.

Mobility scooters must be recharged within designated storage and charging areas, and must be charged according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

All prospective owners will need to inform council staff at the schemes of their intentions to purchase or lease an electric mobility scooter. Although permission will generally be granted, it allows us to ensure sufficient safe storage is in place for the number of mobility vehicles being stored and charged in the mobility vehicle storage areas. The resident must complete a Mobility Vehicle Permission Form and pass it to the scheme manager.

In some situations, special arrangements may be agreed with the scheme manager to store the mobility scooter within the individuals flat. Considerations will be made on the class, size, weight and speed of the scooter before permission is granted. In such situations, the tenant must ensure, particularly where space is limited, the mobility scooter does not obstruct safe evacuation from the property in an emergency.

(These arrangements will be for smaller scooters that are speed restricted and have a smaller turning circle than most other scooter models.)

7.1 Guests with mobility scooters

As a tenant living in a property with shared communal areas you are responsible for ensuring any guests to your home adheres with this mobility vehicle policy. All guests must find a safe location to park their mobility scooter that is outside the communal or shared areas and does not cause any obstruction within the property during visits.

Visiting guests are not permitted to use the storage area, or any other communal area for charging their motorised wheelchair.

Guests who are staying overnight or for an extended period of time can request permission to use the storage facilities for storing and charging mobility vehicles, providing an in date PAT has been carried out within the last 12 months and there is adequate space in the storage area. (We would need to see the PAT sticker on the charging block).

Where demand exceeds space availability all tenants are restricted to one mobility scooter only. If there is additional space availability, a tenant may have 2 mobility scooters, (of different class – class 2 & 3) but may be asked to remove one if demand exceeds space availability.
8.0 Portable appliance testing (PAT)

The actual scooter/wheelchair and the batteries do not require a portable appliance test; however the charging equipment used does require testing.

- All scooter/wheelchair chargers must have an in date, valid Portable Appliance Test (PAT test) if the charging equipment is to be used in the mobility vehicle storage rooms, to ensure that it is in a safe condition. If the equipment does not have an in date valid PAT, and the date for onsite testing is more than 2 months away, the tenant must get the equipment tested elsewhere.

- The PAT test will be carried out by an approved contractor on behalf of Darlington Borough Council, on an annual basis.

- The scheme leader will make tenants aware prior to the scheduled date for onsite PAT. Tenants must ensure the chargers are available on the day.

- If any equipment fails the PAT, it will be the scooter/wheelchair owner’s responsibility to repair/replace the damaged item before it can be used again.

- Darlington Borough Council will not, at this moment charge owners for PAT testing or electricity used to recharge their scooter/wheelchair when stored in designated areas, but do reserve the right to make a change in the future.

9.0 Liability insurance

There is no legal requirement for tenants to have insurance for mobility scooters or motorised wheelchairs, however, it is advised that all tenants storing and charging in the DBC operated schemes have 3rd party liability insurance as a minimum to cover against damage to property and claims from other tenants and staff.

*If you are going to purchase a mobility scooter you should check costs associated with insurance before purchasing.*

Please note, if damage is caused to property owned by Darlington Borough Council through the use of mobility vehicles, you may be recharged for any damages and repairs.
10.0 Storage

This section details general rules for all tenants storing and charging within the mobility vehicle storage area.

10.1 General rules

Mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs must not be stored in any part of a corridor or stairwell that might block an escape route, potentially cause an obstruction, trip, or fire hazard.

10.2 Allocation of space

Allocation of storage space for mobility vehicles will take place on a first come, first served basis. If there are already mobility vehicles parked at a sheltered or extra care schemes, the scheme manager’s will record details and ensure that there is adequate space for all mobility vehicles to remain. If there is not sufficient space, the housing services and scheme managers will work with the tenants to attempt to achieve a mutually acceptable solution.

Where the demand for spaces exceeds the spaces available, on some schemes it may be possible to consider arranging your own alternatives, for example:

- Locally arranged storage in a garage. You will be responsible for any arrangements if you choses this option.
- Locally agreed outdoor storage. However, please remember that you are responsible for the safety and security of your mobility scooter.
- Requesting permission for a hard standing area, which a shed could be erected on. You would need to pay the cost for the storage shed, and any maintenance required will be the tenant’s responsibility.

Unfortunately, Darlington Borough Council cannot guarantee that every tenant who wants to bring a mobility vehicle into the schemes will be given permission to do so.

10.3 Permission for storage

If you would like to request permission to store and charge your mobility scooter or motorised wheelchair within the schemes storage area, you must complete the permission form and pass it to your scheme leader.

The permission form is attached at the end of this document.
11.0 Charging of scooters and wheelchairs

Mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs must not be charged in the communal corridors or other communal areas.

12.0 Usage of mobility vehicles

We must ask that any tenant using a mobility vehicle in and around the scheme’s, does so with due care and attention to other tenants, staff, guests and members of the public.

We may recharge tenants for damages caused to property by the use of your mobility vehicle.

More information is available regarding the safe usage of mobility vehicles at the websites listed at the end of this document.

12.1 Training and usage

It is advised that all mobility vehicle users undergo adequate training on the usage and control of the vehicle they are purchasing or leasing. The company selling the scooter/wheelchair should be able to provide the training, or give guidance on where training is available.

If the vehicle is purchased second hand the purchaser should ensure that they receive adequate training on the usage and control of the vehicle before use, and ensure that it is appropriate for their needs.

All users must drive safely and with full consideration for other tenants and staff of the scheme.

13.0 Enforcement of the policy

The Council has to be very firm on this issue to ensure that the health and safety of our tenants, staff and guests is not put at risk.

This policy will be enforced and regularly monitored via ongoing fire risk assessments.

All tenants allocated space or using the storage/charging areas must agree and comply with the conditions stated in the policy.

If you are found to be breaching the conditions stated in this policy, you will be given a 30 day period to rectify the issue/s, or you may be asked to remove the mobility vehicle from the scheme.
Darlington Borough Council reserves the right to withdraw permission for using the mobility vehicle storage area at any time if any of the conditions are not met.

14.0 Storage availability

Sheltered and Extra Care schemes with mobility vehicle storage provision

The following schemes have a mobility vehicle store facility:

- Dalkeith House
- Rockwell House
- Ted Fletcher Court
- Windsor Court
- Bransome Hall
- Oban Court
- Linden Court
- Dinsdale Court
- Rosemary Court
- Roxby Court

15.0 Useful information for mobility vehicle users

Information on mobility scooters;

http://www.positiveageing.co.uk/mobility-scooters.html

Information on safe usage of mobility scooters;

http://www.positiveageing.co.uk/mobility-scooters/ten-tips-on-mobility-scooter-safety.html

Information on things to consider before purchasing a mobility scooter;

http://www.positiveageing.co.uk/mobility-scooters/buying-a-mobility-scooter-ten-things-to-consider.html

Information on looking after mobility scooters;

http://www.positiveageing.co.uk/mobility-scooters/five-tips-on-looking-after-your-mobility-scooter-batteries.html
## Appendix 1

### Useful contacts

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Contact details</th>
<th>Website/email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Darlington Borough Council</td>
<td>Housing Services</td>
<td>Town Hall Feethams Darlington, DL1 5QT</td>
<td><a href="http://www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/">http://www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: 01325 405333 <a href="mailto:housing@darlington.gov.uk">housing@darlington.gov.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:housing@darlington.gov.uk">housing@darlington.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darlington Borough Council</td>
<td>Complaints, compliment and comments</td>
<td>Town Hall Feethams Darlington, DL1 5QT</td>
<td><a href="http://www.darlington.gov.uk/your-council/complaints-compliments-and-comments/">http://www.darlington.gov.uk/your-council/complaints-compliments-and-comments/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: 01325 406777</td>
<td><a href="mailto:complaints@darlington.gov.uk">complaints@darlington.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darlington Association on Disability</td>
<td>Services, support and information</td>
<td>20 – 22 Horsemarket Darlington, DL1 5PT</td>
<td><a href="http://www.darlingtondisability.org/">http://www.darlingtondisability.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: 01325 489999</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mail@darlingtondisability.org">mail@darlingtondisability.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AgeUK Darlington</td>
<td>Support for older people</td>
<td>Bradbury House Beaumont Street West Darlington, DL1 5SX</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ageuk.org.uk/darlington/">http://www.ageuk.org.uk/darlington/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tel: 01325 362832</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@ageukdarlington.org.uk">info@ageukdarlington.org.uk</a></td>
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Mobility Vehicle Permission Form

Darlington Borough Council Sheltered & Extra Care Schemes

If you would like to store and charge your mobility scooter or motorised wheelchair within any sheltered or extra care scheme’s communal storage area, you must read and agree to the following conditions, as well as all the conditions stated within the Mobility Vehicle policy document.

Please read the following conditions carefully and complete and sign Part A, then return this form to your scheme manager.

- You must adhere to the arrangements for storage and charging as per the ‘Mobility Vehicle Policy’
- The scooter must be kept in good working condition
- The scooter must be charged in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions
- All charging equipment is subject to periodic ‘Portable Appliance Testing’. Arrangements for PAT are within the ‘Mobility Scooter Policy’. It is your responsibility to ensure the equipment is tested. (Darlington Borough Council will provide free periodic PAT tests as long as they are available during the visits to the schemes. Managers will have details of this)

Periodic checks on the storage arrangements will take place to ensure all residents are complying with the policy.

**Part A – To be completed by the requesting tenant**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Address</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scooter Make</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scooter Model</td>
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</table>
I confirm that I have read and understand all guidance and procedures in the Mobility Vehicle Policy.

Signed: ____________________________________________________________

Print Name: ________________________________________________________

Date: ____/____/____

Part B – To be completed by the Scheme Manager

Has the electrical charging equipment got a valid PAT certificate/sticker? Y / N
(If No, inform the resident of the date for PAT) (Valid too ____/____/____)

Is there adequate space in the storage area for an additional scooter/wheelchair? Y / N

(tick as appropriate)

Permission for storage has been approved

Permission for storage has been declined

Reason/s for refusal:

Inadequate space in the storage areas

Tenant already has a mobility vehicle stored in the area

I authorise/reject the tenant named in Part A permission to store and charge their mobility scooter or motorised wheelchair within this sheltered housing/extra care schemes mobility vehicle storage area.

Manager’s signature _________________________________ Date ____/____/____

Note to managers

This form should be kept as a record that permission has been granted/denied to the resident.

This form should be scanned to the tenant’s orchard account.

If the charging equipment does not have a valid PAT certificate, the resident must ensure the equipment is available on the next day of the periodic PAT visits to the scheme.