



# Mobility Scooters Policy

Rugby Borough Council – Mobility Scooters Policy

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The use and storage of mobility scooters within Rugby Borough Council (RBC) schemes (a scheme can be any number of properties served by a communal entrance area) has not been reviewed for some time.
- 1.2 It is important at this time to review our current arrangements to take into account recommendations received from the Fire Service and the future needs of our residents.
- 1.3 The report on the strategic review of sheltered housing showed that the 65-plus population in Rugby was projected to increase by 49.4% between 2008 and 2025.
- 1.4 These statistics would suggest that with a growing ageing population the use and requirement for storage of mobility scooters will continue to increase.
- 1.5 The increased use and ownership of mobility scooters can be attributed to a number of factors. These include:
  - Policies to promote independence and social inclusion;
  - Legislation – most notable the Disability Discrimination Act – to ensure equal access to goods and services;
  - Changes in lifestyle, expectations and aspirations of disabled and older people and the lack of any restrictions on obtaining and using a scooter.
- 1.6 None of RBC's existing schemes has been specifically designed or adapted to accommodate the storage, charging and use of mobility scooters. This means that if tenants cannot accommodate a scooter within their own home there may not be the necessary space within the communal areas of the schemes to safely store it.

## **2.0 Fire Service Recommendations**

- 2.1 The principal recommendation is that mobility scooters should not be stored/sited in escape staircases, escape corridors and communal areas forming part of means and escape routes within buildings. This is because mobility scooters introduce a considerable fire loading and sometimes obstruction hazards within these areas that should be maintained as sterile areas at all times.

## **3.0 Aim of the policy**

- 3.1 The aim of this policy is to protect and preserve the health and safety of all residents living within RBC schemes and anyone else visiting or working there, whilst enabling the use of mobility scooters to promote independence.

## **4.0 Policy**

- 4.1 RBC encourages the rights of tenants to independent living. It also recognises that mobility scooters can and do enhance the quality of life of tenants who may otherwise be limited in their ability to access facilities, either within a scheme or the wider community.
- 4.2 Where possible, RBC will work with residents to enable their use of a mobility scooter. However, the health and safety of other residents is paramount and permission cannot be given to store mobility scooters in communal areas.
- 4.3 RBC reserves the right to prohibit or restrict the use and storage in any of its schemes of any residents' personal possessions and equipment deemed to be unsuitable for the accommodation and communal areas. The type and nature of such possessions and equipment will be decided by RBC and reviewed annually. The storage and use of mobility scooters within RBC schemes falls into this category.
- 4.4 All enquiries with regard to use and storage of mobility scooters will be dealt with in a sympathetic manner in order for RBC to meet its obligations and to ensure certain minimum requirements are met.
- 4.5 The requirements of this policy will be applicable to any existing scheme tenant who already owns or may wish to purchase a scooter and also to applicants with scooters who are considering moving into an RBC scheme.

## **5.0 Key principles**

- 5.1 Whatever the intended use of a mobility scooter is to be (inside and/or outside a scheme) the following applies to all categories:
  - The scooter must be able to be charged safely and securely stored within the tenant's own property. RBC does not currently provide purpose-built storage or charging facilities and these are entirely the tenant's responsibility.
  - Scooters are prohibited from being stored in stairwells, corridors and communal areas within schemes. Exits must be kept clear at all times.
  - The storage of a scooter external to any scheme must be in such a manner that it does not cause any health and safety issues to any other residents, visitors or threaten the fabric of the building. Scooters must not be stored by meter cupboards.
  - The practice of trailing wires across a corridor/escape route from a property to a scooter for charging purposes is prohibited.

- The scooter must be maintained in good condition.
- RBC may claim against a tenant for any damage caused to RBC property by the use of his/her scooter.
- RBC may prohibit a tenant from using a mobility scooter in a scheme if, by their general disregard for safety, they place other scheme residents, visitors and property at risk.
- The ability of a tenant to get either on or off a mobility scooter must be achieved without assistance from RBC staff.

## **6.0 Review**

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed annually and an equality impact assessment carried out after each review unless there are any legislative changes requiring an earlier review.