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ORBIT

MOBILITY AIDS POLICY

Executive Summary	This document outlines Orbit’s policy on the storage and charging of mobility aids in communal areas. It links to the Health and Safety Strategy and Health and Safety Policy.
Approved by	Health and Safety Committee – May 2018
EA completed	EA completed on 12.12.16
Explain how customers have been involved.	Customers have been involved in the formulation of this policy by face-to-face consultation at meetings in the east, south and midlands
Consultation	Consultation has involved customers, Health & Safety team, Compliance team
Applies to	This document applies to Housing, Independent Living, Estate Services,

Scope: This policy outlines the key principles around the storage and charging of motorised scooters and other mobility aids in communal areas. It should be read in conjunction with the Mobility Aids Procedure.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Orbit understands the value that mobility aids (motorised scooters¹, wheelchairs, walking frames, walking sticks, etc.) can bring to the lives of some customers by maintaining and increasing their independence.
- 1.2 Where possible dedicated scooter storage facilities will be provided in sheltered and extra care schemes, but this is subject to the practical constraints of the individual sites. Customers are expected to store other mobility aids within their accommodation; wheelchairs, walking frames, and so on cannot be left or stored in hallways or under stairs.

¹ Based on feedback from customers we have used the word motorised scooter throughout – this encompasses motorised/mobility scooters, wheelchairs, etc.

The provision of dedicated motorised scooter storage does not apply to existing Private Retirement Leasehold schemes and customers. Scooter storage will only be considered if the leases allow for improvement works and subject to consultation with all other Leaseholders.

- 1.3 Landlords have to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people when requested. We recognise our obligation to make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage in the enjoyment of their homes, compared to those who are not disabled. However, landlords do not have to remove or alter physical features of the premises; features arising from the design or construction of the premises are to be treated as a physical feature.
- 1.4 Orbit has a duty to comply with the law relating to fire safety. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies and covers general fire precautions and fire safety duties which are required to protect people in case of a fire. The order requires that where necessary fire precautions should be put in place to the extent that is reasonable and practical.
- 1.5 One of the requirements under the Order is that fire risk assessments, focusing on the safety of occupants and visitors to the building, be carried out. Risk assessments have identified motorised scooters as a possible fire hazard when stored in escape routes within communal areas.

2. DEFINITION

- 2.1 A mobility aid is a device designed to assist walking or otherwise improve the mobility of people with mobility impairment. Mobility aids can include motorised scooters, wheelchairs, walking frames, crutches, walking sticks; items included under the term mobility aids can also include stairlifts – stairlifts are covered in Orbit's Aids and Adaptations Policy.
- 2.2 This policy refers specifically to the use and safe storage of mobility aids, but particularly motorised scooters due to the specific issues and risks relating to their storage and use.
- 2.3 Motorised scooters and powered wheelchairs come in 2 categories:
 - 'class 2 invalid carriages' - these cannot be used on the road (except where there is no pavement) and have a maximum speed of 4mph
 - 'class 3 invalid carriages' - these can be used on the road, and have a maximum speed of 4mph off the road, and 8mph on the road

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 In all Orbit properties, if a customer wishes to store and charge a motorised scooter in a communal area or designated "scooter room", then they must first apply for permission in writing, and have received written confirmation back that this permission has been granted in line with Orbit's Mobility Aids Procedure.
- 3.2 In Independent Living schemes, permission is given for the storage and charging of motorised scooters in communal areas, subject to demand, on the

assumption that the scooter will be used on a regular basis. If the scooter is not used for 28 days (unless due to hospitalisation or ill health which is not expected to continue or other factors such as adverse weather conditions) Orbit reserves the right to withdraw permission and the space be allocated to another customer who can make better use of the storage facility.

- 3.3 Where properties do not have designated scooter storage/charging areas Orbit will not house new customers with or requiring motorised scooters at that scheme, unless they are prepared and able to safely store/charge the scooter in their own property. If the needs of an existing customer change and they may need a motorised scooter then team members will support the customer to look at options, which may include considering alternative housing more suitable for their requirements.
- 3.4 No mobility aids should be stored in communal areas, including stairwells, corridors, and walkways.
- 3.5 Currently Orbit does not levy an additional charge on the owners of motorised scooters for the costs of the storage and charging facilities; Orbit reserves the right to review this and introduce a charge in the future at any time.
- 3.6 Within schemes where any motorised scooters are stored and charged in a communal space, all scooters must be serviced and maintained regularly and have an Portable Appliance Test (PAT test) as part of their service to ensure that the charging equipment is in good condition. If any equipment fails the PAT test the equipment should be removed from the communal area. It will be the scooter owner's responsibility to repair/replace the damaged item before it can be used again.
- 3.7 Insurance is not legally required for motorised scooters. However, where a customer wishes to use a motorised scooter in the grounds of or within any Orbit property they must obtain appropriate insurance cover including:
 - Public liability insurance, covering accidental damage to a third party and property
 - Some policies also cover additional losses from fire, theft and damage.

Orbit will not accept liability for any claims arising from the use of motorised scooters.

- 3.8 If there is a very strong indication that the ongoing use and/or storage of the motorised scooter in the scheme poses a serious risk to the user, other customers, staff or visitors, or to the property then Orbit reserve the right to ask that a motorised scooter is removed from the premises in less than 28 days, and possibly in as little as 24 hours.
- 3.9 Customers have the right of appeal against any decisions made in the process and procedures of safely managing the presence of motorised scooters
- 3.10 Unless written permission has been granted by Orbit no vehicle is to be stored, used or charged in any Orbit property. Written permission will be subject to the findings of a risk assessment.

4. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 4.1 Orbit policies are developed in line with our [Equality and Diversity policy](#) approach.

5. PRIVACY STATEMENT

- 5.1 Orbit are collecting information ('personal data') so that we can manage and support our relationship with our customers, comply with legal obligations, improve our services and achieve our legitimate business aims. We are committed to complying with data protection legislation when handling customers' data. Customers have rights around their data, including the right to access their data, and to object to the way it is processed. For more information on how and why we process customers' data, and how customers can exercise their rights, please see our full Privacy Policy on our website at www.orbit.org.uk/privacy-policy/

6.0 COMPLAINTS

- 6.1 Anyone is able to make a complaint about the service they have received and this is managed under our Complaints Policy.

7. MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- 7.1 The management team will oversee the consistent and fair implementation of this policy and will consult with colleagues (e.g. compliance, Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity) to ensure timely and accurate updates of the policy.

8. REVIEW

- 8.1 We will carry out a fundamental review of this policy every three years or sooner subject to legal, regulatory changes or if internal changes require.