



# Sheltered Housing at South Cambridgeshire District Council



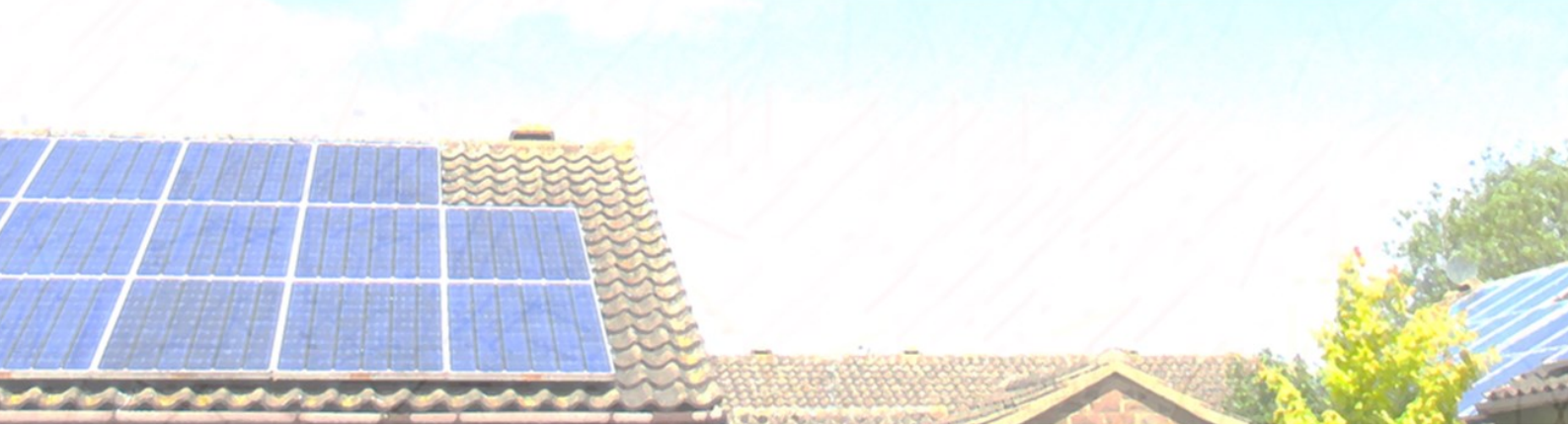
South  
Cambridgeshire  
District Council



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## Introduction

We understand that when it comes to housing and support everyone has different needs. That's why we tailor our services to meet your needs and design them to help you keep your independence through choice, involvement and control.

We believe that sheltered housing helps to remove any fears of isolation and loneliness that many people experience as they become older.

Each scheme is made up of bungalows or flats which have their own front door. A Sheltered Estate Officer is on duty from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday to manage the schemes and to provide sign posting for extra support residents

may need. Your Sheltered Estate Officer also covers other schemes and will spend some of the working week at the other locations.

For those of you whom have opted to have an emergency helpline service for those times when you need help. The alarm is linked to the 24-hour response service. (*we do recommend that you have a lifeline alarm*).

Most schemes have a communal lounge and kitchen where we encourage residents to meet and socialize with each other. Some also have a garden or patio area for you to enjoy, also laundry facilities.

## A place for your notes

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# Housing & the Care Act (2014)

The right home environment is important for everyone's general health and wellbeing. The Care Act 2014 says local authorities must promote wellbeing and suitable accommodation is a key part of that. SCDC Council's care and support and housing services will work with other local housing and health care providers and do everything within its power to provide suitable accommodation, particularly for older and vulnerable SCDC residents.

## Rent & service charges

The weekly amount you pay for your bungalow/flat is made up of a number of different charges:

- **Rent**  
this covers the cost of your bungalow/flat
- **Service charges**  
this covers the cost of the shared services in your scheme (*for example staffing costs, lifts, door-entry systems, shared lighting, heating, communal facilities which includes laundry and grounds maintenance*).

### Our vision for sheltered housing

To provide a safe place for older residents to live and to support communities to thrive.

- **Monitoring Centre**  
this covers the cost of operating the 24 hour alarm service response in the communal building.

The following services are not included in the weekly amount you pay, and you will be charged separately for them.

- Electricity usage in your home
- Phone charges
- Council tax
- TV licence (*if you need one*)



# Home contents insurance

We strongly advise you to arrange enough insurance cover for the contents of your home such as furniture, carpets, clothing, cooker, fridge, TV, decorations, and include any outbuilding. The Council cannot be held responsible for any uninsured loss where we are not shown to have been negligent. You should also ensure that, as occupier of the premises, you have adequate insurance to meet claims against you by other people.

**We strongly recommend that you take out a contents insurance, please ask your estate officer for further details.**

## Key safes

All of our sheltered housing properties have Key safes in place.

The key safes are to store your front door key in. We will only use the key safe to access your bungalow / flat in an emergency or when you have clearly agreed this. Some examples of when we may use the key safe include:

- If you have used your alarm to ask for help but you cannot get to the door to let the Emergency services in
- If you have used your alarm but the monitoring centre cannot get a reply
- If you don't respond to any of the statutory services who have visited your home and/ or your neighbour's haven't seen you
- If you are away and we need to get into your flat to carry out an emergency repair for example if there was a flood or a gas leak.





## Keys, locks and door chains

When you move in we will give you keys to your bungalow/flat. If you have a door chain, please only use this when answering the door. A chain at other times may delay access in an emergency. If you add a chain or a new lock to your front door and the door is damaged when getting access during an emergency, you may have to pay for the repair.

## Your security

If you are concerned about your security, please speak to your Sheltered Estate Officer. Please keep your front door locked at all times (*but not with a chain*) and do not feel that you need to leave the door open for the Sheltered Estate Officer as they will use your key from the key box on the wall outside your front door; please don't put yourself at risk.

**Remember to take your key out of the door once you have locked it, as leaving the key in the door will restrict access in an emergency.**

## Door entry systems

We only have a door entry system at one of our sheltered housing schemes which is at Elm Court in Over. Your Sheltered Estate Officer will show you how the system works and how to report any faults.

You should use the system correctly to make sure the scheme is safe and secure. Please make sure you do the following:

- Close the door properly behind you
- Ask for identification from visitors
- Avoid letting people into the scheme if you don't know them
- Never wedge the door or leave it open.



## Pets

You will need to get our written permission prior to getting a cat, a dog or any other small animal. We have a pets policy and a leaflet on responsible pet ownership, which you can view on our website or by asking a member of staff.

Please take time to read the policy and leaflet as it explains the conditions you are expected to adhere to if you add a pet to your household.



## Rubbish

Most properties have individual bins and some schemes have designated bin areas. If you have larger items to dispose of please speak to your Sheltered Estate Officer. Elm Court has a rubbish chute system in place.

## Visitors

We are happy for people to visit you at any time but you are responsible for making sure that your visitor's behaviour does not cause a nuisance to others in the community.

If your visitors behave in an unacceptable way, we will have to ask them to leave.



## Fire precautions

Every bungalow / flat has a smoke detector which is usually located in the hallway.

If the detector is set off, the alarm will sound in your flat. If you have elected to have a 'Lifeline' this will then call through to the 24 hour monitoring centre. The monitoring centre will check with you whether there is a fire in your flat or if it is a false alarm. If

there is a fire, the Fire Service will be called.

If the fire is in your flat / bungalow, you should leave immediately by the nearest exit. If it is a false alarm, and you have confirmed this, the call will be closed. If there is any doubt the Fire Service will come to your home.

**Please do not leave any articles/ items in the walkways of flats.**

## Other safety matters

To keep everyone safe, please do not leave wheelchairs, walking frames and walking sticks or bags of rubbish outside your front door.

As these items can be a trip hazard to emergency services entering your property.

### ELM COURT ONLY

There are also smoke detectors in the communal building/areas which are linked to the main fire-alarm system. If any of these detectors are set off, the fire alarm will also sound in your flat; the 24-hour central control service will contact the Fire Service.

If you hear the fire alarm and the fire is not in your flat, you should stay in your flat and wait for instructions from the Fire Service or a Council officer.



## Shared facilities

Many of our schemes have facilities that are available for all sheltered housing residents to use.

- Most of our schemes have a communal building. The lounge is for residents to use but people who live in the surrounding area can join in any activities if they have been invited.
- The lounge is used for regular activities such as coffee mornings or bingo, as well as a place for you to meet other residents.
- In some schemes you may be able to use the lounge for a private party. Please speak to the

Sheltered Estate Officer if you would like to arrange this. They will let you know whether the lounge is available.

- We do hire out communal buildings for outside users; there is a communal booking hire guidelines booklet on all schemes.
- The revenue that is taken from a hire charge is paid into the Council and will then be offset against your service charges.

**Please see the communal room booking booklet for information on when charges apply.**

## Mobility scooters

Mobility scooters can pose a fire hazard, so please do not keep these in your flat or in any part of the building. We will provide mobility scooter shelters to each scheme where feasible.

## Social events

Sheltered Estate Officers can assist with arranging activities for residents at your scheme; for example these could be general events, parties or trips.

## TV Licence

To check if you need to pay for a TV licence, please visit [www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk) or speak to your Sheltered Estate Officer for more information.

## Laundry facilities



Most schemes have a laundry room with washing machines and tumble dryers. These are for resident use only and are covered by the service charge. You will need to provide your own washing powder and fabric conditioner

and you are not permitted to do any washing in the laundry room for family members (*as the cost of this service is paid for by tenants as part of their service charges/rent*).

## Guest rooms

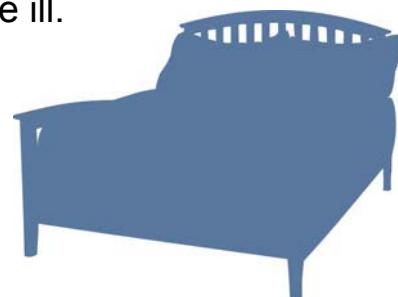
We have three schemes that offer a guest room, which you are welcome to book in advance through your Sheltered Estate Officer.

There are twin guest rooms located at the following villages:

- Stapleford
- Great Shelford
- Whittlesford

You will need to supply your guest with towels and please ensure all items that are either yours or your guest's are removed from the guest room at the end of their stay.

We will give priority to people who need to stay to look after residents who are ill.





# Handyperson scheme

## Do you need somebody to do those little jobs around your home?

In partnership with our repairs contractor, we are pleased to be able to offer a handyperson service to all out tenants and leaseholders.

For a small charge, the handyperson can visit and carry out small jobs such as:

### > Minor joinery

*Such as putting up curtain poles, trimming doors and fitting handrails.*

### > Minor gardening jobs

*Such as grass cutting, hedge trimming, weeding and digging over beds.*

### > Security jobs

*Such as fitting locks and bolts to garden sheds and fitting door chains.*

### > Minor plumbing jobs

*Such as unblocking sinks and connecting washing machines and dishwashers.*

### > Minor electrical work

*Replacing light bulbs etc.*

### > DIY Support

*Including moving furniture, assembling flat pack furniture, putting up shelves and small decorating jobs.*



For more information, pricing or to schedule an appointment please call **0800 085 1313**.



## Your Sheltered Estate Officer

Your Sheltered Estate Officer is usually on duty from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (*excluding Bank Holidays*). Their telephone number and e-mail address are on the inside cover of this handbook.

They will make sure that you have access to services and facilities that help you to maintain your independence. They are on hand to give you advice and information about the care you receive and help you to get as much support as you need.

They are responsible for your scheme and will also be responsible for:

- Housing management; such as changes to tenancies, management of nuisance or breaches of tenancy.
- Managing the cleaner for communal areas
- Carrying out property viewings and tenancy sign ups with prospective new tenants
- Estate inspections (*including ensuring communal repairs are carried out*)
- Reporting and following up on any repairs needed in your home (***if you are unable to do this or if you encounter any delays***)
- Test your Lifeline alarm monthly, or if you have elected not to have a Lifeline they will call three monthly to test your smoke alarm. You can elect to self test, however it is preferred if this is done by a member of staff
- If you self-test your smoke alarm or Lifeline, your estate officer will visit you every six months to ensure the details we have for you are up to date, such as phone numbers, next of kin information etc.
- Working closely with the visiting support team, who support residents with more complex needs.
- If you are ill and unable to contact your doctor they will do it on your behalf (*and your family if they have your permission to do so*) and will help to make the best arrangements for your care.
- They will help you to contact Social Services, health services



and other organisations that can help you. If you want to talk, they are there to listen. They will always respect your privacy and your right to confidentiality.

- If you need your home to be adapted, your Sheltered Estate Officer can help by contacting Social Services.

- They will give you advice about the 24-hour helpline and other telecare services.
- Tenancy advice and information  
On things such as your rent account, tenancy matters and moving home.

Each Sheltered Estate Officer is responsible for around four sheltered schemes, which unfortunately means that it is not possible for them to be at your scheme all day, every day. However, they will be on site at your scheme at an allocated time, details of which are listed on each scheme notice board.



## What Sheltered Estate Officers don't do

Although your Sheltered Estate Officer will do a lot of things for you, there are some things they unfortunately cannot do.

Sheltered Estate Officers are not nurses, so they are not allowed to change dressings or give you any kind of medication. Instead they can make arrangements with your doctor or the health authority; for example arranging for the district nurse to visit you regularly.

Cooking and shopping are also not part of your Sheltered Estate

Officer's normal duties. However, if you urgently need a prescription or cannot do your own shopping for a short while because you are ill, they will try to arrange for someone to give you the help you need, whether this is a neighbour, family member or the home care service.

### **Financial matters**

Sheltered Estate Officers don't handle your money or deal with your finances. They are able to support you with minor financial advice and can sign post you to specialist financial services should you need it.

## Holidays

Please let your Sheltered Estate Officer know when you are going away and when you return, so that if your Lifeline activates linked to the fire alarm they will know that you are away.



## Personal information

It is very important that we have up to date contact details of your next of kin, which we will use in case of an emergency or if you need us to contact them. Please make sure you tell your Sheltered Estate Officer if any of these details change.

Your Sheltered Estate Officer may keep other records about your tenancy, for example copies of benefit forms or important medical information.

## 24-hour alarm system

We provide an around the clock helpline alarm call service for all sheltered residents that have opted to have a Lifeline fitted in their home. When the alarm is set off, a call will be made to the monitoring centre.

The alarm is very simple to use, you simply speak normally through the speech unit in the lifeline unit. You should wait for a couple of seconds after the person has finished talking to you before you reply, this is just to ensure the person can hear you fully.

### Your pendant / bracelet alarm

We would encourage you to wear your pendant or bracelet at all times during the day and make sure that you keep your pendant within reach (*e.g. next to your bed*) at night, in case you need help in an emergency or have a fall.

If there is an emergency or any problems, you can simply push your pendant or bracelet. The control centre will respond to your call and will ask someone to attend if necessary. There is a lifeline in all of the communal areas.

**If you would like a Lifeline, or would like to know more information about them and pricing, please speak with your Sheltered Estate Officer.**



## Cleaning service for communal areas

A Cleaner is employed at every sheltered scheme to keep the communal areas clean.

### Your cleaner will:

- Clean communal toilets and replace items.
- Clean the communal kitchen.
- Empty all bins and replace bin liners
- Clean communal lounge (tables, floors)
- Clean all communal areas (corridors, and entrances)
- Clean guest room and facilities
- Clean the lift compartment if you have one at your scheme.
- Clean laundry room.

### Your cleaner will also report:

- Health and safety issues
- Communal repairs
- Lighting defects



## Notice boards

You are welcome to use the notice boards that are designated for residents, although we would like to approve notices first. This is just to ensure that notices are valid and would not cause offence or any misunderstanding.

**Please contact your Sheltered Estate Officer if you'd like to put something onto the notice board.**

## Car parking

There is no designated parking on any of our schemes. We do have disabled parking spaces but again these are not designated. We ask that residents park in the bays provided or in a safe position on the road.

**Please do not park on grassed areas.**

## Social activities

There are regular residents forums to discuss any issues that you may have about the scheme and we encourage you to come and take part.

You can also suggest social activities that may interest the group.

We can help you to arrange social activities and cater for a wide range of interests. Some events and trips are run jointly with our other sheltered housing schemes.

If you have any ideas or want to help with any activities please speak to your Sheltered Estate Officer.

Our Sheltered Estate Officers book the communal lounge for an event and the staff will update the scheme calendar in order to avoid double booking.

## Getting involved

We are committed to involving and empowering our residents in shaping our housing service.

As part of our vision we have a range of opportunities for our residents to get involved and are continually looking at new & innovative ways for engagement.

We believe that our residents should be at the heart of everything we do and we want you to be able to tell us what you think about our services and suggest how we can improve them.

We appreciate that everyone is different and therefore would want you to be involved at a level that suits you and gives you as many ways as possible to have your say. There are many ways in which you can get involved, ranging from attending meetings to providing feedback on things via e-mail.



When we make changes to our services we try and work with you as best we can; we may do this through discussion at scheme coffee mornings, groups, forums or TPG meetings, Leaseholder forums and the Sheltered Housing forums.

A number of our estates also have community housing or action groups which meet to talk about local issues on the estate.

If you're interested in finding out more about getting involved, our Resident Involvement team would love to hear from you.

You can get in touch with them by calling 03450 450 051 or e-mailing [resident.involvement@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:resident.involvement@scambs.gov.uk).



# Sheltered Housing and Leasehold Forum

We hold these forums with senior staff from Housing Services every three months. The Leaseholder Forum takes place at South Cambs Hall and the Sheltered Forum is held at one of the sheltered schemes across the district.

The aim of the meeting is to get your feedback on our services and also any

changes that may affect our service to you.

If you are interested in being a member of this forum in the future, please speak to our resident involvement team or your estate officer.





# Safeguarding

We have a duty of care to safeguard you from abuse which includes:

## **Physical abuse**

*This may include hitting, pushing, kicking, shaking and misusing medication.*

## **Sexual abuse**

*Any sexual activity that a person does not understand or want.*

## **Psychological abuse**

*This includes threats of harm or abandonment, emotional or verbal abuse, humiliation and intimidation.*

## **Financial abuse**

*This may include theft, fraud, denying a person access to their money or belongings or putting pressure on someone in connection with their inheritance or will.*

## **Neglect**

*This includes failing to provide health-care and social-care services or food, or ignoring someone's needs for medical or physical care.*

## **Discrimination**

*This includes any harassment associated with, for example, a person's race, sexuality, disability, gender.*

## **What you should do**

If you, or someone you know, is a victim of any form of abuse it is important that you tell someone.

You can report abuse confidentially:

By phone on 0345 045 5202  
(*Cambridgeshire Council Council, 8am to 6pm weekdays, 9am to 1pm Saturday*) or on 01733 234 724 out of hours in an emergency.

By speaking to your Sheltered Estate Officer.

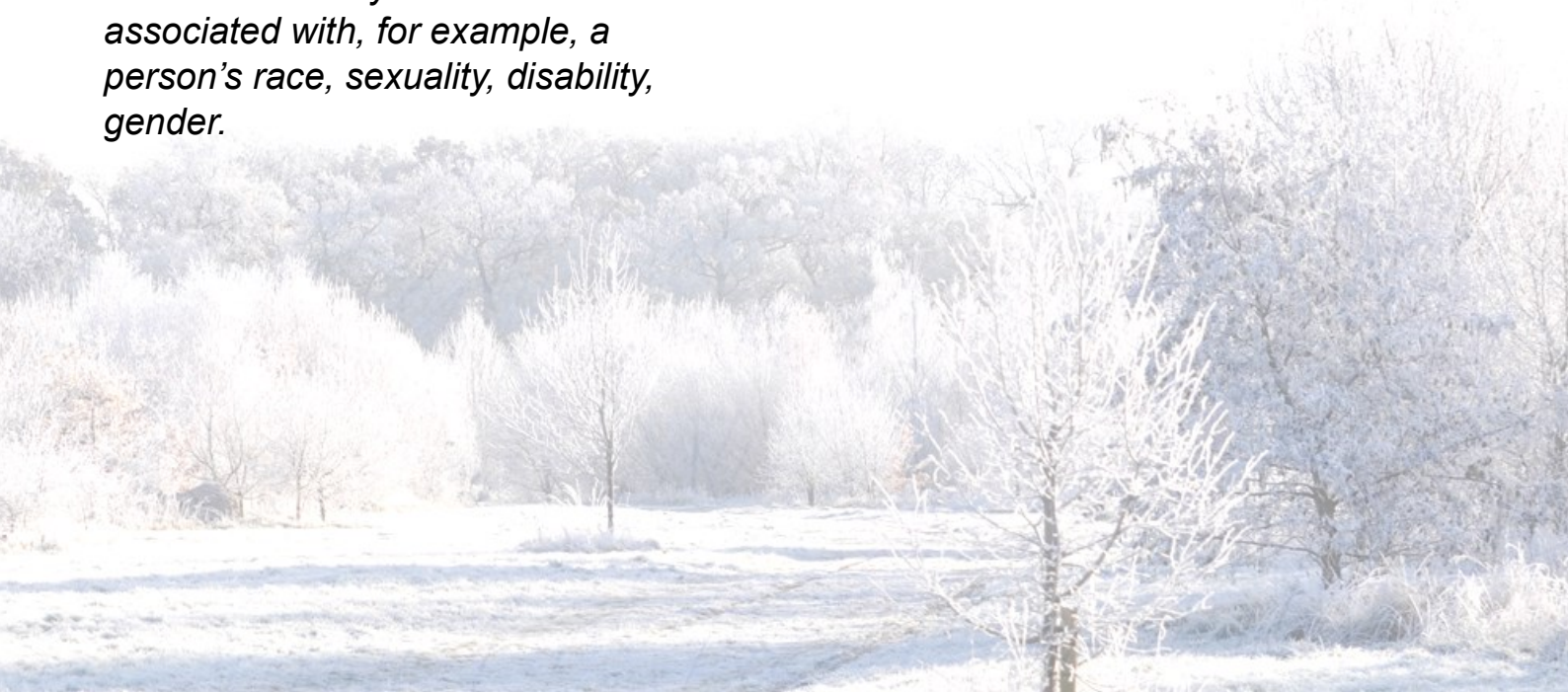
You can also call any of the following organisations:

The Police by phone on 101 or 999 in an emergency

Age Concern by phone on 0300 666 9860.

These agencies will work with you and other people to make sure that you are safe.

If you want a copy of our policy on vulnerable adults, please let your Sheltered Estate Officer know.







## Leasehold / Equity Share

The equity share scheme is for the 60 plus age group, who are homeowners or have sufficient capital to purchase a share in a sheltered bungalow or flat.

### What are the benefits of this scheme?

- Enables you to move closer to family
- Friendship and companionship of similar people
- Possible release of some equity, from the sale of your current property
- Security and peace of mind with the optional alarm service

### What are the responsibilities?

As an owner-occupier you are responsible for all the internal repairs, maintenance and decoration of your home. The Council is responsible for the external maintenance, with the costs recoupable via a quarterly service charge.

### How does the Equity Share Scheme work?

The Council sells the property to you at

75%\* of the current market value (*exceptions to the rule are Kay Hitch Way, Histon - offered at a 99% share and Coxs Close, Stapleford - offered at a 70% share*).

If you wish to sell your equity share property at a later date, you must assign the lease to a qualifying person. The Council will have 28 days to nominate a purchaser from its housing register for you to assign the lease to.

If the Council is unable to nominate someone, then you must find and nominate your own suitable purchaser to the Council. An assignment of lease operates in much the same way as an open market house purchase with you and the proposed purchaser instructing your own solicitors to act for you in this transaction. The Council will have no involvement in the process other than to either nominate or approve a purchaser and to answer solicitors' sales enquires.

The variable service charge, ground rent and insurance will need to be apportioned between the two parties on the date of completion.

Full details of the assignment process will be found in your lease.

### **What are the costs?**

- A £250\* non-returnable reservation fee is required before purchasing the property
- There is a variable service charge, covering the cost of the Sheltered Estate Officer services, communal facilities, alarm (*paid for separately*), external repairs and support charge (*where applicable*) full details can be found in your lease
- Ground rent (*currently £26\* per annum*)
- Buildings insurance
- Residents of the Elm Court building are also subject to a water charge and a heating charge

There will be other outgoings such as utility bills (*electricity, water etc.*), home contents insurance, council tax, etc.

### **How can I apply?**

You need to register on to the South Cambridgeshire District Council housing register. An application pack can be obtained by phoning 03450 450 051 or you can apply online at [www.home-link.org.uk](http://www.home-link.org.uk).

Once registered, you will be able to

express an interest in properties via the Council's Home-Link, Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

Alternatively, South Cambridgeshire District Council properties are sometimes advertised with local estate agents in the case of lease assignments. The Council also market some properties through a local estate agent (Currently Pocock and Shaw on 01223 322552).

### **What Happens Next?**

Once you have registered on the Housing Register you will receive information on how to apply for a property. If you are successful in being offered a property, the housing officer will contact you to organise a viewing. If you wish to accept, you will be contacted by a member of the Leasehold Services team to commence the Equity Share Process. This will be an opportunity to discuss any further information you may require regarding the Equity Share process.

### **Important Information**

All of your rights and obligations are set out in the lease that will be issued to you. Please ensure you read through the lease with your solicitor and seek their advice before you sign it. Once signed the lease is a legally binding contract.

The Council reserves the right to withdraw an offer of an equity share property if your current property has not sold within a reasonable amount of time.

\*prices correct as at January 2019





## being a sheltered housing officer: behind the scenes

Each Sheltered Housing Officer is on a rota to allocate their time to be on their schemes. Some of the tasks they might carry out include the following:







## Confidentiality

We will only share information with other agencies with your consent, or if:

- The information is required for the protection of children.
- We are required by law to share the information.
- There are legal reasons to protect a person without capacity.

You have the right to see your file at any time.

## Useful contacts

### Repairs

0800 085 1313

### Gas & Air Source Heating Repairs

0333 207 0766

### Rents

03450 455 216

### Social Services

0345 045 50202

### Blue Badge

0345 045 5204

### Faulty Street Lights & Pot Holes

0800 7838 247

### Sensory Services *(hearing assistive tech)*

0345 666 9860

### Age UK

0300 666 9860





South Cambridgeshire District Council  
South Cambridgeshire Hall  
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South  
Cambridgeshire  
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[www.scams.gov.uk](http://www.scams.gov.uk) | 03450 450 501