

Mobility Scooter Policy

MOBILITY SCOOTER POLICY	
Purpose	To make clear the conditions under which mobility scooters can be used and stored in our sheltered housing schemes and how responsible use and storage of scooters will be promoted and maintained.
Applies to	All residents and operational staff.
Date first implemented	September 2024
Author	Housing Manager
Date first approved by Leadership Team	June 2024
Date first approved by Board of Trustees	September 2024
Review Frequency	Every 3 Years or earlier if circumstances change/incident occurs
Service Area	Operations
Document Status: This is a controlled document. Any printed copies of this document are not controlled. As a controlled document, this document should not be saved onto local drives but always accessed from the Policy Library.	

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS (made prior to full policy revision)		
Amendment Date	Nature of Amendment	Revised by
March 2025	Policy moved to new template and Housing Manager replaced with Head of Operations.	Transformation Manager

VERSION HISTORY			
Revision Date	Version No.	Revised by	Approved by

CURRENT POLICY REVISION	
Date revised	June 2024
Revised by	Housing Manager
LT approval date	June 2024
Board of Trustees Approval date	September 2024
Next revision due	September 2027

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Harrison Housing recognises that being able to have the use and ownership of a mobility scooter gives both disabled and older people physical and mental health benefits through:

- Mobility – scooters allow users to enjoy increased outside activity.
- Independence – having the use of a scooter keeps users active and enables them to maintain their independence.
- Social inclusion – using a mobility scooter can reduce isolation and improve quality of life.
- Access – allows users to access services in the wider community, which they may have otherwise been excluded from using.

1.2 As well as the benefits, using a mobility scooter also brings responsibilities. For this reason, the policy only allows residents to use and store scooters subject to certain conditions.

1.3 Our schemes were built before mobility scooters were widely available and, therefore, were not designed to accommodate them in terms of physical layout, fire safety and storage capacity.

1.4 In particular, mobility scooters present a risk to the fire safety of our buildings for the following reasons:

- Obstruction to fire escape routes.
- Increased fire load especially if stored in or near escape routes.
- Ignition hazard especially if charged overnight, or if batteries can overheat.
- Smoke inhalation hazard in confined spaces including escape routes.

1.5 **Before a resident purchases a mobility scooter**, they must obtain permission from the Head of Operations. This is to ensure that there is adequate safe storage space available before bringing a scooter onto the scheme. This also applies if an existing permitted scooter is to be replaced.

2. Policy Principles

2.1 To make clear the conditions under which mobility scooters can be used and stored in our sheltered housing schemes and how responsible use and storage of scooters will be promoted and maintained.

2.2 To ensure that residents' individual needs are met by accommodating mobility scooters where possible.

- 2.3 To ensure that the conditions residents must meet when keeping a mobility scooter in Harrison Housing schemes are understood by staff and are clearly communicated to prospective, new and existing residents.
- 2.4 To ensure that all decisions made to give or withdraw consent to use and store mobility scooters are made fairly and with a balanced assessment of availability of safe storage space and the mobility needs of the resident.
- 2.5 To require residents to purchase adequate mobility scooter insurance and to maintain and have their scooter serviced annually.
- 2.6 To require residents to allow annual PAT (portable appliance test) testing of their mobility scooter, arranged by Harrison Housing, and to ensure residents understand that a failed PAT test will result in permission to store a scooter being suspended until the matter is rectified, or in the last resort that permission is revoked.
- 2.7 To ensure that residents are recharged in the event of damage to the scheme buildings or grounds.

3. Permission to Keep a Mobility Scooter

- 3.1 Residents must apply for formal permission to store a mobility scooter **before** they purchase one. To apply, contact your Scheme Manager by phone, in person, via e-mail or in writing.
- 3.2 Prospective residents who already have a mobility scooter will not automatically be given permission to keep it if they move into one of Harrison Housing's schemes.
- 3.3 Scooters may not be stored or charged in the internal communal areas at any time, unless this is a designated mobility scooter storage area.
- 3.4 Where written permission to keep a mobility scooter is granted, the resident must agree and comply with all conditions placed upon the storage and usage of the vehicle. Harrison Housing reserves the right to withdraw permission at any time should the conditions of the permission be broken.

4. Purchasing a Mobility Scooter

- 4.1 Any resident considering buying a new or second-hand mobility scooter from a commercial retailer will generally be advised on the type of machine, the suitability of the machine and will be instructed on all safety aspects of using a mobility scooter by the supplier. A test-run usually concludes the introduction to the machine, and all of this should be included in the purchase price.

- 4.2 Residents are strongly discouraged from purchasing a second-hand scooter, unless this is done through a recognised dealer. Harrison Housing will not give permission for the storage of a scooter bought, for example, through a newspaper, or online advertisement by a private seller as there is no guarantee as to the condition of the equipment.
- 4.3 Harrison Housing highly recommends that residents visit an organisation where mobility scooters can be hired and training given to gain experience, before they purchase a mobility scooter. Shop Mobility based in Westfield is a service that can provide these opportunities.
- 4.4 Permission for a mobility scooter will be limited to **one per resident**.

5. Storing a Mobility Scooter

- 5.1 Scooters must not be stored in the communal areas of Harrison Housing properties; under no circumstances are they permitted to be stored under stairwells or blocking fire exits at any time, even temporarily.
- 5.2 Where a designated mobility scooter storage area is available, either within a one-hour fire rated room in the building, or in an external storage area, this will be allocated by the Scheme Manager in accordance with the terms set out in this policy for servicing, charging, insurance and PAT testing. Scheme specific information can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 5.3 Allocation of a space for a mobility scooter will take place on a first-come first-served basis and a waiting list will be held once all spaces are allocated.
- 5.4 Discretion will be used to prioritise a request if it is made on medical grounds with an Occupational Therapist recommendation; it will be the responsibility of the resident to provide sufficient evidence to support their request for a space.
- 5.5 Mobility scooters will be required to be used on a regular basis. If this is found not to be the case, then the scooter will be required to be moved.

6. Charging a Mobility Scooter

- 6.1 Charging must be undertaken in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The average time for a scooter to recharge is approximately 4 hours but, depending on the model, may take longer.
- 6.2 Charging of batteries should be carried out during the day when staff are on site wherever possible.

- 6.3 Vehicles should not be left on permanent charge or overnight.
- 6.4 Harrison Housing will not, at this moment, charge owners for the electricity used to charge their mobility scooters when stored in the designated areas but maintain the right to do so in the future.
- 6.5 All vehicles charged within the designated area will require an annual PAT test to ensure that the charging equipment is in a fit state to be used. This will be arranged by Harrison Housing when undertaking the annual test of all other equipment within the schemes.
- 6.6 Should the charger fail the PAT test, it will be the responsibility of the owner to repair/replace the damaged item before it can be used again.

7. Insurance

- 7.1 Permission to keep a mobility scooter will be subject to the requirement that the resident has appropriate insurance in place. This should include liability insurance in case of either damage to the building, or injury involving other people who may be living at or visiting the building. Contents insurance is not sufficient for this purpose.
- 7.2 Any damage to Harrison Housing's property caused by a mobility scooter will be recovered through the owner's insurance company.
- 7.3 A copy of the current insurance certificate must be provided to the Scheme Manager and subsequently a yearly renewal certificate should be provided.
- 7.4 Failure to comply with the above conditions will result in a breach of the agreement and you will be asked to remove the mobility scooter from the premises permanently.

8. Monitoring and Review

- 8.1 The Head of Operations will prepare an annual report to the Trustees which will outline performance in terms of:
- Number of scooters within the scheme.
 - Number of scooter related complaints received by the services
 - Common scooter management issues recorded, including details of how they were handled and the outcome of any action taken.

9. Implementation

- 9.1 Relevant staff will be made aware of this policy through Harrison Housing's internal communication channels, including email.

- 9.2 Changes to this policy and its associated procedure, if applicable, will be communicated to relevant staff.
- 9.3 Relevant staff will be required to read this policy, and to confirm that they have read and understood it.
- 9.4 This policy will be published to residents through our website.

10. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- 10.1 For Harrison Housing, diversity is about respecting people's individual differences and ensuring that all people that come into contact with us have access to the same high standards of behaviour and service.
- 10.2 We are committed to ensuring that no resident or team member will be treated less favourably because of their protected characteristics.

Appendix 1 – Scheme Specific Information

Harrison Housing Scheme's	Current Policy
Christian Union	No scooters can be accommodated at this time. Limited access at entrance and no space at front of building to store or charge a scooter. Courtyard areas too small to accommodate scooter with sufficient distance from dwellings. Not a listed building.
Greenwoods (Rousden Street)	Potential for scooter storage in yard at rear subject to full assessment. Could be done in rear right corner where existing outhouse stands. Access would be through the building.
Howis Trust (Shakespeare Road)	Potential for scooter storage at back of rear garden subject to full assessment, with access via side gate.
Minford Gardens	No scooters can be accommodated at this time. No suitable space at rear, no space at front. We will review the provision in 2025.
St James's Gardens	Currently scooters can be stored outside the building in the communal garden area with a suitable cover. Scooters must remain at least 5m away from the main building at all times.
Tonge House (Portal)	Large garden area including external garage which might be suitable. However, terrain is an issue. Steps must be used to access all parts of the main building. Currently no scooter provision.
Whicker & Kifford (Stanley Close)	Potential for scooter storage at back of rear garden subject to full assessment, with access via side gate.