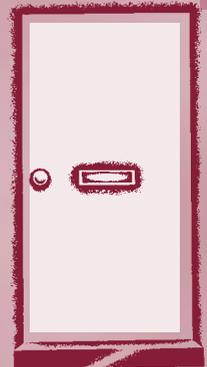




Services for older people

HOUSING SERVICE



A guide to services for older people living in council properties

Sheltered housing

Many properties let by Epping Forest District Council incorporate special features to make them suitable for older people. Some are simply ground floor flats or bungalows that have no stairs. Others are fitted with an emergency alarm system. Older tenants may be visited by 'Scheme Managers'.

All the properties we provide for older people are either flats or bungalows. They offer convenience, safety and security. They are not 'care homes' and they do not provide clinical care.



Most pets are not allowed in sheltered housing schemes as they may disturb other tenants. Smoking and vaping is not permitted in the communal areas by tenants or their visitors. Rents are similar to normal Council rents but a Support Charge is included which is mainly for the Scheme Manager and Alarm Service. Applicants may be entitled to housing benefits if they cannot afford the rental charges. Advice is available from the Council's Benefits Team.

The role of the Scheme Manager

Scheme Managers are employed by the Council to help people in sheltered housing to live as independently as possible. When you move in, your Scheme Manager will complete a support plan with you to identify any support needs. They are on site every working day in sheltered housing schemes. Area Scheme Managers visit tenants living in other properties designated for older people on housing estates.

Scheme Managers are not nurses or home carers. Their job is to keep a “friendly eye” on the well-being of their tenants and support them to live independently. Tenants can turn to the Scheme Manager for help and advice, particularly when dealing with organisations like Social Care or the Council. They keep information about doctors and relatives, and work with our alarm monitoring provider to get help quickly in an emergency. For more information, please see the later section about our alarm monitoring service.

The personal independence of tenants is a top priority. Scheme Managers encourage community spirit and give assistance with social events, particularly where communal facilities such as lounges are available. Activities could include bingo, coffee mornings, parties, jumble sales and bazaars. Social gatherings may include older people living locally, as well as tenants of sheltered schemes. Tenants always decide for themselves whether to take part.

Find a home that suits your needs

If you are a tenant of retirement age you could be finding the upkeep of your property a burden - especially if it is large or has a garden. You may also be looking for somewhere a little more secure. If you would like to apply for sheltered housing, contact the Housing Options Section at the Civic Offices on 01992 564000.

Our Re-housing Support Officer will provide support and practical help where necessary to older tenants wishing to move to any

smaller Council property. If you would like a visit from our Re-housing Support Officer to discuss the potential benefits of downsizing please telephone Older Peoples Services on 01992 564 000 ext. 2804.

24 hour emergency alarm service

Our alarm service may help older or disabled people who do not want to give up the freedom and independence of their own home. Most Council properties reserved for older people have an emergency alarm installed.

A two way speech unit in the person's home is connected to Tunstall Response our emergency Alarm Monitoring Centre, which is based in Doncaster and staffed 24 hours a day. In case of emergencies the centre holds user information about doctors, relatives and medical conditions.

In an emergency, the user alerts the Monitoring Centre by pressing the button of a pendant worn around the neck, or by pulling a cord suspended from the ceiling. The operator will then try to speak with the person to find out what the problem is. The speech system can pick up a voice from anywhere in the home.

Even if the user is unable to speak, the operator can contact the emergency services or Scheme Manager, and get help once the alarm has been raised.

If you do not live in sheltered accommodation you could still have an emergency alarm. For an annual rental fee, the service can be installed in any property via a telephone line or sim card. In some cases part of the cost of the alarm system is met by Essex County Council Social Care. Various telecare sensors, such as smoke or flood detectors, can be linked into the system.

If you think an emergency alarm might be of benefit to you, and would like further information, please phone the enquiry line on: 020 8532 1065 (24-hour answer phone), or write to Older Peoples Services, 2 Parsonage Court, Loughton, Essex IG10 2BB. Alternatively you can email Careline@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Adaptations

Whenever possible, the Council will do its best to make your home more suitable if you suffer from a disability. Please refer to the section on adaptations in the Tenants Handbook leaflet, 'Repairs and improvements to your home'. You can contact Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) for information about home improvement services if you live in privately owned accommodation (see back cover for contact details).



Internal Decorations Service

If you are a council tenant, and you need help with decorating, you may be able to get help through Epping Forest District Council's internal decorations service.

Normally all internal decorating is the responsibility of council tenants, but we will decorate one room free of charge for certain people.

To apply for this service you must meet all these conditions:

- The Council has not carried out any internal redecoration in your property in the past five years.
- All the tenants in your property are senior citizens and/or they receive benefits because they have disabilities.
- You have a clear rent account
- Your property has no more than two bedrooms.

You can choose the room you want to have decorated, and the colour of the paint. If you would like wallpaper we have a range for you to choose from.

If you meet all our qualifying conditions, just fill in the application form, cut it out and return it to the address at the top of the form. When we receive your completed form we will let you know if your request has been accepted or refused within 5 working days.

If we accept your application, we will put your name on our waiting list. The work is done on a 'first come - first served' basis. You can expect us to carry out the work within 3 to 4 months after your application is approved. We can only decorate a room for you once every 5 years.

We may be able to decorate a room for you even if you do not meet all the above conditions, but you will have to pay the full cost for the work. If you are interested in this service please ask us for an estimate.

Please telephone 01992 564203 if you want any more information on the Council's internal decorations service.

Handyperson Scheme

Council tenants are expected to deal with certain repairs and DIY tasks. But not all tenants are capable of replacing a curtain rail or putting up shelving.

If you live in one of our sheltered housing schemes, a dedicated member of our Housing Repairs Service can help you. The handyperson spends half a day each week at each scheme, on a rota basis. You can get assistance with all sorts of small repairs and odd jobs that would normally be your responsibility such as changing a light bulb, fixing a leaking tap or replacing a broken toilet seat.

The service is provided free, or at a low cost, depending on the work you require.

You do not have to live in our sheltered housing to use the Handyperson Scheme, because there is a separate service for other council tenants. It is managed on our behalf by Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF).

For more information on the Handyperson Scheme telephone Housing Repairs Service on 01992 564199 or email: housingrepairs@eppingforestdc.gov.uk. Residents in privately owned accommodation should contact Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) for information about home improvement services (see back cover for details).

Concessionary television licences

If you live in sheltered accommodation and are under 75 years of age you may be entitled to a Concessionary TV Licence which is available at a reduced price. The scheme is run by the National TV Licence Records Office in Bristol. They make the rules and decide who is entitled. The Council administers the scheme on a local basis but has no influence over the rules.

If you are moving into a new home where you will have the concession for the first time, you must discuss this with your Scheme Manager immediately.

A Scheme Manager will visit each year to collect the payment and issue a receipt.

For further information, please write to the Housing Resources Section, Epping Forest District Council, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, Essex CM16 4BZ, or phone 01992 564000 and ask for the Housing Incomes Team.



Central heating welfare scheme

The Council operates a scheme to replace central heating systems in homes where a member of the family suffers from ill health or a disability that could be improved by installing a different system.

Limited money is available for this scheme and help is only given to those in most need who also have a doctors letter of recommendation. For more information phone 01992 564052 and ask for the Housing Officer (Adaptations) in the Housing Assets Section.

Befriending schemes

Voluntary Action Epping Forest runs befriending schemes for older people, using the Council's facilities at sheltered housing schemes.

The clubs provide friendship and company for older people who do not live in sheltered housing schemes. They are usually held one day each week.



Activities include bingo, coffee mornings, parties, daytrips and games.

There are befriending scheme clubs at various sheltered housing schemes throughout the district. For more information about joining, please contact Voluntary Action Epping Forest on 01992 564518 or email admin@vaef.org.uk

Concessionary fares

If you are of retirement age, or you are an eligible disabled person, you are entitled to an English National Concessionary Bus Pass.

Buses in Essex can be used from 9.00 am until midnight Monday to Friday, and anytime at weekends or public holidays. Transport for London buses can be used anytime.

Contact Essex County Council if you are an Essex resident applying for an older persons or disabled persons bus pass for the first time. Current bus passes will normally be renewed automatically.

You can email the team at: buspass.team@essex.gov.uk or phone 0845 200 0388 for an application form, or for assistance completing one.

Website: www.canigetapass.org.uk

Epping Forest Community Transport

This project is for people who have difficulty accessing conventional transport because of restricted mobility, or because there is no alternative form of passenger transport. It uses a team of volunteer drivers who may use their own cars or be trained to drive one of the minibuses operated by the project. You can use the service for shopping, health and other appointments, visiting friends and family, or for social events.

For more information, phone Epping Forest Community Transport on 01992 579 556.

The Safe & Sound Scheme

Safe & Sound is a joint venture between Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership and Voluntary Action Epping Forest to reduce the number of falls by older people in their homes whilst making sure the property is secure and safe against intruders. This includes the provision of security products such as locks, bolts, door safety chains, window locks, door viewers and smoke alarms.

The scheme is available to anyone aged 60 or over and living in the Epping Forest District. For certain work, it does not matter whether you own your own home, are a council or private tenant, or live in sheltered accommodation. Your financial circumstances are not relevant either.

To find out if you are eligible for this FREE service, please contact 01992 564259 or 01992 564608. Alternatively email safercommunities@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Garden maintenance

Mow and Grow is operated by Voluntary Action Epping Forest and targets vulnerable council tenants. You must meet the following criteria to qualify:

- There is no one physically able under the age of 70 years living at your property
- You have a clear rent account (subject to a right of appeal)
- You may also be eligible if you have a disability and there is no other physically able person living at your property under 70 years of age, and you are receiving relevant benefits.

For more information tenants should contact their Housing Management Officer. You will also find this information in the Tenants Handbook or in your Tenancy Agreement.

New Horizons

New Horizons is a leisure programme for people aged 50+. It provides daytime opportunities to take part in a whole range of sports and social activities, from yoga and gym fitness, to tea dances and trips out to places of interest. All classes and sessions are provided at concessionary rates and equipment is provided where needed.

It is the Council's longest running leisure programme and provides a great social and health improvement outlet for men and women alike.

The New Horizons programme includes a wide range of sporting, social and leisure pursuits. In addition to the Council's own sessions, other courses are provided by SLM (an organisation contracted to run leisure facilities on behalf of the Council).

The New Horizons brochure includes full details of the programme. You can download a copy, and find details of other leisure activities, on the Council's website www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk.

For general enquiries telephone 01992 564561.



How to contact us:

Older Peoples Services

Telephone: **020 8532 1065**

Email: **olderpeopleservice@eppingforestdc.gov.uk**

Write to: **Older Peoples Services**

Epping Forest District Council

2 Parsonage Court,

Loughton,

Essex IG10 2BB

Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE)

Telephone: **01992 564086**

Email: **pshgrantsandcare@eppingforestdc.gov.uk**

The information given in this leaflet was correct at February 2018. Please be aware that there may have been changes since that time, such as new laws or council policies.

Please tell us if you would like this information provided in any other way, as a large print version for example.

Epping Forest District Council
Communities Directorate, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, Essex CM16 4BZ
Telephone: Epping (01992) 564000 www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/housing

February 2018