

# Services

*for*

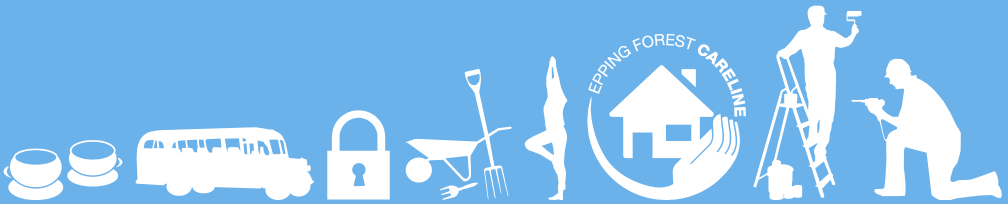
# Older People



**ADVICE** *for*  
**COUNCIL TENANTS**

 **Epping Forest  
District Council**  
[www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

# 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. Others are fitted with alarms connected to Tunstall Response (the Council's alarm monitoring service) or may have a visiting Sheltered Housing Officer Service.

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. Rents are similar to normal Council rents but a support charge is included which is mainly for the Sheltered Housing Officer and Alarm Service. Applicants may be entitled to housing benefit if they cannot afford the rental charges. Advice is available from the Council's Benefits Team.

## The role of the Sheltered Housing Officer

Sheltered Housing Officers are employed by the Council to help people in sheltered housing to live as independently as possible. When you move in, your Sheltered Housing Officer will complete a support plan with you to identify any support needs. They are available every working day in sheltered housing schemes. They also visit tenants living in other properties designed for older people on housing estates.

Sheltered Housing Officers are not nurses or home carers. Their job is to keep a friendly eye on the wellbeing of their tenants and provide support as and when needed. Tenants can go to the Sheltered Housing Officer 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 Tunstall Response to get help quickly in an emergency.

The personal independence of tenants is a top priority. Sheltered Housing Officers encourage community spirit and help facilitate social events, particularly where communal facilities such as lounges are available. 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, please contact the Rehousing Team at [Rehousing@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:Rehousing@eppingforestdc.gov.uk) or on 01992 564716. You can also apply online by visiting the Council's website at [www.eppingforest.dc.gov.uk/housing](http://www.eppingforest.dc.gov.uk/housing).

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 to discuss the potential benefits of downsizing please telephone on 01992 564529.

# Epping Forest Careline

## A 24 hour emergency alarm service

Epping Forest Careline is a service to assist older or vulnerable people to remain independent in their own homes. Most Council properties reserved for older people have emergency alarms installed.

The emergency alarm is a two way speech unit that can be installed in a person's home and is connected to our monitoring centre, Tunstall Response, which is staffed 24 hours a day. The monitoring centre holds user information about doctors, relatives and medical conditions.

In an emergency, the user alerts Tunstall Response by pressing the button on 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, Tunstall Response can contact the emergency services or Sheltered Housing Officer, and get help once the alarm has been raised.

# 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 'Repairs and improvements to your home' (available online at [www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/housing](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/housing)).

You can contact the Private Sector Grants Service 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 our 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 tenants in your property are over 60, or they receive disability benefits.
- You have a clear rent account.
- Your property has no more than two bedrooms.

We will decorate a room for you once every five years. You can choose the room you want to have decorated and the colour of the paint. Or you can purchase your choice of wallpaper at your own cost.

If you meet all our qualifying conditions, apply online at [www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/housing](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/housing) or phone 01992 564203. Once we have received your application we will contact you within five working days.

If we accept your application, we will add you to our waiting list. The work is done on a 'first come - first served' basis. We aim to complete the works for you within four months of approving your application.

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.

## Handyperson Scheme

If you live in one of our sheltered housing schemes, a member of our Qualis Repairs Service can help you. You can get assistance with all sorts of small repairs such as changing a light bulb, fixing a leaking tap or replacing a broken toilet seat. To report a repair phone Qualis on 0333 230 0464 (24-hour number) or send an email to [repairs@qualismanagement.co.uk](mailto:repairs@qualismanagement.co.uk). The service is provided free, or at low cost, depending on the work you require.

The Council is not operating a Handyperson Scheme at the current time. If you are a council tenant or live in privately owned accommodation you can contact Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF) on 01992 564 199 or email [handyman@vaeef.org.uk](mailto:handyman@vaeef.org.uk) for further information on the services they provide.

## **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 Sheltered Housing Officer.

## **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 910701 or email [admin@vaef.org.uk](mailto:admin@vaef.org.uk).

## Concessionary fares scheme

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

Contact Essex County Council if you are an Essex resident applying for an older persons or disabled persons bus pass for the first time.

You can apply online at [www.canigetapass.org.uk](http://www.canigetapass.org.uk) or phone 0345 200 0388 for an application form.

## **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 579556.

## **Garden maintenance**

Voluntary Action Epping Forest helps vulnerable Council tenants with garden maintenance. 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.

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 please contact your Housing Management Officer.

## Forever Active

The Forever Active programme welcomes everyone with no restriction on age, ability level or fitness. The programme offers everything from cycling and walking, football to yoga and pilates as well as the amazing day trips.

The Forever Active brochure includes full details of the programme. You can download a copy, and find details of other leisure activities, on the Council's website at [www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

For general enquiries telephone 01992 564561.

## How to contact us:

### **Older Peoples Services**

**Phone:** 01992 564348 or 01992 564000 (main switchboard)

**Email:** [olderpeopleservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:olderpeopleservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

**Write to:** Older Peoples Services, Epping Forest District Council  
2 Parsonage Court, Loughton, Essex IG10 2BB

**Website:** [www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

### **Private Sector Grants Service**

**Phone:** 01992 564092

**Email:** [privatesectorgrants@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:privatesectorgrants@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

The information given in this leaflet was correct at December 2020. Please be aware that there may have been changes since that time, such as new laws or Council policies.

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