



# Property Services

## Mobility Scooter Policy

### 2026-2029

**Service Area**

Property Services – Asset & Planned

**Policy Owner**

Property Services – Asset & Planned Service Manager

**Policy Category**

**Regulatory** – required to demonstrate compliance with landlord statutory duties, Regulator of Social Housing standards, and Housing Ombudsman requirements.

**Version controls:**

Version	Category	Trigger	Next review	Policy Owner	Date
1.0	Regulatory	Review	1 year	Asset & Planned Service Manager	01 April 2026

If you require this policy in another format or language, please contact the Housing Service by emailing [policy@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:policy@winchester.gov.uk) or calling **01962 848 400**.

**Policy Purpose**



This policy sets out Winchester City Council's strategic framework for the safe assessment, approval, use, storage and charging of mobility scooters within Council-owned and Council-managed housing. This Policy replaces the **Mobility Scooter Policy (2023)**.

This policy has been revised to reflect:

- The **Building Safety Act 2022** and the strengthened emphasis on resident safety in higher-risk residential buildings.
- The **Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023** and updated Consumer Standards
- The **Fire Safety Act 2021** and **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005**
- National Fire Chiefs Council guidance on mobility scooters
- Learning from operational experience, complaints and Housing Ombudsman determinations

The Council recognises that mobility aids are essential in supporting many residents to live independently, safely and with dignity in their homes and communities. Our approach is to be enabling, supportive and person-centred.

We will work collaboratively with residents to identify safe and practical solutions wherever possible, while balancing our legal responsibilities for fire, building and resident safety.

The Council will provide clear guidance, accessible information and support throughout the assessment process to help residents understand:

- What mobility equipment is covered by this policy
- What information may be required
- What safe storage and charging arrangements may be suitable
- What alternative options or support may be available where challenges arise.

We are committed to ensuring residents are treated fairly, respectfully and consistently, with decisions made on an individual basis and with consideration of disability-related needs and reasonable adjustments.

The Council therefore adopts a needs-led, person-centred and risk-based approach, underpinned by a clear safety principle.

Mobility scooters introduce material fire, electrical, obstruction and evacuation risks, particularly within blocks of flats, sheltered schemes and buildings with shared escape routes.

Mobility scooters must not be stored or charged in communal areas unless the Council has provided a formally designated and risk-assessed storage facility and written permission has been granted.

This policy supports the Council's duties under the **Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards**, particularly the **Safety and Quality Standard**.

This Policy is supported by a range of Resident-friendly guidance documents including a 'Policy on a Page' summary, Frequently Asked Questions, application guidance, fire safety advice and resident information materials. These documents are designed to help residents understand the



policy, assessment process, safety requirements and available support in a clear, accessible and practical way

A glossary of key terms used in this policy is provided at the end of the document to support understanding.

## **Scope of the Policy**

This policy is applied across Housing, Property and Neighbourhood teams involved in allocations, tenancy management and building safety.

## **Understanding Different Mobility Aids**

This policy primarily applies to motorised mobility scooters and, in some circumstances, powered wheelchairs where similar fire, charging or obstruction risks may arise. The Council recognises that different mobility aids present different levels of risk and therefore may require different approaches.

Non-Motorised Mobility Aids Examples include:

- Manual wheelchairs
- Walking frames
- Rollators
- Mobility trolleys

These items do not normally present battery charging or electrical fire risks. However, they must still not obstruct communal escape routes or create hazards within shared areas.

Motorised Mobility Scooters Mobility scooters are battery-powered vehicles designed primarily for outdoor mobility and longer-distance travel. These are usually larger devices that may:

- Require battery charging
- Use lithium-ion or sealed lead-acid batteries
- Present fire or obstruction risks if stored incorrectly
- Affect evacuation routes in communal buildings

This policy fully applies to Class 2 and Class 3 mobility scooters.

## **Powered Wheelchairs**

Powered wheelchairs are battery-powered mobility aids generally designed for indoor and outdoor use. In many cases they are smaller and more manoeuvrable than mobility scooters and are commonly stored within the resident's home.

However, where a powered wheelchair presents similar risks relating to:

- Battery charging
- Storage in communal areas
- Escape route obstruction
- Fire safety concerns the Council may apply relevant parts of this policy.



Each case will be assessed individually and proportionately. The safety of all residents, visitors, staff and contractors is paramount.

## **Distinction Between Property Types**

The Council recognises that mobility scooter risks vary by property type and must be managed accordingly.

### **Houses and bungalows (general needs)**

Risk may be lower where scooters can be stored within a private, self-contained area that does not affect shared access or other residents.

The Council will work collaboratively with residents to identify safe and practical storage and charging arrangements within the dwelling or a private external area (for example a shed or secure covered location), subject to assessment and written approval and provided this does not create a fire, electrical or access risk.

### **Purpose-built blocks and flatted accommodation**

Risk is higher due to shared building design and the potential impact on multiple households. Scooters may only be stored in a formally designated, Council-approved, risk-assessed mobility scooter storage facility. Storage and charging in corridors, lift lobbies, stairwells or communal landings is Not permitted due to significant safety risks.

## **Understanding Different Mobility Aids**

### **Core Principles**

The Council applies the following principles to ensure decisions about mobility scooters are fair, consistent and safe. The Council also aims to support residents to maintain independence safely wherever reasonably possible.

### **Safety First**

Safety is the primary consideration in all decisions. Scooters must not create risks to residents, staff or the building, including obstruction or unsafe charging. Where risks cannot reasonably be managed safely, approval may not be possible and alternative solutions or support options will be explored where appropriate.

### **Needs-Led and Proportionate Decisions**

Permission is based on evidenced mobility need and essential daily living requirements, not convenience. Approval will only be granted where a long-term mobility difficulty is demonstrated, supported by appropriate medical or professional evidence and the scooter is necessary, suitable and compatible with the property and building arrangements.

The Council will explain decisions clearly and support residents throughout the assessment process.



## Individual and Risk-Aware Assessment

Each request is considered on its own merits, taking account of the resident's circumstances and the specific risks associated with the property type. There is no automatic right to store or charge a scooter, and approval depends on whether risks can be safely managed for all occupants.

## Evidence-Based Assessment Process

All decisions are based on verified information about the resident's mobility need, the scooter, and the safety and suitability of the property. This ensures decisions are lawful, consistent and proportionate.

Residents may be supported to provide:

- Confirmation of mobility need from an appropriate medical or relevant professional (for example GP, consultant, Occupational Therapist or other recognised health professional)
- Details of the scooter, including size, weight, type and charging method
- Proposed storage and charging arrangements within the property or designated facility

Residents are strongly encouraged to obtain insurance to cover damage, loss, or third-party liability. Where damage is caused to Council property by a mobility scooter, the cost of repairs may be recoverable from the resident. Where insurance is in place, claims should be made through the resident's insurer. Residents may be responsible for reasonable repair costs where damage is caused to Council property and costs cannot be recovered through insurance.

Where required, the Council will support residents to obtain or submit this information. Where information is unavailable or incomplete, the Council will work with residents to explain what is needed and why. Decisions may be delayed where essential safety information cannot be obtained.

The Council will provide guidance documents and Resident-friendly information to help residents understand the process and what information may be required.

## Structured Assessment Stages

Assessments are intended to be supportive, transparent and focused on identifying safe solutions wherever reasonably possible. All applications are assessed through a consistent staged process:

1. **Mobility Need Review** - confirmation that a scooter is necessary to support essential daily living.
2. **Scooter Suitability Check** - review of size, manoeuvrability, battery type and charging requirements.
3. **Property and Building Assessment** - evaluation of layout, storage options and impact on safety and access.
4. **Final Risk Evaluation** - holistic review to confirm that risks can be safely managed for the resident and others.



Permission will only be granted where sufficient evidence is provided, and all stages confirm that the scooter can be accommodated safely within the property and wider building environment.

### **Reasonable and Lawful Adjustments**

Reasonable adjustments will be considered in line with the Equality Act 2010. The Council will work collaboratively with residents to consider appropriate and proportionate solutions wherever possible. Any adjustment must be lawful, proportionate, practical and compatible with fire, building and health and safety duties. Adjustments that introduce unacceptable risk cannot be approved.

### **No Automatic or Historic Rights**

Previous informal arrangements or lack of past incidents do not guarantee approval. All requests must meet current safety, legal and operational requirements at the time of assessment.

### **Visitors Using Mobility Scooters**

These principles also apply to visitors. Residents are responsible for ensuring that visitors' mobility scooters do not create safety risks. Mobility scooters (including visitor scooters) must not be stored or charged in communal areas, corridors, stairwells or escape routes.

This includes both mobility scooters and motorised (powered) wheelchairs where applicable.

### **Adaptations**

If changes to your home may help manage risk, these will be considered under our Adaptations Policy. They must be:

- Necessary to meet an assessed need.
- Safe and lawful.
- Practically achievable; and
- Compatible with fire and building safety.

In some cases, you may need to apply through Hampshire County Council for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).

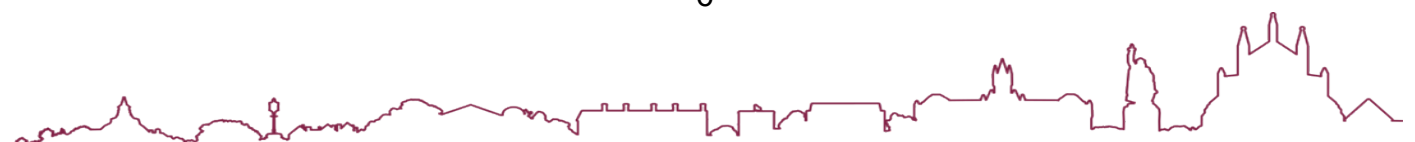
We cannot make changes to a building that would compromise safety for others.

The Council will discuss potential options with residents and provide guidance on available adaptation processes, supporting information and potential funding routes where appropriate.

Approval of an adaptation does not automatically result in permission to store or charge a mobility scooter.

### **Storage and Charging Requirements**

Storage or charging must not begin until written permission has been issued by the Council. If approved, mobility scooters must:



- Be stored only in locations agreed in writing.
- Never be stored or charged in corridors, stairways, lift lobbies, landings or any communal escape routes
- Be charged safely and in line with manufacturer guidance.

In blocks of flats, communal storage and charging is only permitted where a formally designated, Council-approved and risk-assessed mobility scooter storage facility exists.

Charging of mobility scooters is Not permitted due to significant safety risks in all general communal areas. Charging is only permitted within a formally designated, Council-approved and risk-assessed mobility scooter storage facility or within an approved private dwelling location.

Mobility scooters using lithium-ion batteries present a higher fire risk and must only be stored or charged in locations approved through the Council’s assessment process.

These requirements may also apply to powered wheelchairs where similar battery or charging risks are identified.

### Unsafe Practices We Cannot Permit

The following are not allowed:

- Using extension leads or trailing cables.
- Charging in communal areas.
- Altering electrical installations without approval.
- Mobility scooters (including visitor scooters) must not be stored or charged in communal areas.

### Assessment Outcomes and Next Steps

Decisions are based on a full assessment of mobility need, equipment safety and property suitability. After assessment, your application will result in one of the following:

Decision Outcome	What This Means for You
<b>Approved</b>	You can store and use your mobility scooter, as long as you follow the safety conditions we set out in writing.
<b>Approved with Conditions</b>	<p>You can use your mobility scooter, but you must follow specific conditions, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Storing it in an agreed location</li> <li>- Following any charging restrictions</li> <li>- Complying with any review dates or additional safety requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Deferred</b>	We need more information or further checks before we can make a decision.



## Decision Outcome What This Means for You

- You must not store or charge the scooter at the property until you receive written confirmation from us.

We are unable to approve the request.

This may be because:

### Unable to Approve at This Time

- We did not receive the required information
- The identified risks cannot currently be managed safely within the property or building environment.
- Approval would breach fire or safety laws.

## Decision Review

Residents may also request further explanation or support to help them understand the decision-making process. You can request a review within 21 days of receiving your decision. The review will be carried out by a senior officer who was not involved in the original decision.

You also have the right to make a complaint under the Housing Complaints Policy.

## Storage Without Prior Approval

We understand that some residents may purchase or begin using a mobility scooter before fully understanding the approval process. Where this occurs, the Council will aim to work constructively and proportionately with residents to reduce risk and identify safe solutions wherever possible.

However, mobility scooters must not be stored or charged without written permission where approval is required under this policy. Storage Without Prior Approval may result in:

- Written warnings.
- Requirement to remove or relocate the scooter.
- Where necessary and legally permitted, the Council may arrange removal if significant safety risks remain unresolved.
- Recovery of costs where appropriate.

Retrospective requests will still go through the full assessment process.

## Recharges and Cost Recovery

All recharges must follow the Councils **Repairs Recharges Policy 2025-2028**. This includes damage caused by mobility scooters, which may be recovered from the resident directly or via



their insurance provider where applicable. We may recover reasonable costs where they arise directly from non-compliance, including:

- Removal or relocation of an unsafe scooter.
- Damage to Council property.
- Works required to address safety risks, including removal of unsafe charging equipment, electrical alterations, or clearance of obstructed communal areas.

Any recharge will be:

- Lawful and proportionate.
- Based on actual costs.
- Clearly explained in writing.

### **Recharges are not used as punishment.**

Where possible, we will give you the opportunity to correct issues before applying charges, unless there is an immediate safety risk. Information will be communicated in clear and accessible formats wherever possible.

### **Recording and Communication**

The Council will confirm all decisions in writing and maintain appropriate records to ensure transparency, consistency and accountability.

### **Monitoring and Ongoing Review**

Approvals may be reviewed, varied or withdrawn where conditions are breached, risks change, or circumstances alter, to ensure continued safety and compliance.

Resident feedback, complaints learning and engagement outcomes will help inform future policy and guidance improvements.

## **Winchester City Council Complaints Policy**

Complaints will be handled in line with Winchester City Council's Housing Complaints Policy and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, which set out a clear, fair, and accessible process for resolving complaints.

We will support residents to access the complaints process and provide reasonable adjustments where required

You can make a complaint in any of the following ways:

- By completing the online complaints form
- By email to: [customerservice@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:customerservice@winchester.gov.uk)
- By telephone: 01962 848 400
- In writing to: Winchester City Council, Colebrook Street, Winchester, SO23 9LJ
- By speaking directly to any council officer



If you remain dissatisfied after our response, you can escalate your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman, an independent service that reviews housing complaints across England. We aim to make the complaints process straightforward, fair, and transparent.

## **Recording and Information Management**

When you report a problem, we record it on our secure housing management system. We only collect and share information that is relevant, necessary, and proportionate.

We process personal data in accordance with the **Data Protection Act 2018** and the **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)**, alongside the Council's Data Protection and Privacy Policy.

Sometimes we work with other agencies (for example, the police or support services). We will only share your information with them if it is safe, legal and will help protect people or resolve the issue.

## **Performance Monitoring and Learning**

The Council reviews decisions, complaints, incidents and emerging safety guidance to improve practice and ensure consistent, fair and lawful decision-making.

## **Equality and Safeguarding Considerations**

We are committed to treating all residents fairly and considering individual circumstances, including disability-related needs. We recognise that mobility equipment may be essential in supporting independence, wellbeing and daily living.

We will consider reasonable adjustments where these are lawful, proportionate and compatible with fire and building safety requirements. Where we have concerns about vulnerability or risk, we may involve appropriate support services to help keep residents safe.

## **Legal and Regulatory Framework**

This policy is informed by relevant legislation and guidance governing fire safety, building safety, equality and landlord responsibilities. In all cases, statutory safety duties take precedence.

### **Primary Legislation**

- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Equality Act 2010
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974



- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Use of Invalid Carriages on Highways Regulations 1988 (as amended)

### **Related Policies**

- Housing Complaints Policy
- Repairs and Recharge Policy 2025-2028
- Adaptations Policy 2025-2028
- Tenancy Agreement and Tenancy Conditions
- Fire Safety Policy 2025-2028
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy

### **Guidance**

- National Fire Chiefs Council Fire Safety Guidance for Mobility Scooters and Similar Devices (2018)
- Local Government Association – Fire Safety in Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats (2011, updated)
- Housing Ombudsman Service – Complaint Handling Code (2024)

### **Governance and Review**

The Property Services - Asset & Planned Service Manager is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and reviewed.

Resident feedback and engagement outcomes will inform ongoing communication improvements and policy awareness activities. Resident-facing guidance documents and summary materials will also be reviewed regularly to ensure information remains clear, accessible and up to date.

This Policy will be reviewed annually as we are adopting a test and learn approach to ensure the approach we take is fair and proportionate, or sooner if legislation, guidance, or best practice changes. Equality impacts, complaints outcomes and Ombudsman learning will explicitly inform each review.

All housing staff are trained on safeguarding, equality and legal powers, and they regularly update their training to keep residents safe.

### **Appendices**

Mobility Scooter 'Policy on a Page' Summary

Mobility Scooter visual Guidance Information for Residents

Mobility Scooter Storage Application Form & Covering Letter

Mobility Scooter Refusal Letter

Mobility Scooter Agreement



## Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
<b>Approved Location</b>	A place where the Council has confirmed in writing that a mobility scooter may be stored or charged following a safety and suitability assessment.
<b>Charging</b>	The process of connecting a mobility scooter battery to an electrical supply to replenish power. Charging must follow manufacturer guidance and may only take place in locations approved by the Council.
<b>Communal Areas</b>	Shared parts of a building used by multiple residents or visitors, including corridors, stairwells, lift lobbies, landings, entrance halls, and shared external access routes.
<b>Designated Mobility Scooter Storage Facility</b>	A location formally assessed and approved by the Council for the safe storage and charging of mobility scooters.



<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Escape Route</b>	A route used by residents to safely exit a building during an emergency such as a fire. Escape routes must remain clear of obstructions at all times.
<b>Fire Risk Assessment</b>	A structured process used to identify fire hazards, evaluate risks and determine appropriate safety controls within a building. Mobility scooter storage and charging arrangements must be consistent with the building's fire risk assessment.
<b>Mobility Scooter</b>	A battery-powered mobility aid designed to assist individuals with mobility impairments. This policy applies to Class 2 and Class 3 mobility scooters as defined under the Use of Invalid Carriages on Highways Regulations 1988.
<b>Mobility Need</b>	A verified long-term difficulty with mobility that significantly affects a person's ability to move around independently and undertake daily activities. Evidence may be required from a relevant health or care professional.
<b>Permission / Approval</b>	Written authorisation issued by the Council confirming that a mobility scooter may be stored or charged at a specific property location subject to conditions.
<b>Reasonable Adjustment</b>	A change or adjustment considered under the Equality Act 2010 to remove or reduce disadvantage experienced by a disabled person. Adjustments must be lawful, proportionate, and compatible with safety obligations.
<b>Unauthorised Storage</b>	The storage or charging of a mobility scooter at a Council property without written permission or in breach of approved conditions.
<b>Motorised Mobility Aid</b>	A battery-powered mobility device including mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs.
<b>Non-Motorised Mobility Aid</b>	A mobility aid that does not require battery or electrical charging, including manual wheelchairs and walking aids.
<b>Powered Wheelchair</b>	A battery-powered wheelchair designed primarily to support mobility both indoors and outdoors.

