

SHELTERED HOUSING AND SUPPORTING PEOPLE



Working for older people in Scotland



What is Supporting People?

This is the name given to the government's programme for delivering and paying for housing support. It was introduced in April 2003 when the planning and funding of housing support was transferred to your local council.

What is housing support?

It is help to maintain independent living in the community and can cover things like help to ensure you feel safe and secure in your home. Services offered by the scheme manager or warden in sheltered housing are housing support.

What is the reason for the change to Supporting People?

In the past many tenants in sheltered housing paid for their support through the service charges in their rent; this was part of the tenancy agreement. Housing benefit provided help with rent and support charges. However government changes to this benefit mean that it can now only cover help towards rent payments. ***Supporting People*** is the new way of paying for housing support. Now if you receive housing support you will have an agreement with your council for this service, not your landlord.



What role does the council have in this?

Councils are expected to ensure there are adequate support services in their area for those who need them. Money is allocated to them by the Scottish Executive to ensure things like support in sheltered housing continues to be available. Councils will either deliver services or purchase them from other providers, for example from housing associations. Individuals who are liable to pay for their support will owe the money to the council. So if you are a tenant receiving housing support, you could be making one payment to your landlord for your rent, and another to your council for your housing support, even if your landlord provides your support. However there may be an arrangement in place for your support service provider to collect the charges on behalf of the council.

I moved into sheltered housing before April 2003. How does all of this affect me?

Some tenants have not had to pay for support as no charge was levied. If you are one of those tenants you will be protected from having to pay for support unless you require more services.

If you receive Housing benefit, no matter how small an amount, this help will continue, and all of your support charges will be paid for by ***Supporting People.***




If you have been paying for some or all of your support charges yourself you now have to make two different payments. You will pay a reduced rent to your landlord as it no longer includes the support element. Your council will inform you of your charge for support and in most cases you will pay this directly to the council. You will not pay any more than you did prior to the introduction of ***Supporting People***, (apart from annual increases for inflation) unless you require more services.

What if I move into sheltered housing after 31st March 2003?

Your local council will carry out an assessment of your support needs, and your eligibility for financial assistance. If you are in need of housing support and are also eligible for Housing benefit to help with your rent, you will automatically get your support charge paid for by ***Supporting People***.





If you are not eligible for Housing benefit, your council will look at your resources to see if any help can be given from **Supporting People** for your housing support charges.


This means that if, from April 2003, you are a new resident you may find that you are paying a different charge for support than another resident who is protected under the transitional arrangements.

Whether you are worse off as a result of moving in after the introduction of **Supporting People** will depend on your income, any disability related income and expenditure, and the charging policy of your local council.

**I am an owner occupier in sheltered housing.
Am I affected in any way?**

In this type of housing there is no relationship between your council and the management company responsible for maintaining the building and providing services. These services are set out in your Title Deeds or Contract for Services.

However if you are entitled to the benefit called the Minimum Income Guarantee you can receive some help towards payment for your charges. Before 1st April 2003 this payment would have been included in your benefit. You will have received a letter from the Pension Service explaining that this help will no longer be included in your benefit. The council is now responsible for providing help with payment of support charges, so you should pass the letter on to them.



In October 2003 the Pension Credit will be introduced and owners entitled to this can apply to the council for a financial assessment for help with their charges. If you moved into your home before 1st April 2003, you do not need to go through a housing support needs assessment. However you can request one if you feel your circumstances or support needs have changed.

Are there any other changes I should know about?

Your support provider will require to be registered with the Care Commission and to demonstrate that services meet national standards. In addition your council is expected to undertake a review of all support services and to seek your views. This review process will take place between 2003 and 2006, and then every five years. The purpose of this is to ensure that needs are being met and to find out if any improvements are required.

It should be noted that managing agents of owner occupied sheltered housing will require to be registered with the Care Commission but that services provided in this type of housing will not be reviewed by your council.



What if I have complaints about my housing support?

There are now national quality standards for all aspects of housing support. You should be made aware of how to comment or make a complaint to the housing support provider about the service. An independent and confidential advocacy service can ensure your views are heard. Both your landlord and your council will have information about this type of service. You can also make complaints directly to the Care Commission and you do not have to give your name.

Where can I get further help or information?

- **Your landlord** will have a housing manager whom you can contact by letter or telephone. Your warden or scheme manager should be able to arrange a visit from the housing manager if you request this.
- Your council has a **Supporting People Team**, normally found in the housing or housing & social work department.
- **The Care Commission** is responsible for regulating Scotland's care services which include housing support.
Web: www.carecommission.com
Complaints: 0845 6030890 (lo-call)



SCOTLAND

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AY/July '03/10,000

This booklet has been produced with financial support from the Scottish Executive.

