



**Melton  
Borough  
Council**

# Mobility Scooters

## Key policy details

| Item        | Details               |
|-------------|-----------------------|
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## 1 Introduction

This policy sets out how the council will consider requests from tenants and leaseholders to keep electric mobility scooters, and the factors it will take into account when granting or refusing permission.

Melton Borough Council believes that residents/tenants are entitled to a quality of life that includes the provision of full mobility. In some circumstances this may include the use of a mobility scooter.

At the same time, the council has duties to ensure high standards of health and safety within blocks of flats, maisonettes and sheltered schemes for tenants, leaseholders, staff and visitors. The council has limited storage facilities for mobility scooters which are becoming more common, especially in sheltered accommodation

### 1.1

National Fire Chief's Council guidance identifies the term 'mobility scooter' as;

#### 1.1.1 Class 2 Vehicles

Powered Wheelchairs and mobility scooters for pedestrian routes and indoor use, that are limited to a maximum speed of 4mph and do not exceed an unladen weight of 113.4 kg. Class 2 vehicles are not allowed on the public highway and are not required to be registered with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

#### 1.1.2 Class 3 Vehicles

Powered vehicles and mobility scooters that are designed to:  
Travel up to 8mph and are used on roads/highways and;  
Fitted with a device to restrict travel to a maximum speed of 4mph on pedestrian routes and for indoor use.  
Class 3 Vehicles must not exceed an unladen weight of 150 kg.

Class 3 vehicles are not classed as motor vehicles but they are required to be licensed with the DVLA for road use and cannot be operated by anyone below the age of 14.

### 1.2

Due to the widespread expansion in the use and availability of motorised scooters and powered wheelchairs, their popularity is now beginning to create issues in premises, which were not designed to accommodate such vehicles.

### 1.3

Melton Borough Council recognises that it is important to balance the needs of scooter users, with the availability of suitable storage areas and available finances.

## 1.4

Finding secure storage and charging areas for these vehicles is particularly difficult in communal areas where safe access and fire safety is paramount. It is also important that these vehicles are not stored where they present a safety risk/nuisance to the user, other residents and vehicles.

## 1.5

This Policy applies to the storage and charging of scooters in Melton Borough Council owned accommodation, this policy addresses the issue of storage and charging mobility scooters and safe options to do so.

## 2 Aims

This policy aims to balance the needs and aspirations of tenants and leaseholders to keep mobility scooters with its duties to maintain a safe living environment for tenants, particularly in relation to potential fire risks.

This policy will apply to all new requests to keep a scooter, to customers considering moving into a council property and retrospectively to existing tenants who already have a scooter without permission.

### 2.1

The aim of the policy is to:

2.1.1 ensure the council takes a consistent approach to granting permission to tenants and leaseholders to keep a scooter.

2.1.2 ensure tenants ask for written permission before obtaining a new scooter

2.1.3 accommodate all requests for permission to keep a scooter where practicable, and not to refuse permission unreasonably

2.1.4 carry out a full assessment prior to a decision on whether or not to grant permission

2.1.5 ensure that where permission is granted that the tenant has adequate insurance and understands and commits to the terms and conditions they are required to adhere to;

- provide clear information on the terms permission is granted on
- provide a clear explanation in writing of the reason(s) for refusing permission
- manage the number of scooters in any one site so as not to compromise the safety of residents or other users of the site, and
- ensure that tenants and residents are aware of their responsibilities to others.

### 2.2

Set out the allocation priority for council our scooter pods to ensure this is applied consistently and fairly.

## 2.3

Defines the way that MBC will tackle customers who hold a license for a scooter pod and who fall into arrears. We will always look to offer a fair and balanced approach to the collection of our income and ensure that early intervention measures are adopted in all instances.

# 3 Fire Safety

## 3.1

The common areas of residential premises fall within the scope of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which is enforced by Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service.

## 3.2

In line with the Governments Purpose Built Flat Guide and Fire Safety in Specialised Housing Melton Borough Council have adopted a sterile zone policy to ensure all common areas are kept clear of combustible material, ignition sources and obstructions.

## 3.3

In addition to causing an obstruction, the storage of mobility scooters within communal corridors can increase risks of combustion should a fire occur.

## 3.4

Mobility scooters are manufactured from plastic and rubber-based materials, which liberate vast quantities of thick black toxic smoke when involved in fire. They also utilise large battery packs to provide power to the motor. Some batteries house corrosive acids which can give off flammable and explosive gases including hydrogen, particularly during the charging process.

## 3.5

The risk of battery charging has been assessed due to numerous cases of batteries igniting or exploding.

## 3.6

Current Melton Borough Council accommodation were designed and built before mobility scooters were a common item and these buildings were not designed for such products, so suitable and safe storage is not available in the buildings.

## 4 Permission for a Mobility Scooter

### 4.1

Those in any Melton Borough Council owned accommodation this includes tenants and leaseholder, must apply for formal permission to have a scooter before they purchase it to enable Melton Borough Council to arrange safe and suitable storage and charging with you.

Requests must be made to your housing officer in the tenancy services team in writing or by email, to:

FAO Tenancy Services  
Melton Borough Council  
Parkside  
Burton Street  
Melton Mowbray  
LE13 1GH

[Tenancyservices@melton.gov.uk](mailto:Tenancyservices@melton.gov.uk)

### 4.2

Prospective tenants, who already have a mobility scooter, will not automatically be given permission to keep a mobility scooter and will be subject to the same assessment criteria as existing tenants.

### 4.3

If storage is provided by Melton Borough Council, permission will be subject to the requirement of the resident to show proof of adequate insurance cover for the mobility scooter. 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.

### 4.4

Any damage to the Council's property caused by a mobility scooter will be recovered through the owner's insurance company. If the owner does not have a current insurance certificate, they may be personally liable for all costs, and may be asked to remove the scooter from the premises immediately.

### 4.5

A copy of the current insurance certificate must be provided to the housing officer for that area who give this to the compliance officer to check and store.

### 4.6

A copy of a annual PAT will need to be provided by the owner of the mobility scooter at there expense to Melton Borough Council to ensure the battery charger is safe with no faults.

### 4.7

If the tenant resides in general needs accommodation, then the scooter must be stored either in the tenant's property if they are on the ground floor or house, or in a

designated storage facility (e.g. scooter pod) and not in any other communal area where this applies. If stored in the property this will need to be stored with the battery not connected and charged in a fire rated charging bag that meets British Standards.

Scooters found to be in areas believed to present a risk will be removed and stored by Melton Borough Council until such time as agreement is sought with the resident/owner about its future location and storage.

#### **4.8**

A If the tenant resides in Extra Care accommodation, then the scooter must be stored either in the tenant's property if they are on the ground floor or in a designated storage facility (scooter pod) and not in any other communal area. If stored in the property this will need to be stored with the battery not connected and charged in a fire rated charging bag that meets British Standards.

Scooters found to be in areas believed to present a risk will be removed and stored by Melton Borough Council until such time as agreement is sought with the resident/owner about its future location and storage.

**4.9** If the tenant resides in Sheltered Housing accommodation, then the scooter must be stored either in the tenant's property if they are on the ground floor or in a designated storage facility (scooter pod) and not in any other communal area. If stored in the property this will need to be stored with the battery not connected and charged in a fire rated charging bag that meets British Standards.

Scooters found to be in areas believed to present a risk will be removed and stored by Melton Borough Council until such time as agreement is sought with the resident/owner about its future location and storage.

#### **4.10**

A Where written permission is granted, the resident must agree and comply with all conditions placed upon the storage, charging and usage of the vehicle. Melton Borough Council reserves the right to withdraw permission at any time should the conditions of the permission be broken.

#### **4.11**

A Any tenant residing in a general-purpose flat who requires the use of a mobility scooter may be entitled to transfer to a sheltered housing scheme if eligibility criteria are met. This will also be dependent on sufficient space being identified to store the scooter.



## 5 Scooter Pods - Rental

Melton Borough Council (MBC) owns several scooter pods across the borough which provides a rental income.

The letting of our scooter pods is managed by our Tenancy Services Team who also have responsibility for collecting the rent, chasing debts, and repossessing scooter pods when necessary.

There are variable rent charges for the scooter pods which are reviewed annually, and Scooter Pods are linked to the electric costs required to support the charging of the scooters and maintaining them.

### 5.1

Allocations of Scooter Pods

- Applicants for a mobility scooter will only be allowed from anyone living at the scheme where the pods are attached too. For example, at Gretton Court, we will only accept application from residents at Gretton Court.
- Once all the units are occupied, we will hold a waiting list for each site and the application date will be used to determine the allocation.

### 5.2 Arrears Collection

- Scooter pods are let in accordance with the Council's garage Licence conditions.
- Scooter pods may not be used for storage of any belongings other than the resident's mobility scooter to prevent any risk associated to the health and safety concerns and an electrical supply in the pod.
- All new tenants are required to pay 4 weeks rent in advance.
- Scooter pod rents must be paid by Direct Debit (for new lettings with effect from April 2023) and any council tenant in rent arrears on their property will be refused a pod on these grounds.
- If the rent is not paid on a scooter pod, then a warning letter will be sent to the customer to make them aware of the debt outstanding.
- If the account is not cleared, contact will be made to discuss the circumstances and to either arrange for the debt to be cleared in full or an arrangement to be put in place to clear the debt.
- If a satisfactory outcome cannot be agreed (or any arrangement subsequently broken) a final warning letter will be sent informing the customer to clear the debt within 14 days.
- If the debt is not cleared in this time, then a Notice to Quit (NTQ) will be served and the licence ended on the expiry of the NTQ providing the customer has not cleared the debt in full.
- When the NTQ is served a section 41 local government (miscellaneous provisions) act 1982 notice will be served in case any goods or possessions are left in the garage, giving 28 days to clear the items.

- If, on expiry of the notice, the items have not been cleared MBC will dispose of them and recover the costs of disposal as an additional recharge. If there are items of value, we may sell the belongings to cover the cost of the debt.
- Should the tenant make contact and wish to continue renting the scooter pod after the locks have been changed there will be an additional charge for the lock change and an administration charge of £25 alongside the arrears being cleared in full before the request is granted. The decision will be at the discretion of the Tenancy Service Manager.

## **6 Purchasing and Owning a Mobility Scooter**

It is important at the point of considering the purchase of a mobility scooter that the tenant/leaseholder considers the suitability of the surroundings. Melton Borough Council would in some circumstances recommend the smaller, collapsible models, which can be stored more easily within the property.

### **6.1**

Tenants and leaseholder must request permission before purchasing the scooter, so Melton Borough Council can ensure there is a suitable and safe storage and charging option.

### **6.2**

Tenants and leaseholders must maintain the scooter, keeping it in a safe condition to avoid putting anyone else at risk.

### **6.3**

Tenants and leaseholders must have a PAT (Portable appliance testing) completed at their expense by a competent person annually and provide a copy of the certificate to Melton Borough Council.

### **6.4**

Tenants and leaseholders must purchase a scooter that is suitable for their accommodation, if it needs to be stored in the property. It may be a requirement to purchase a smaller model that will fit.

## **7 Storage and Charging of Mobility Scooter**

### **7.1**

Charging should be undertaken in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

### **7.2**

Mobility Scooters cannot, under any circumstance, be stored either temporarily or permanently within any communal area. This includes storage rooms, drying areas, corridors, under stairways, and any other area with general access.

### **7.3**

The storage or abandonment of scooters in communal areas increases the fire risk within the property area. It is therefore Melton Borough Council's priority and responsibility to eliminate the potential fire risk to residents, staff, visitors and properties.

### **7.4**

Storage and charging of scooters in communal areas is a breach of the tenancy agreement.

### **7.5**

Should a Mobility Scooter be found within any communal area, Melton Borough Council will take reasonable steps to mitigate the risk, including the immediate removal and temporary storage of the scooter whilst agreement is sought with the scooter owner about appropriate storage. In addition, where required to do so and as a last resort, further legal action may be instigated to ensure removal with any associated costs recharged to the tenant or visitor.

### **7.6**

The communal areas of all properties managed by Melton Borough Council are inspected on a regular basis to ensure compliance with this policy and are subject to periodic fire risk assessments.

### **7.7**

Those who have been granted permission to store a scooter in the property (not shared area) must store this with the battery detached and the battery must be stored and charged in a fireproof storage bag that meets British standards.

### **7.8**

Scooter storage and charging pods are available at several of Melton Borough Councils accommodation sites. Where a pod is available for rent the owner of the mobility scooter should do so if they have no other storage and charging options that meet the requirements of this policy.

## 8 Monitoring Compliance

### 8.1

Inspections of communal areas will be undertaken on a regular basis within all MBC flats and sheltered accommodation by the compliance assistant.

### 8.2

The compliance assistant follows a process to address an unauthorised item in the common area as seen in figure 1.

Figure 1

| Communal Inspection Procedure Flowchart - General |  |  |  |  |                                | Version 0.1 DRAFT |
|---|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| STAGE   | Interventions to be taken during process |  |  |  |                                |                   |
|   | Contractor                               | Compliance Team  | Tenancy Services (TS)  | Community Safety (CS)                    | Legal                          |                   |
| 1) Weekly communal checks                         |  | Communal check completed. - items found.   |  |  |                                |                   |
| 2) 7 Day Clearance Letter                         |  | Letter to clear area within 7 days.  |  |  |                                |                   |
| 3) Check area 7 days later                        |  | Check if the area has been cleared.  |  |  |                                |                   |
| 4) Referal to Tenancy services                    |  | Compliance to inform TS that are has not been cleared after 7 days - email the housing officer direct and cc the tenancy services email. | Send out 1st Advice letter for area to be cleared in 7-14 time decided by TS on each case. |  |                                |                   |
| 5) Check area after 7-14 days                     |  | Check if the area has been cleared, if not inform TS.  | Issue Tenancy Warning 1 and request CPW CS   | Issue CPW (Community Protection Warning) |                                |                   |
| 6) Check after 7-14 days                          |  | Check area - inform TS and CS area not cleared.  | Issue Tenancy Warning 2  | Issue CPN (Community Protection Notice)  |                                |                   |
| 7) Check after 7-14 days                          | Clear area on request.                   | Check area - inform TS and CS area not cleared - arrange clearance.  |  | Issue FPN (Fixed Penalty Notice)         |                                |                   |
| 8) Failure to pay FPN                             |  |  |  | Create case file and Refer to Legal      | Take to court for prosecution. |                   |

### 8.3

The Any incorrectly stored or unauthorised mobility scooters identified by the compliance assistant will be sent to tenancy services to address.

## **9 Terms and Conditions of Permission**

Where permission is granted, this will be based on certain conditions. The letter granting permission will specify the size and type of scooter that can be kept, and will state that permission is conditional on the tenant having relevant insurance, tax registration etc.

### **9.1**

It is the tenant/leaseholder's responsibility to ensure that their mobility scooter will fit in the external doors, lifts, and internal doors. Melton Borough Council will not make alterations to accommodate this.

### **9.2**

Tenants must ensure that they have appropriate public liability insurance cover against accidents or other injury, to third parties or themselves, as well as any damage to the internal or external parts of the building

### **9.3**

Tenants who apply for permission will be expected to produce their insurance certificate for inspection. Absence of adequate insurance cover will result in the permission granted being refused or withdrawn.

### **9.4**

Permission may be withdrawn if the conditions are not adhered to, if the tenant purchases an additional or larger scooter or if the policy is updated to meet new regulatory requirements.

### **9.5**

The council will undertake periodic checks, including at the Annual Tenancy Visit to ensure the policy is complied with.

### **9.6**

If any charging equipment fails the PAT, it is the tenant's responsibility to repair or replace it before using it.

## **10 Breach of Policy**

Where there is a breach of the policy the council will take the appropriate action.

### **10.1**

Where a scooter is stored or charged on council premises without permission, or outside the terms of permission granted, the council reserves the right to remove the scooter to ensure health and safety and will recharge the tenant for any removal costs.

## **11 Equalities Statement**

Where there is a breach of the policy the council will take the appropriate action.

### **11.1**

The Council is committed to meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010. There is a need to promote the independence of residents and ensure equal access. Understanding and responding to the diverse individual needs of our residents is fundamental to the Council's value. However, there will be a need to impose restrictions due to lack of storage facilities or potential breaches in health and safety regulations. Storage of mobility scooters in communal areas such as corridors, stairwells and community lounges heighten the risk to people in the event of a fire. This might either be a fire caused by the scooter itself or the obstruction caused to other residents as they escape. There is also a risk to emergency services when entering our buildings if communal areas are not kept clear.

## **12 Monitoring, Evaluation, Delegation and Review**

The Assistant Director of Housing Management is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

### **12.1**

This policy will be reviewed every three years. In addition, it will be reviewed:

- Following information/ suggestions that the policy is not effective.
- To reflect any service enhancements; and/ or,
- Following the introduction of any relevant new legislation, regulations, or guidelines.

### **12.2**

The Housing Asset Manager has the delegated responsibility for decision making in the install of new pods.

### **12.3**

The Tenancy Services Manager has the delegated responsibility for decision making in cases where there are exceptional circumstances.

### **12.4**

The Compliance Officer has the delegated responsibility for reviewing the policy.