**Mobility Scooters and Powered Wheelchairs – What You Need to Know**

**Keeping You and Others Safe**

Mobility scooters, and powered wheelchairs, can make a real difference to people’s lives, helping them to live independently and take part in activities. However, before you get one, it is important to think about where you are going to store it and charge the batteries.

Mobility scooters, on fire, give out lots of smoke. They, very quickly, create extreme heat as well. Storing scooters on your ‘escape route’ means that you won’t be able to get to safety because of the smoke and heat. Scooters can cause serious and deadly fires. The most common causes of scooter fires are: faulty wiring; faulty electrics (especially whilst charging); and wilful fire raising.

This guidance is for any tenant with, or getting, a mobility scooter. It is also for any tenant with, or getting, a powered wheelchair\*. In this guidance, the term ‘ mobility scooter’ refers to both.

Please do not get one before we give you permission. You may be asked to remove it.

**Am I allowed to have a mobility scooter?**

Yes, if you can safely store it, charge it and have the correct insurance in place.

You need to have our permission before operating, storing or charging a scooter at your property. This is to keep tenants and staff safe. Speak to your Housing Officer, or Warden, about getting our permission.

We, as the landlord, will ‘risk assess’ the risk of fire from the storage and charging of your scooter. We will use the [Scottish Government’s ‘Practical fire safety for existing specialised housing and similar premises: guidance’](https://www.gov.scot/publications/practical-fire-safety-guidance-existing-specialised-housing-similar-premises/) and, specifically [Annex C](https://www.gov.scot/publications/practical-fire-safety-guidance-existing-specialised-housing-similar-premises/pages/16/)

We will also consider whether others are at risk of harm, if you appear unable to operate it safely. For example, if there are risks due to your eye-sight; medical issue or due to alcohol or another substance.

We will give you advice on your responsibilities for safe storage etc.. We will advise you on possible solutions if there is are any safety risks.

We will only refuse permission if there is a good safety reason for doing so. We will explain this reason to you. If you can resolve the reason, then you can ask us again.

If you already have a mobility scooter, you will still need permission.

**Where can I store my mobility scooter?**

The place you store it should be secure, clean and dry. The safest place to store and charge your scooter is outside your home e.g. in a shed.

You will need to get our permission before building external storage. We will check that it will not be a fire risk to neighbours. You will need to provide external storage yourself.

If you cannot store your scooter outside (if you don’t have a garden for example), you may be able to store it inside in a suitable room. For example, a room with a fire-resistant (or substantial) door which is kept **shut**, and a smoke detector.

Do not store or charge it in your hallway. This is likely to block off your escape route.

Petrol scooters should **never** be stored inside the home or in communal areas.

**Can I make alterations to my home to accommodate my scooter?**

Perhaps, however the cost of alterations could be high. We will not pay for alterations - for example, we will not provide a fire-door; ramp; nor paved area etc.. Before carrying out any improvements or alterations to your property, you must ask us for written permission. We have a right to inspect any work carried out.

Before getting one, make sure your doors are wide enough for it to fit through. You may be able to find a different model.

Before buying or leasing, think about all costs - including the cost of safe storage.

**Can I store my mobility scooter in a communal area?**

Scooters cannot be kept within corridors or shared areas. If there is designated storage outside, space may be limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Mobility scooters must not block escape routes or fire exits or cause a potential hazard.

**What happens if there is nowhere safe to store my mobility scooter?**

You will not get permission if you do not have a safe place to store it.

**Where can I charge the battery for my mobility scooter?**

Your mobility scooter battery must be recharged at your own property or within a designated (external) scooter charging area.

If you live in a building with communal / shared areas, recharging must not to be carried out in any communal areas including corridors, laundry or stairwell areas.

Scooters using a communal designated charging facility will need an annual PAT (‘portable appliance test) to check that the charging equipment is safe to be used.

Where-ever it’s stored, we recommend getting your charging kit ‘PAT’ tested each year.

We recommend you keep your scooter and equipment maintained / serviced in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions to guarantee safe operation.

**What happens if I damage something using my scooter?**

You will be charged for any damage caused to your home, or a communal area.

**Should I have insurance for my mobility scooter?**

Yes. This should include liability insurance in case of damage to building, or injury involving other people.

**What happens if I already have a scooter and move home?**

If you already have a mobility scooter, it is your responsibility to make sure that there is appropriate storage and charging facilities before you accept a tenancy.

**Are there any rules for using scooters?**

Yes. You should be aware of these Government [rules and laws: Mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs: the rules](https://www.gov.uk/mobility-scooters-and-powered-wheelchairs-rules)

**Where can I find advice about getting a scooter and keeping safe?**

There is lots of good information on the internet. You can also get advice from your local reputable supplier / retailer of mobility scooters. If you are struggling to access this information, please let us know and we will assist you.

Internet information includes;

* www.disabilityscot.org.uk/
* https://livingmadeeasy.org.uk/category/access-and-mobililty/wheelchairs-scooters-and-buggies/scooters

**Why is safe storage and charging important?**

This short video shows why care needs to be taken with storage and charging:

* Direct link to video: [Mobility scooter fire](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fyoutu.be%2FYYebqIYVcyk&data=04%7C01%7C%7C8924fcd1296f41fe1c8a08d988bf6506%7C89f0b56e6d164fe89dba176fa940f7c9%7C0%7C0%7C637691177871889806%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=CTYhS52l2DuHj4yFchZfFOJUK51O87KBtHl%2BwnfW%2FzE%3D&reserved=0) (<https://youtu.be/YYebqIYVcyk>)
* *Or search for: DWFireRescue Mobility Scooter Charging Advice*

**\*Do people with NHS Highland supplied equipment need permission?**

Tenants with equipment such as a powered wheelchair provided via NHS Highland do not need our permission. This is because NHS Highland undertake risk assessments and safety checks for equipment that they provide. The guidance on safe use etc. is relevant to all.