

# Thinking about a move?

*Thinking About Very Sheltered  
Housing?*

We offer a telephone interpreting service. To use it, phone 0845 6 066 067. Leave your name, language and phone number and a translator will call you back.

我們設有電話傳譯服務，如欲使用，請撥電 **0845 6 066 067**，留下你的姓名、所用語言和電話號碼，便會有翻譯員回覆你的。

টেলিফোনে অনুবাদ প্রদান করার একটি ব্যবস্থা আছে। এটা ব্যবহার করতে হলে **0845 6 066 067** নম্বরে ফোন করে আপনার নাম, কোন ভাষায় কথা বলেন এবং টেলিফোন নম্বর বলুন তাহলে একজন অনুবাদকারী আপনাকে ফোন করবেন।

Caso deseje esta publicação em português ligue 0845 6 066 067. Será atendido por um gravador de chamadas. Queira por favor, deixar o seu nome, língua a traduzir e número de telefone e um tradutor telefonar-lhe-á em seguida.

If you would like this leaflet in large type, Braille or audio tape phone 0845 6 066 067.

## **Contents**

About this leaflet.....	4
Very Sheltered Housing is about:.....	4
Questions and Answers.....	6
Money Matters.....	10
Further Information.....	11
Contacts.....	12
What do residents say about very sheltered housing?.....	13

The images in this leaflet were provided by the  
Flagship Housing Group

## ***About this leaflet***

We all know how difficult it is to move house. Taking time to think through your options means that you can make the best, and most positive choice for yourself. If decisions have to be made in a hurry or an emergency some older people end up living somewhere they are not happy to be. Sometimes this is because they want to please others or not be a burden to their family.

This leaflet aims to help you decide if very sheltered housing is a good choice for you and tells you where to go for further advice and information.

## ***Very Sheltered Housing is about:***

- Living at home – not in a home
- Continuing to live in your own community
- Having your own front door in a secure environment – and deciding who comes in
- Couples and friends being able to stay together
- Having a mix of able and less able older people
- 24 hour care and support services always being available – for when and if you need them
- Support being on hand to help keep you independent
- Joining in with social activities - or being private
- Control over your finances
- Having security as a tenant
- Keeping in contact with local people
- Continuing to use local services

Very sheltered housing offers a way of supporting you to live independently with 24-hour services available when you need them. You have the security and privacy of a self-contained flat of your own and a range of shared facilities on the premises.

You may be thinking about moving or having to leave your current home because of life changes or health problems. To move into a very sheltered housing scheme you must require at

least four hours of personal care and some support each week.

If you value your independence and privacy, want to control and to make choices in your life, you should consider very sheltered housing. To find out what is available in your area see the 'Contacts' section below. See the 'Money Issues' section if you are concerned about financial matters.

**Below is the story of how two people moved into very sheltered housing written with them, by their daughter, Liz Foyers.**



*"In 1986 Mum and Dad retired from a very busy and sociable life running a pub, moving into a Housing Association flat just down the road. Retirement brought it's own rewards – holidays, trips out etc, but inevitably age finally caught up with them.*

*Dad was still very active and was well able to work on his allotment and get out and about, but Mum had slowed down both mentally and physically and her only contact with the outside world was through visitors or trips when my sister and I were able to take her.*

*Most of her time was spent sitting in her chair while Dad coped with their day-to-day needs. I think that when we saw the first brick of No 11 Cullum Road being laid we realised that this was perhaps an ideal place for Mum and Dad to move into – still close to us but with more care for Mum. So we set the wheels tentatively in motion".*

## Questions and Answers

I am managing fairly well with help from my friends and family, but my health is not good and I want to move. Would very sheltered housing be suitable for me?

*Yes. Most very sheltered housing schemes have a mix of tenants. Some will be getting a lot of care and support; others will be living more independently. The flats are accessible and easy for you to manage.*

I own my own home, can I move into very sheltered housing?

*Yes. Very sheltered housing is open to all people whether they own or rent their current accommodation.*

I already live in ordinary sheltered housing – how would very sheltered housing be different?

*The main difference is that care and support staff are on the premises 24 hours a day. There are also social activities and other facilities in the scheme. Each very sheltered scheme has in it different accommodation, for example some flats are bigger than others.*

My husband is unwell and we get a lot of help from our family and friends. Could we move into very sheltered housing together?

*Yes. You and your husband can stay together and your family and friends can continue to help as before if they want to, with the added support of the scheme staff.*



## The story continues.....

*“Time went on and Dad’s hip finally gave way and an operation followed. Because neither my sister nor I had suitable houses for Mum to come and stay while Dad was in hospital – no downstairs toilet being the major issue, we had to arrange for Respite Care for her. We didn’t like doing that and it made us think about what the future would hold as time moved on.”*

What happens if my health gets worse while I am living in very sheltered housing?

*It is expected that your needs will change over time – (and not always for the worse)! There may be times when you need a lot of care and support, times when you need less support or a mixture of the two.*

*The staff will be flexible and sensitive in asking you about what help you need. They cannot give you nursing care, but Community Nurses can support you to stay living in your home.*



My mother has early signs of Alzheimer’s disease. Can she move into very sheltered housing?

*Yes. Some very sheltered housing schemes provide for new tenants with dementia to live in flats grouped together within the scheme. Most people who develop dementia after moving into very sheltered housing can continue to stay in their familiar home surroundings supported by staff and friends as before.*

## The next bit.....

*“A family conference was called and my sister contacted Mum’s Social Worker and eventually they were offered a flat at No. 11. What a revelation!! We couldn’t believe our eyes when we all went down to view the flat - it was twice the size of the one they were living in and the facilities were amazing – everything we could have hoped for.*

*They duly moved in and their lives, especially Mum’s, have been transformed. Carers on site 24 hours a day is such a comfort to us all – there is nearly always someone about for a chat in the Dayroom or Conservatory - there’s all sorts of entertainment and activities planned without having to leave the building and some trips out – so much so that when we pop in to see them nowadays we often have to hunt them down”.*

What facilities and services are available on-site in the very sheltered housing scheme?

*The facilities range from lounges to activity rooms, shops, hairdressers and keep fit suites. Sometimes a day centre is based in the scheme. People from the surrounding area may also come in to use the facilities and resources.*

Who runs the very sheltered housing scheme?

*Very sheltered housing is built and run by housing associations or the local council. Usually the staff team is employed by a housing association. Very sheltered housing tenants are involved in making decisions on all aspects of the scheme they live in.*

## Can I stay until I die?

*Most people are able to live in their homes until they die. For a few people there may come a time when you will want to talk about whether or not the scheme can continue to meet your needs. If this is the case the staff teams and Social Care Services will talk about alternative choices with you and your family.*

Somebody said I should go into a 'Home'. What is different about moving into very sheltered housing?

*You will be at home in your own flat, with control over your finances, and with privacy and choice about how much you mix with the other residents (or not).*



*The staff will support you in looking after yourself for as long as possible, and you can keep up your usual routines and activities in your community.*

## The end result

*“The best thing of all is they still have their own front door with their very own key and no one goes into their flat uninvited – they sort out their own meals and their own domestic routine so still have their own independence with help around when needed.*

*No we didn't put our Parents in a Home they just moved into a new home and we couldn't be happier”*

Is there a very sheltered scheme in my area?



*There are many very sheltered schemes throughout Suffolk. They are very popular, often with waiting lists. For information on very sheltered housing in your area, contact your local council (you can get the number from your telephone directory), a Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB), Housing Associations or Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC, see below)*

*Your local Citizen's Advice Bureau can also give you general information about benefits, housing and financial matters.*

## **Money Matters**

Can I afford very sheltered housing?

You will have to pay rent.

If the accommodation is provided by a housing association or by the council, the rent levels are usually affordable.

Depending on your income, you may qualify for housing benefit to help you with your rent. If you get housing benefit or income support you may also be entitled to free care and support services.

If you are thinking of moving into very sheltered housing it is important to find out exactly what it will cost you. You may qualify for benefits to meet most, or part, of the costs. Get advice and information from your Social Worker, Citizen's Advice Bureau, or from the organisations listed at the end of this leaflet.

How much does very sheltered housing cost?

There are four elements to the cost of living in very sheltered housing:

- The cost of renting your home
- The service charges associated with your home, (for example lift and fire alarm servicing and repairs and replacement of communal furniture)
- Your support costs
- Your care costs

The amount you pay will vary depending on your financial situation and your income. You may have to pay for all of the costs, or you may be entitled to benefits to meet some of them.

You may find that your care needs to fluctuate up and down. This can mean that you need different services at different times. If this happens you can ask for a re-assessment from your local Social Care Services. As a result of changes your care and support costs may increase or decrease.

### ***Further Information***

A video explaining Very Sheltered Housing is available from your local Social Care Services department called “My Own Front Door”. Each very sheltered housing scheme produces its own individual leaflet that outlines the specific features of the scheme and the costs of living there. Support staff can also ask for a reassessment of your needs on your behalf.

## ***Contacts***

### **Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC)**

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
89 Albert Embankment  
London SE1 7TP

Advice Line: 020 7820 1343

[www.housingcare.org](http://www.housingcare.org)

Phone EAC's advice line for free advice and information on all aspects of housing, care and support. The web site has a database of housing options, including extra care accommodation, nation-wide.

### ***For more general advice and information contact:***

#### **Age Concern England**

Information Line: 0800 00 99 66

#### **AIMS:**

020 8765 7465

An advice, information and mediation service for people living in sheltered and retirement housing.

#### **Alzheimer's Society helpline:**

0845 300 0336

## **What do residents say about very sheltered housing?**

“You get the extra help you need without moving”. *Julia*

“There’s plenty to do here, and good company”. *Enid*

“Living here means peace of mind for me and my family ... and they can stay over whenever they come to visit”. *Joan*

“I see people every day, and at the end of the day I can lock my door and relax”. *Eileen*

“I have the best of both worlds here. The staff remind me of things – like taking my pills – but they don’t do things for me”. *Barbara*

“I like being independent and I feel very secure”. *Julia*

**We are currently negotiating and hope to provide new services in:**

- Beccles
- Capel St Mary
- Eye
- Ipswich
- Kessingland
- North Lowestoft
- Stowmarket
- Sudbury





*For your Notes...*

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This leaflet was published in August 2006.  
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