



**Housing**  
services

# Sheltered Housing

## Guide for Applicants

BCHA aims to provide the best possible, care, support and accommodation for Bedford Citizens



# Sheltered Housing

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## Q What is BCHA?

**A** Bedford Citizens Housing Association was formed in 1957, and is a non-profit making charitable organisation, providing sheltered and non-sheltered accommodation for Bedford Citizens. This leaflet is for older people seeking sheltered accommodation i.e. people who require support from a Scheme Manager.



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## Q What is Sheltered Housing?

**A** Sheltered Housing offers older people a choice of accommodation in a safe and secure environment. Tenants have the benefit of a part time site based Scheme Manager, an emergency alarm call system, and an individual regularly reviewed support plan. Sheltered housing is designed to help older people maintain their independence.

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## Q Where is BCHA's Sheltered Housing?

**A** There are currently two sheltered housing schemes within the association.

Bedesman's House  
- Duckmill Lane

Maydenbury House  
- Kimbolton Road

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## Q What facilities are provided at the Schemes?

**A** Lifts, communal lounge, laundry room, guest room (for visitors), free car parking, buggy parking and communal gardens. The accommodation is primarily one bedroom flats.

### **Q Can I get help with the rent?**

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**A** You may be entitled to housing benefit but this will depend on your financial situation i.e. how much pension you get, any savings, etc. Advice may be obtained by contacting Age UK or a Benefits advisor at the Council, who can also arrange for assistance with form filling. If you are not entitled to housing benefit you may still be able to seek assistance with paying the support charge by requesting a Fairer Charging Assessment through Bedford Borough Council. Please ask us for further assistance.

### **Q Can I keep pets?**

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**A** Cats and dogs are not allowed at our schemes, however small caged animals can be considered with permission provided provision is made to care for them should you become unable to do so.

### **Q I would like a 2 bedroom property**

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**A** We have very few 2 bedroom property vacancies and the waiting lists are lengthy. We only consider couples for these properties.

### **Q How soon can I expect to be re-housed?**

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**A** BCHA has very few vacancies each year but we do aim to offer accommodation to all accepted applicants within 18 months of joining our list. The time spent on the waiting list may be longer than this if you are seeking a particular scheme or ground floor accommodation. We would also strongly recommend that you apply to other Housing Associations (also known as registered providers) in the area.

### **Q How do I apply?**

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**A** You will need to complete and return an application form. Please contact us using the details on the back of this leaflet.

**If you need assistance to complete the application form or if you require this leaflet in a different format or language please contact BCHA, using the details overleaf and we will be pleased to help you.**

**Q How are my details kept confidential?**

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**A** We recognise that your housing application form contains questions of a sensitive nature. We endeavour only to ask questions that are relevant and enable us to assess your housing need. We treat all applications in the strictest confidence and comply, as appropriate, with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. Details of our policy are available on request.

**Q How is my application assessed?**

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**A** Your application will be assessed in accordance with our Allocations Policy which assesses your housing need. If you have a medical condition you may be asked to supply us with a letter from your doctor to support your application.

**Q What happens if I am successful?**

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**A** You will receive a letter advising you that you will be placed onto the waiting list for your chosen schemes. When a vacancy occurs we look at the applicant with the highest need in the first instance. Prior to being considered for a tenancy you will be asked to attend an interview to verify your application. We will also undertake

a needs assessment with you, to ensure we will be able to meet your support needs. You will then have the opportunity to view the vacancy. In accordance with our Allocations Policy you are allowed to refuse two offers of tenancy before you are removed from our waiting list.

**Q What happens if I am unsuccessful?**

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**A** If you are not successful you will receive a letter explaining why you do not meet our criteria, for example if you owe a housing related debt or do not have a local connection. If you wish to appeal against the decision you should use our complaints procedure which is available on request.

We do not consider applicants who have been guilty of anti social behaviour or domestic violence, hate crime or who have been violent to council or housing provider staff.

**Q How do I contact BCHA?**

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**A** Please see our contact details on the back of this leaflet.

### **Q What does the Scheme Manager do?**

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**A** The Scheme Managers work Monday to Friday and their hours vary between 9am to 3pm.

They will:

- Check on your well-being regularly as agreed with you
- Respond to emergencies within the scheme when on duty
- Assess and agree your support needs regularly
- Request a doctor to visit if you are ill
- Request Medication reviews, Occupational Therapy referrals, nurse visits and monitor any care packages
- Provide you with help to arrange any personal or domestic support you may require
- Provide help with completing documents or reading post, instructions, recipes etc.
- Report any maintenance problems, or inspect and identify faults within flats
- Assist you to make arrangements for external services e.g. utilities connection
- Assist residents to arrange activities.

They are unable to:

- Provide personal care/nursing care, or administer any medication but are happy to help you access such services
- Provide shopping, laundry, cleaning, prescription collection service, or meals.

### **Q What is the rent?**

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**A** Current rent information may be obtained from our Housing & Maintenance Manager or Head of Finance.

### **Q What does the Service Charge include?**

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**A** The service charge covers a percentage of the Scheme Manager's costs, emergency alarm system, external window cleaning & gardening, lighting, heating of all communal areas, TV aerials maintenance and fire alarm maintenance. Service charges are based on actual costs of service provided. Service charges are reviewed annually and tenants are consulted regularly on what is included in the charges.



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