

	HEALTH & SAFETY Providence Row Housing Association	Electric Mobility Vehicles and Scooters Policy VERSION:1
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Electric Mobility Vehicles and Scooters Policy

Policy Statement

This policy provides information and guidance on the safe storage, charging and use of electric mobility vehicles (MV) within all properties owned or managed by PRHA. The policy is to reduce hazards within the buildings and to our residents and staff whilst actively promoting independent living.

The policy takes into account the **Equality Act 2010** (*Appendix I*) in which it is unlawful to treat a disabled person less favourably than others for a disability related reason.

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, electric mobility vehicles (MV) include all sit down electric mobility scooters, electric scooters (e-scooters) and wheelchairs and any mobility vehicle that requires electrical charging.

PRHA recognised the use of MVs enables our residents with limited mobility to maintain their independence and promotes social inclusion.

Principles

- Resident's needs, views and priorities are acknowledged when carrying out a risk assessment in relation to storage, charging and use of an MV in their property
- Clear standards for staff and residents e.g. "clear corridors"
- Non-discriminatory, fair and equitable, taking into account **Equality Act 2010** (*Appendix I*)
- Fire Regulatory Standard 2005 and good practice

Objectives

PRHA will provide:

- Clear definitions of the responsibilities of PRHA residents and staff
- Clear guidance to residents & staff on the use, storage and charging of MV's
- Classification of mobility scooters (*Appendix II*)

Mobility Vehicles and Risk

One of the key challenges to landlords is the perceived risk posed by storage and charging of MVs in communal areas. The biggest factors are blocking communal corridors and fire exits, followed by charging poorly maintained vehicles in communal areas via extension cables. There is the potential of collisions within the building itself; both with residents and staff causing injury,

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and with the internal structure causing damage which may cause further risks e.g. broken to flooring causing trip hazards.

PRHA has maintained a “clear corridors” approach to all its buildings for many years to ensure that in the case of fire, our residents and staff are able to evacuate from the building safely.

Key Risk Areas:-

- Obstruction or restriction of safe fire escape routes or exits
- Fire risk from faulty units, unsafe or unsupervised charging mechanisms and poor ventilation for charging.
- Trip hazards from inappropriate charging cables
- Collisions within the building causing injury or damage

Storage of Mobility Vehicles

PRHA and landlords for the services we manage are required to carry out a Fire Risk Assessment in each of their buildings.

Obstructions from storing mobility vehicles and potential fire risk from battery charging in fire escape routes will mean **permission will not be given** for storing and charging in communal areas at any time.

Our accommodation has not been built to take into account the use, charging and storage of MV's. The communal areas do not easily allow alterations to meet the increased requirement for these facilities. It is recognised that in order to promote independent living there is a need to work with residents to identify suitable storage and charging facilities.

A **risk assessment** (Appendix III) **MUST** be carried out for all residents who wish to store an MV in their property:-

- **Class 1** Where a resident is able to safely store a wheelchair in their property, without blocking safe means of escape in an emergency, permission is not usually required. If the resident is unable to store it within their home, permission must be agreed for suitable safe storage within the service.
- **Class 2** A resident **MUST** be able to **safely** store and charge their mobility vehicle in their own property, without blocking their own safe means of escape in an emergency. Permission to store and charge must be agreed in advance of buying or leasing the vehicle. Class 2 vehicles cannot be stored or charged in any communal areas within the property.
- **Class 3** These vehicles are designated for use on the roads and are faster and heavier. As such, permission must be agreed for **external**

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storage and charging only. These vehicles **cannot** be stored or charged within communal areas **OR** the residents property.

Charging Mobility Vehicles

Residents should be provided with advice on the safe charging of scooters as part of a person-centred approach.

- The vehicle should not be charged in the hallway if this is the only means of fire escape.
- The vehicle should not block means of escape in the location it is charged in.
- Fire detection equipment (smoke alarms) should be present and in good working order.
- Extension cables should not be used
- Extension cables from communal area into the resident's property to charge their mobility vehicle is a serious H&S breach and will lead to written warnings and possible withdrawal of permission.
- The area should be well ventilated and fire doors closed.
- Mobility Vehicles should **not** be charged overnight due to the risk of a fire while resident is asleep.
- Charging should be monitored and not left on while resident goes out or goes to bed.
- MV's should be **unplugged**, not just turned off at the socket when fully charged.

Permission

All users of MVs will request permission from PRHA in writing; this includes those who already use these vehicle prior to the introduction of the policy or change of service provider contracts. Residents must request permission before leasing or buying a vehicle.

Permission will be given in writing and is subject to:-

- Proof of insurance/registration with DVLA if applicable
- Risk Assessment has been carried out
- Residents agrees to pay for any damages to the property caused by collisions and electricity for charging (if appropriate)

Permission will be reviewed annually and can be withdrawn on the basis of:-

- No insurance is in place
- Resident has exceeded 3 warnings for storing/charging the MV in communal areas
- Concerning incidents involving injury to residents or damage to the building

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PRHA Responsibilities:

- Assess requests from residents before granting or refusing permission and identify where the MV will be stored
- We will not usually refuse permission if the resident can store the MV in their own home, can charge is safely and it does not hinder evacuation in the event of a fire
- Notify residents in writing of permission
- Withdraw consent where resident is repeatedly not following guidance particularly storage in communal areas and blocking fire evacuation routes.
- PRHA maintains “clear corridors” in all its schemes to ensure safe routes of evacuation and limitation of fire risk in communal areas.

Resident Responsibilities:

- Request permission in writing prior to obtaining an MV
- Store their mobility vehicle within their own home unless there is a mobility vehicle storage facility near their home.
- Not to leave or store their MV in any communal area
- Not to use extension cables or communal power sockets to charge the MV
- Cover any damages caused by the MV, e.g. damage to floor, holes in plaster, lifts etc.
- Use the MV responsibly and not cause nuisance or danger to self or others and comply with the regulations and recommendations of the Highway Code (36-46)
- Annual PAT testing of the MV is provided by PRHA in supported properties
- General Needs residents must arrange for annual PAT testing of the MV with a qualified electrician and provide a certificate to PRHA
- General Needs residents must confirm that home contents insurance has been amended to cover the storage and charging of a EMV in their home

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Appendices

Appendix I – Equality Act 2010

Appendix II – Classification of Mobility Vehicles & Wheelchairs

Appendix I

Equality Act 2010 It is unlawful to treat a disabled person less favourably than others for a disability related reason. Landlords are required to make reasonable adjustments for disabled residents if requested which included the provision of auxiliary aids. However landlords are not required to make any changes that would consist/include the alteration of a physical feature within the building

Appendix II

Classification of Mobility Vehicles & Wheelchairs

Wheelchairs and mobility scooters are defined by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) as follows:



Class 1 – Manually operated wheelchairs not electrically operated. These **do not need** to be registered with the DVLA.



Class 2 – Powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters for pedestrian routes. Limited speed of 4mph and an un-laden weight not exceeding 113.4kg. These are not allowed on the public highway and **do not need** to be registered with the DVLA.



Class 3 – Powered vehicles and mobility scooters that travel up to 8mph on roads/highways. Fitted with a device limiting the speed to 4mph for use on pedestrian routes. The un-laden weight must not exceed 150kg. These must be registered with the DVLA for road use.

This policy will apply to:

- **Class 1** wheelchairs;
- **Class 2** powered wheelchairs/mobility scooters for footways (max 4mph);
- **Class 3** powered wheelchairs/mobility scooters for road use (max 8mph);