



SCOOTER POLICY

Responsible Director: Director of Homes and Wellbeing

Responsible Manager: Head of Homes and Wellbeing

Last updated: January 2020

Next update: January 2023

Mobility Scooter storage policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A significant proportion of NCHA customers are elderly and/or disabled and have acquired mobility scooters over the last few years to improve their mobility and independence. Storage and access have become significant issues for many customers, leading either to a scooter being a potential health and safety and fire hazard in a communal area or customer's property, or the lack of suitable storage acting as an impediment to NCHA's purchasing a scooter which would otherwise make a significant contribution to their independence and quality of life.
- 1.2 NCHA understands the benefits that mobility scooters can provide and wishes to support our customers and residents to retain their independence as far as possible. However, the health and safety of all of our customer's, staff and visitors must be our first priority.
- 1.3 In order to help customers who require a motorised scooter where suitable storage is not available, NCHA has maintained a Scooter Storage budget of £30,000 plus a repair budget of £5,000 which can be used to provide communal and individual scooter stores and improve access where required.
- 1.4 This policy deals with the storage of these scooters in NCHA owned properties and has been written with the intention of enabling people to use and store them whilst at the same time not compromising the Association's obligations under current fire safety legislation, namely the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

2. Bringing a scooter onto NCHA premises

- 2.1 Everyone has the right to purchase a mobility scooter. Storage, however, can be problematic, especially where the owners of scooters live in properties which lead out onto communal areas. In this situation the customer should first take advice from their Estate Officer and ask for permission in writing to store a scooter on NCHA premises.
- 2.2 By taking advice at this stage the customer will be able to confirm whether there is adequate storage space available before any purchase takes place. Allocation of space for a mobility scooter will be made on a first-come, first-served basis. If there are already mobility scooters parked on a scheme the Estate Officer will record the details and every effort will be made to ensure that there is adequate space for all scooters to be stored. If there is insufficient space the Estate Officer will support the customer to apply to the NCHA Scooter Storage budget.
- 2.3 Customers who bring scooters onto a scheme without first making arrangements for a suitable storage space may be asked to remove them from the premises if the storage of scooter causes fire safety or other health and safety issues.

3. Purchasing a scooter

- 3.1 We recommend that customers visit a retail outlet where mobility scooters can be hired and training given to gain advice and experience of use before they purchase a scooter.
- 3.2 Customers should not purchase a mobility scooter without making appropriate checks that the scooter can be stored and charged in a safe location and that storage of the scooter does not cause any fire safety risks in communal areas or the customer's own flat, bungalow or house.
- 3.3 All customers should seek the permission of their NCHA Estate Officer if the intended storage and charging of a mobility scooter is in an internal or external communal area. Where the intended storage and charging location is in a customer's own property and is likely to obstruct access/exit from the property, it is recommended that customers consult their Estate Officer to discuss safe storage and charging options before purchasing a scooter.

4. Charging a scooter

- 4.1 Scooters may only be charged a) in a customer's own home (where they will pay for the costs of charging) or b) in a designated internal or external charging and storing area.
- 4.2 If any scooters are found to be recharging in communal areas not designated for this purpose the owner of the mobility scooter will be recharged for the electricity used and may be asked to remove the scooter from the premises.
- 4.3 All scooters charged within a designated communal area will require a PAT (Portable Appliance Test) annually to ensure that the charging equipment is safe to be used. Where mobility scooters are stored in designated internal communal areas, NCHA will arrange for PAT tests to be undertaken either by a Scheme Manager or contractor. As the costs for PAT testing are likely to be minimal, individual customers will not be charged for test. Owners of mobility scooters which have failed the PAT test and found to be faulty **MUST NOT** continue to charge them in designated communal areas until the fault has been repaired. Owners of mobility scooters will be responsible for paying for repairs and must provide written evidence of completion of repairs by a suitably qualified person.
- 4.4 In accordance with NCHA's Fire Safety Management Policy, where no designated storage areas exist, mobility scooters must not be stored in access or escape routes. Under no circumstance should mobility scooters be charged in any communal areas other than specially equipped designated charging/storage rooms.
- 4.5 Scooters should not be left on permanent charge and should only charged for the manufacturer's recommended time.

5. Locations of scooter stores

- 5.1 Wherever possible mobility scooters should be stored in a room in the customer's own home (not a passage way forming an access/exit route to the property) or in a storage facility outside and to the rear (where the customer lives in a ground floor flat, house or bungalow).
- 5.2 Where a suitable scooter store, hardstanding, electric supply and connection for charging and/or access to the public highway does not exist, customers supported by the Estate Officer should apply to the Scooter Storage budget for funding to provide individual or communal stores, suitable hardstanding, electric supply and connection for charging and suitable access to the public highway before purchasing a mobility scooter. See Appendix 1 for further details.
- 5.4 Where this clearance has been given and an area has been specifically designed and set aside for this purpose, whether indoors or outdoors, residents should at all times comply with the conditions placed upon the storage and usage of the scooter on NCHA premises.
- 5.5 Any mobility scooters kept on NCHA property should have appropriate insurance in place. 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 property. Where a mobility scooter owner does not have insurance, damage caused to the building by the mobility scooter owner will be recharged.
- 5.6 Any damage to NCHA property caused by a mobility scooter will be recovered through the scooter owner's insurance company. If the owner does not have a current insurance certificate they may be liable for meeting the costs themselves.
- 5.7 Customers who bring scooters onto a scheme without arranging suitable insurance first may be asked to remove them from the premises.

6. Customer funded Scooter Store and access works

- 6.1 Where a customer wishes to fund their own Scooter Store and access works, the customer should produce a plan of the intended work and seek NCHA consent in writing. Any customer funded works should be undertaken by a competent and suitably qualified contractor. If the customer wishes to have any works undertaken on a DIY basis by members of their family, the customer will need to provide evidence that the person(s) undertaking the work is competent to undertake the works specified.
- 6.2 Before giving consent for works, NCHA will ensure that the planned works are appropriate for the property and deal adequately with any health and safety issues.
- 6.3 NCHA will conduct a post inspection of any completed customer funded and DIY works to ensure that all works have been completed to a suitable standard,

all health and safety concerns have been addressed and any electrical installations pass NEIC statutory standards. Where works are found to fall below the required standard, the customer will be requested to make good the works. Where the customer is unable or unwilling to make good substandard works, NCHA may take whatever action is necessary up to and including replacing or removing substandard work and disconnecting electric connections. The cost of all works related to making good substandard works will be recharged to the customer.

7. Transferring to a more suitable property

- 7.1 If the customer's current property is unsuitable for storing/using a mobility scooter and is not suitable for any adaptations, the customer may apply for a transfer to another NCHA property.

8. Prioritisation

- 8.1 The purpose of establishing a set of prioritisation criteria is to ensure that limited funds are allocated on a fair basis that reflects both applicants need for a mobility scooter and safe access to their property and takes account of the waiting time of applications.

- 8.2. It is hoped that whilst date ordered applicants may have to wait longer than Urgent Priority applicants, the use of a primarily date ordered system will ensure that their applications will be funded within a reasonable period of time.

- 8.3 Applicants should complete the Application for Scooter Storage Funding (Appendix 1) and pass the completed form to the Service Manager – Customer Contact & Rents.

8.4 Urgent Priority:

- a. Where a customer is severely disabled or suffering from severe ill health and is completely reliant on their mobility scooter to maintain any independence and mobility, or;
- b. Where a customer urgently needs to purchase a mobility scooter to re-establish their independence and mobility following a newly developed significant disability/severe illness, and; where a customer cannot keep or purchase of a mobility scooter without the installation of a scooter store and/or provision of suitable access.

- 8.4.1 Urgent priority should be backed up with medical written evidence provided by the customer to the person completing the assessment and will be determined by the Service Manager – Customer Contact & Rents. These applications may be given priority over other applications that are dealt with in date order.

8.5 Communal Areas

8.5.1 Customers who currently own a mobility scooter which is necessary to maintain their independence and mobility living in flats accessed through communal areas where mobility scooters cannot be stored because of fire safety issues and where it is not safe or possible to store a scooter in the customer's own flat.

8.5.2 Please note that customers who do not currently own a mobility scooter but wish to purchase one will be dealt with under the standard date ordered priority unless the applicant satisfies the criteria for Urgent Priority (below)

8.6 Date Order Waiting List

8.6.1 The Service Manager – Customer Contact & Rents will maintain a register and waiting list of all applications received for scooter store and access works. The list will be used to confirm the date order; the priority of applications received and monitor the progress of applications and installations received.

8.6.2 All applications will be placed on a waiting list and works ordered on the Date Order list with the exception of 2. Scooter Stores in communal areas, and 3. Urgent Priority, below.

8.6.3 Once the Scooter Store budget has been spent in any one financial year, applicants will be told that they will have to wait until at least the next financial year when a further budget allocation is available.

9. Acknowledgement of receipt of Scooter Store applications

9.1 Following the receipt of a scooter store application and confirmation of priority, the Service Manager, Customer Contact & Rents should write to the applicant confirming the priority awarded and providing an approximate indication of the likely waiting period.

9.2 If the applicant will have to wait until at least the next financial year, the applicant should be advised of any other options for storing a scooter store that may be available to them.

10. Scooter storage budget works

10.1 All scooter store and scooter access works should be assessed by the Maintenance Technical Officer who should seek suitable quotes from Maintenance Approved Contractors for the works required. The Technical Officer should consider any health and safety implications of proposed scooter store installations and access works and consult with the Customer Contact & Rents Service Manager with regard to any design and cost issues which need to be resolved.

10.2 The Technical Officer should also recommend the type of scooter store to be installed which meets the needs of the customer and provides an appropriate level of security for the location.

10.3 Following agreement of the priority and confirmation of quotes, the Service Manager – Customer Contact & Rents should request authorise an order for the works and scooter store through the EBIS system. No orders should be GRN's (approved for payment) until it has been confirmed that works have been completed to a satisfactory standard.

10.4 The Service Manager – Customer Contact & Rents should ensure that customers are kept informed about the progress of their scooter store installations and the installation process. Where the budget for the current financial year has been committed, the Service Manager, Customer Contact & Rents should write to applicants whose scooter stores cannot be funded in the financial year to confirm the carry over to the next financial year.

11. Assessment of Scooter Store benefits

11.1 The Service Manager – Customer Contact & Rents should arrange for a survey of completed scooter store installations in each financial year to assess the application and installation process and the value for money and benefits received by customers following installation.

11.2 The results of this survey should be presented to and considered by the Collective Panel and any recommendations for improvements considered by the Service Manager – Customer Contact & Rents to be implemented.

12. Charging for running costs

12.1 NCHA will not charge for the running costs of communal scooter stores. Customers who have individual scooter stores attached to their properties will be expected to use an electricity supply from their own property.

13. Removal of scooter stores no longer required

13.1 Communal scooter stores will remain in place and will therefore be available for future customers where space is available.

13.2 Where a customer with an individual scooter store has vacated a property, the property will initially be advertised for and let to applicants who require a mobility scooter. Where this is not possible, and the new customer does not require a mobility scooter, the scooter store will be removed and reused at another location.

Appendix 1

Application for Scooter Storage Funding

Information for your Application:

Name:

Address:

Post code:

- 1. **Please give details of the type of property you live in;**
 - Flat with access through an internal communal area
 - Flat with individual access to street
 - Bungalow
 - House
 - Other not described above

- 2. **My property is on the;**
 - Ground floor
 - First floor
 - Second floor
 - Third floor and above
 - On more than one floor (i.e., maisonette or house)

Criteria for prioritising the scooter storage budget:

Please the priority which you think applies to your application;

- 1. **Date Order Waiting List:**

This includes: All Scooter Store applications that do not come under the category 2.0 Communal Areas, or 3.0 Urgent Priority.

- 2.0 **Communal Areas:**

Customers who currently own a mobility scooter which is necessary to maintain their independence and mobility living in flats accessed through communal areas where mobility scooters cannot be stored because of fire safety issues and where it is not safe or possible to store a scooter in the customer’s own flat.

Please note that customers who do not currently own a mobility scooter but wish to purchase one will be dealt with under the standard date ordered priority unless the applicant satisfies the criteria for Urgent Priority (below)

3.0 **Urgent Priority:** (please delete a or b as required)

- a. Where a customer is severely disabled or suffering from severe ill health and is completely reliant on their mobility scooter to maintain any independence and mobility, or;
- b. Where a customer urgently needs to purchase a mobility scooter to re-establish their independence and mobility following a newly developed significant disability/severe illness, and;

Where a customer cannot keep or purchase of a mobility scooter without the installation of a scooter store and/or provision of suitable access.

Please provide information and medical evidence in support of your application: