

Independent living

What this guide is about

This guide includes information about your independent living scheme.

Who is this guide for

People who live in an independent living scheme.

Bitesize summary

On-site facilities

These vary from scheme to scheme but include some or all of the following:

- **Communal lounge**

The lounge is for tenants and their guests to meet, talk and enjoy social activities. It is also available for external organisations who visit to teach art, needlework or other activities that the tenants wish to enjoy in communal areas.

- **Laundry**

Washing machines are available in most independent living schemes. In extra care schemes, the care providers will have their own designated time to use the laundry facilities.

- **Guest room**

This is available for use by tenants' families or friends and can be booked in advance through the independent living coordinator. Priority will be given to those most in need. There is a nightly charge to use the guest room.

- **Communal kitchen**

- **Bathroom/shower room**

Most closed (category two) and extra care schemes have a communal bath or shower room. This offers more bathing options, as individual flats usually only have either a bath or a shower.

On-site services

These vary from scheme to scheme, but the services may include:

- Communal computer
- Library
- Intercom and alarm system
- Door entry system for additional security
- Visiting chiropodist
- Visiting hairdresser.

Independent living coordinators

Your independent living coordinator is there to ensure your safety and wellbeing and to provide a link with doctors, families, friends, housing teams, and any other support services needed.

Your independent living coordinator will contact you, according to your preference, by personal visit or via the intercom system. If an emergency arises and your independent living coordinator is unavailable, your call will transfer to our 24-hour Alarm Response Centre, where assistance will be summoned.

During your first week, your independent living coordinator will visit you to welcome you to your new home and tell you everything you need to know about living in independent living accommodation.

The independent living coordinator will explain:

- The facilities available within the scheme
- How to use the alarm system
- How to use the laundry facilities provided
- How to use any keys supplied
- Any health and safety procedures
- What to do in the case of a fire
- How to check equipment, such as the alarm and pendant
- Our service standards and help with any queries or complaints.

You can expect the following service from your independent living coordinator:

- A call, according to your preference, either by personal visit or intercom (there is a minimum level of service that will be explained to you)

- Response to emergencies within working hours and liaison with appropriate agencies
- Equipment checks
- Keeping your personal data up-to-date through support plans
- Assistance to organise social activities
- An individual support plan and risk assessment to assess your needs within a month of your moving in.

Your independent living coordinator will do lots of things for you personally and for the scheme, but they cannot:

- Change dressings or give medication of any kind (such as administer drugs or help with eye or ear drops)
- Cook meals or do your shopping
- Bank your money or pay your bills.

The relationship between you and your independent living coordinator is of a professional nature. We ask that you observe the following code of conduct:

- **Cash and gifts**

Progress Housing Group employees cannot lend you money or accept gifts from you.

They can also not undertake financially related instructions on your behalf, such as handling your bank account or benefits.

- **Interaction**

We expect employees and tenants to refrain from derogatory, offensive or inappropriate behaviour or language.

- **Befriending**

Part of your independent living coordinator's role is to build a relationship with you based on trust and confidence and to help support you in your home. However, independent living coordinators cannot take the place of your family and friends.

Emergency support

Your home has its own alarm system, which provides a link with your independent living coordinator through a personal pendant alarm or pull cord and a two-way speech system.

Another employee will cover the site when the independent living coordinator is on leave.

When the independent living coordinator is not on duty, the alarm system is switched through to our 24-hour Alarm Response Centre, which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, providing support whenever needed.

Using the alarm system

Your independent living coordinator will show you how to use the alarm system when you move into your accommodation.

Instructions on using the alarm system

Your alarm works using a unit fitted to the wall, usually in the hall or lounge, called the speech module.

To use the speech module:

- Press the button on the speech module
- A small red light will flash to let you know that your call has been received
- Wait for your independent living coordinator or duty controller to answer
- Once they have finished speaking, tell them what the problem is.

Emergency alarm cords are also in your home, usually in the bathroom and bedroom.

To use the alarm cords:

- Pull the cord to activate the alarm
- Your independent living coordinator or the duty controller will answer
- Tell them what the problem is.

The equipment is very sensitive, so there is no need to shout; just talk normally, and you will be heard. If you are unable to speak, don't panic. The independent living coordinator will be able to tell which flat the call has come from and will summon assistance immediately.

The alarm cord or button is there for your safety. If you need to raise an alarm, please use it, regardless of the time of day.

If you, or a visitor, pull the alarm cord by mistake, just tell the person who answers.

Power failure

During a power failure, the alarm system will work on batteries for several hours, so you can still get help if needed. The alarm system is tested quarterly to ensure that it operates correctly and that any alarm cords hang freely, but if you feel that it is not working properly in between these checks, please report the fault to your independent living coordinator.

It is important that the alarm is always in good working order - you never know if you may need it.

Social activities

Social activities vary from scheme to scheme and can include bingo, dominoes, coffee mornings, keep-fit sessions, day trips, lunch clubs, and art classes. The independent living coordinator and the activities coordinator encourage and help organise social activities within their schemes and promote the use of shared resources.

Pets

Well-behaved cats and dogs are welcome in our open (category one) schemes but not in our closed (category two) and extra care schemes with communal areas and corridors. However, you may keep budgies, canaries and other

caged birds in any independent living scheme. You will need to request permission to keep pets.

Mobility scooters

Due to safety reasons, electric scooters are not allowed to be charged or stored in communal areas.

We do not provide ramps or storage for a mobility scooter at all schemes. Please speak to your independent living coordinator if you need to discuss any mobility requirements or refer to our Scooter Policy.

Shared area cleaning

We are responsible for the communal areas of schemes, which include corridors, kitchen and lounge areas. We ask that you respect your communal areas and leave them as you find them.

Grounds maintenance

We are responsible for ensuring grounds maintenance of the landscaped areas around each scheme.

Access to your property

Your independent living coordinator or mobile warden has access to a spare key or pass key in case they need to get into your home in an emergency.

For example, if you have fallen and cannot reach the door. Conversely, we will not enter your home without permission unless in an emergency or if you have requested a call and you do not answer.

We require access to your home to undertake annual gas safety checks (if we have fitted gas or heating appliances). This check is a legal requirement and must be undertaken by our gas engineers annually.

Health, safety and security

Your safety and security are our highest priority, and we will do everything we can to make sure you feel safe in your homes. We can advise you on safety procedures for dealing with unfamiliar visitors to the scheme, bogus callers, and how to make your home secure.

All our properties have an intercom system and emergency alarm system.

Your independent living coordinator undertakes a regular scheme inspection, including:

- Weekly fire alarm tests
- Weekly health and safety checks of all communal areas

- Checks of personal emergency alarm systems.

Disability Discrimination Act

Our independent living schemes comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements.

Fire prevention

Working in partnership with the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, we can offer you a free home fire safety check. All our schemes comply with fire regulations and are regularly inspected.

Gas safety check

Every year we are legally required to check any gas appliances that we have installed to make sure everything is working safely and efficiently.

Safeguarding

We have a policy in place to protect vulnerable adults in all our communities from mistreatment by employees, relatives, other tenants or any other people in a position of trust.

Repairs

You must take reasonable care of your home and report any repairs promptly. This will stop any damage from worsening and inform us that a repair is needed.

We will coordinate any repairs that are our responsibility, which our Property Services Team will carry out.

For more information on repairs responsibilities, please refer to the 'Repairing and maintaining your home' information on our website or ask for a leaflet.

Repairs can be reported on our website at www.progressgroup.org.uk or by phoning 0333 320 4555 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday. Emergency repairs can be reported 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Planned maintenance

We work on schemes (such as outside painting and annual gas servicing) as part of our planned maintenance and improvements programme.

Planned refurbishment work to individual apartments and bungalows will be carried out, in consultation with tenants, as and when necessary, to ensure that our properties meet our lettable standard.

Decoration of communal areas

We are responsible for maintaining the internal shared areas and the external parts of the building. Redecoration will be completed in consultation on choices for carpets, colour schemes, and other decoration for these shared areas.

Decoration

We encourage tenants to make their homes their own and decorate them how they wish. Replacing carpets, soft furnishings, and interior decoration is the tenant's responsibility and is not included in your rent or service charges.

Schemes with extra care services

Extra care is a service which offers independent living with special facilities and additional services from a registered care provider, which Lancashire County Council funds.

The special facilities may include assisted bathing rooms, a meeting room, a large kitchen or a tenants' lounge. The additional services that will be provided include help with bathing, dressing, cooking, cleaning, and taking medication. The local authority or a registered Care Quality Commission provider provides these services.

With an on-site care team, tenants in our extra care schemes can receive care and support in their homes without moving into residential care.

Extra care services are currently available at the following schemes:

- Stanner Lodge – Lytham St Annes
- Greenwood Court – Leyland.

Please speak to your independent living coordinator for more information on extra care.

You may also be interested in

- Our Progress Lifeline service can offer extra reassurance with telecare services such as personal fall and panic buttons, sensors, and home emergency responders
- Extra care services for support with personal care and specialist facilities
- Our approach to safe and sound homes, including our lettable standard.

Get in touch

The quickest way to get in touch is online at www.progressgroup.org.uk by:

- Logging into your online tenant account
- Emailing us
- Live chat – available Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm.

You can also:

- Call us on 0333 320 4555
- Visit or write to us - Sumner House, 21 King Street, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 2LW.

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Report or track a repair or check your rent balance

You can pay your rent, check your rent balance and report or track a non-emergency repair online 24/7.

Log in or sign up for your online tenant account at www.progressgroup.org.uk

Complaints and compliments

Your feedback is very important to us and helps us to improve our services. If you want to tell us that we have been doing something well or are unhappy about something, please tell us using the contact details on the left.

Our Complaints Policy and process follow the standards set out in the Housing Ombudsmen's Complaint Handling Code. You can read more on our website or let us know if you would like a leaflet.

Information in another format or language

This leaflet is available in the following formats:

- EasyRead
- Audio
- Large print
- Braille
- Other languages.

More information is available at www.progressgroup.org.uk/access