

Policy Guidance Note No 31

Christmas Shutdown Procedures – Housing Support Workers

Responsible Officer	Senior Housing Officer – Supported Accommodation						
Issue No.	1	Revision No.	1	Revision Date:	02/12/2010	Doc Ref:	PGN31

Introduction

Under the terms of the Collective Agreement between Shetland Islands Council and The Unions and relating to the implementation of the Single Status Agreement, a Christmas shutdown was agreed for all non-essential Council Services.

Guidance from the Single Status implementation Team states that, “Council staff are required to participate in the Christmas shutdown unless it can be demonstrated that closedown would make it impossible to maintain key services to the public”.

In November 2009, Housing Service’s Housing Management Team considered the proposal at length and came to the view that Sheltered Housing Support Workers should participate in the Christmas shutdown.

On 25th November 2010, Services Committee ratified the decision that Housing Support Workers should be required to participate in the Christmas shutdown agreement.

The Housing Service is committed to ensuring no tenant is left without support or contact over the festive period.

All Housing Support Worker staff are to work to the following guidelines regarding the Christmas shutdown period.

Guidelines

Discuss with tenants, the support arrangements they have in place over the shutdown period. This can be either formalised arrangements, i.e. Homecare, Care at Home, nursing support or perhaps less formal support arrangements, i.e. support of family, friends, neighbours etc.

It is important that you explain fully to tenants that scheduled visits will not take place over the holidays, but that we want to do all we can to ensure individuals are not unduly disadvantaged because of this.

If you have tenants you believe may be significantly disadvantaged by the Christmas shutdown, please contact the Senior Housing Officer – Supported Accommodation at an early stage to discuss possible options for the provision of additional support.

During the Christmas shutdown period, all tenants should be offered daily reassurance calls from Tunstall Response. Tunstall are able to provide a service

whereby they contact individual tenants on a daily (or frequency to suit the individual) basis. The operator will check that all is well with the tenant and contact a named responder if there is a problem which can't be resolved by the operator.

I would ask that you collate information regarding tenants on your scheme who wish to take advantage of this service. Please forward names and individual Client I.D. information to the Housing Assistant – Supported Accommodation. The information should arrive at Housing by 15th December to allow the necessary arrangements to be formalised.

If you have tenants who do not have Community Alarm but who now feel might benefit and be in need of this provision, you should assist to make necessary referral through the Duty O.T. system either on Tel. 01595 744319 or by email on duty.ot@shetland.gov.uk

Undertake pre Christmas checks to all Community alarms by testing. As part of the testing process, please ensure all contact information is up to date.

There should ideally be 4 named contacts in place for individual tenants, but it is recognised that this is not always possible. The priority must be however to ensure the information held by Tunstall is current and accurate so that if Community Alarm is required, there are no unnecessary delays in summoning assistance.

Any change to contact names should be passed to the Housing Assistant – Supported Accommodation, again by 15th December at the latest.

As Housing Support Workers are on leave over the festive, you may wish to contact Tunstall to advise that you will not be part of an emergency contact list during this time. However, if you are generally willing to respond in an emergency situation (under normal understanding regarding availability, ability etc), the Housing Service is happy to authorise additional payment in recognition of the undertaking.

You can submit timesheets in accordance with OP52. Payment will be calculated from the time of response. There is no requirement to submit a 'summary of flexible hours' sheet during this period

Snow Clearing and Gritting

A snow clearing/gritting service will not be generally available during the shutdown. Tenants (and their families/carers where possible) should be informed of this in advance and advised to exercise due care and attention when venturing out over this period in wintery conditions.

Should there be any emergency medical type situation where access is required to an individual property and all roads and paths are impassable, the Roads Service can provide on-call 24 hour assistance. Tenants/families/carers should be informed that to request an emergency response, they should call the Lerwick Police Station in the first instance on Tel. 01595 692110 where staff will initiate the appropriate request for assistance.

Out of Hours Emergency Contact

Please ensure that your tenants are fully aware of relevant Out of Hours contact information over the holiday period.

Where a tenant is in receipt of a Care at Home package, the tenants individual Care File will include details regarding contact information over the festive period. Housing Support Workers should ensure individual tenants are aware of this

Housing Out of Hours

Out of Hours Housing Repair Emergencies can be reported by contacting:

Housing Repairs Telephone 01595 693972

A Duty Housing Officer will be available to deal with non repair related housing emergencies by contacting:

Duty Housing Telephone 01595 695611

Social Work Contact Out of Hours

Any tenant in receipt of a care package will have a RED coloured Care File in their property. The Care File will give details of who to contact should there be any problems with the care package over the holidays. You should ensure your tenants are fully aware of this.

The Out of Hours Duty Social Worker is available in an emergency on:

Duty Social Worker Telephone 01595 695611

Please note that Social Work Department is open between Christmas and New Year to deal with routine Social Work related enquiries and referrals.