

HELP SHEET: CHOICES – HELPING RESIDENTS TO LIVE THE LIFE THEY CHOOSE

Hanover's aim is to help residents live the life they choose. Where possible, we try to adapt our services to residents' needs and wishes, acknowledging that all individual residents and estates differ in their requirements.

To assist staff to know what the options are, and to enable staff to discuss options with residents, we have developed a guide to clarify where those choices lie, and how they can be exercised. These choices apply to Retirement Housing and Extra Care, and to all tenures, unless specified otherwise.

Guide: Helping residents to live the life they choose.

We have designed a guide, primarily for staff but also available to residents on request, to identify some of those choices and decisions that:

- Can be made by individuals
- Can be made collectively by residents on an estate
- Are retained by Hanover as a responsible landlord and employer

The guide is an electronic document, designed for staff, through which staff have access to automatic links to further background information on each topic. The guide will also be on Hanover's web site www.hanover.org.uk and can be printed out, as can some of the linked information, such as appropriate Help Sheets and policies.

Choices for individual residents

The guide provides a list of choices that individual residents can make, although the list is not exhaustive. Some of these choices may require formal permission. Examples of choices are:

- To rent or buy?
- Decorating the inside of your home
- Not to have emergency pull cords
- Care provision e.g. home care
- Keeping a pet
- To join in or organise social events

Residents are encouraged to discuss a choice they wish to make with their estate manager, as well as with family, friends and other advisors or support workers. The guide gives some indication of the factors to consider and consequences of any particular choice. Once a choice has been made the estate manager will record it either in that resident's Support Plan or note it in the resident's file, as appropriate. If permission from Hanover is required (e.g. to keep a pet), it may be subject to conditions which will be discussed with the resident and will be put in writing. The guide identifies which individual choices need formal permission.

Estate choices

Estate choices build on the work we have already done with Local Agreements and are made by a consensus of residents on the estate. Consensus means that it may not be everyone's first choice, but it is a decision that everyone can support and will live with. This will often require considerable discussion and some compromise. The housing manager will lead this process, assisted by the estate manager and other staff as appropriate e.g. technical manager.

All estate choices will be made in the context of other choices already made on that estate, and will be recorded in the Local Agreement. Some estate choices may need a formal ballot, the guide and linked supporting documents indicate when that is necessary. Ballots should otherwise be used sparingly with most estate decisions.

Residents and staff are encouraged to be imaginative and find methods to ensure everyone living on the estate has an opportunity to put forward their ideas to resolve an estate issue. This may include questionnaires, meetings, “post it” discussion boards etc. It could well be that the consensus answer to a particular estate issue will differ from the initial options considered.

Example estate choices include:

- Use of communal areas
- Repairs contractors for the estate
- Guidelines for pets in communal areas (which will then feature as permission conditions when an individual wishes to have a pet)
- Cover for estate manager absence (Retirement Housing only)

Hanover decisions

There are some decisions that Hanover, as a responsible landlord and employer, cannot devolve or pass on to residents. Some of these are listed in the guide, for example:

- staff pay, terms and conditions
- charges
- Lettings Policy

For more information and to discuss the choices available, residents should contact their Estate Manager.