



KINGDOM

Initiatives



Earlsgate, Scone

Co-housing Information & Charter

Welcome to Earlsgate, Scone

This document aims to provide you with information about the Earlsgate Co-housing Community for over 55s.

It is broken down into 3 sections:

1. **General Information** about Co-housing
2. **General rules** that will apply to Earlsgate
3. **A Co-housing Charter** setting out the commitments from residents



Section 1: An Introduction to Co-housing

Knowing our neighbours and feeling that we belong to a community is important for most people. In today's rapidly changing times, we need a place to belong; a place where we feel safe and supported. We also need a place to be by ourselves, somewhere quiet, separate and secure. Co-housing is a way to address these basic human needs.

Co-housing developments vary in size, location, type of ownership, design and priorities but share some of the same characteristics. For example, future residents can take part in the planning and design of their community and the physical design encourages a strong sense of community. Earlsgate shares the idea of Co-housing as a way for people to live together so that they can have as much community and privacy as they want.

In common with other Co-housing developments, Earlsgate shares two important characteristics:

- Participatory process: residents take part in the planning and decisions that affect the shared aspects of their community. They are responsible as a group for most of the final decisions.
- Intentional neighbourhood design: the physical design encourages a strong sense of community. With central walkways and communal facilities for all neighbours to use.

The aim of Earlsgate Co-housing development is to bring together people over 55 years of age in a safe, independent and caring community so that together, they can decide how many aspects of the community is managed.

Principles and Guidelines

The principles in this Charter offer a starting framework to address basic expectations and guide the residents in their community living as they move and settle at Earlsgate.

Needs and aspirations can change over time so residents may feel it is necessary to review these guidelines to meet those needs.

We expect to review this Charter in consultation with the residents 6 months after they have moved in and every year thereafter.

1. Privacy of Each Individual Apartment

- Each apartment is individually metered for electricity and residents can choose their own supplier. We offer a free energy and money advice service if needed.
- Residents are responsible for their own TV licence and internet provision.
- Residents have the right to live in the privacy of their home and personalise it according to their taste. They are allowed to hang pictures and fittings.
- Residents need to ask permission to carry out any alterations or decorating of their home / building.
- Smoking is not permitted in the internal communal areas. Of course, people can smoke in their own homes but we ask residents and visitors to be sensitive to the environment of close neighbours when smoking outdoors or if their windows or doors are open.

2. Principles of Participation

An important aspect for the success of this development is that residents take part in the decisions that affect the shared aspects of their community. Residents are also responsible as a group to monitor and, if necessary, revise how these decisions are implemented.

We recommend that residents apply the following principles:

- **Right and duty to participate** - All residents have the right to take part and influence decisions that affect their community. They should also have an active interest in these decisions and demonstrate this by supporting, to the best of their abilities, the work of residents that are more involved.
- **Collective discussion** - Every resident should be given the opportunity to take part in discussions and vote for or against matters that affect their community, either in person or by proxy. If an individual chooses not to take part, they accept that decisions will be made without their input and they should support and co-operate with these decisions.
- **Voting** - Decisions that would involve additional service charges levied from residents, or affecting the use and purpose of communal areas require a majority of 60% votes of at least 75% of all residents. For example, this principle would apply when hiring services for cleaning, grounds maintenance or security; but not to the process of rent and service charges increases to manage inflation costs.
- **Delegation** - Residents may delegate certain aspects of community living to a smaller group or groups of residents, like a committee. By doing so, they also agree to support the decisions made by this group where necessary. For example, residents with an interest in pets, gardening or other activities may wish to organise smaller committees to manage these activities.
- **Partnership** - Residents either directly or via a representative group will work in partnership with Kingdom Initiatives or other relevant organisations who represent their interests.

- **Good communication** - Decisions and agreements will be written and made available to all residents and the landlord. Local committees and groups will maintain good communication, reporting to other residents relevant information and making sure that decisions are followed through. Residents may choose to use a notice board or other electronic media to publish notes of meetings or communicate relevant information to all residents.

Kingdom Initiatives will offer help and guidance to the resident to form a committee and delegate tasks to resident volunteers.

Section 2: General Rules

The details of how Earlsgate will be managed, will be developed by the residents through the participatory Co-housing process. Some general rules are needed, in order to make sure the development is well maintained and to put in place some structure around which proposals can be developed by the residents.

3. Pets

- Pets are allowed in the development and in the apartments. However, it is important to maintain a good relationship among pet owners and non pet owners. Residents are responsible to work together to achieve a peaceful, clean and safe environment for all.
- We ask that dogs are kept on a leash in all communal areas and that smaller pets are kept supervised at all times.
- Pet owners must accompany and supervise their pets outdoors and are responsible for removing and cleaning any mess created by their pets.
- Pet owners should be sensitive to other residents' needs and anxieties and not allow their pet to disturb other residents.
- We expect that any disputes over pets can be resolved by common agreement between residents. In the event of any unresolved conflict or issue over pets, Kingdom Initiatives will take this forward.
- This guideline will be monitored by residents to fit the needs and expectations of the community and if necessary, can be revised by a mutual agreement between the residents.
- Residents will be responsible for making sure that any relaxation or tightening of these guidelines are done following good principles of resident participation.

4. Cleaning and Maintenance

- The cleaning of communal areas and the maintenance of the gardens will initially be delivered by contractors appointed by Kingdom Initiatives.
- Charges for these services will be included in the monthly rent until 30 June 2023.
- Residents should be able to monitor the standard of these services and may decide to take upon themselves to subcontract some of these services, provided Kingdom Initiatives is satisfied that the contractor of their choice meets relevant legal requirements and guidelines on health and safety.
- Any decisions made regarding the change of service standards and providers have to be made following the principles of resident participation highlighted in this Charter and in accordance with the tenancy agreement.

5. Communal Rooms / Areas

- The use of communal rooms is open to all residents while they are free and unoccupied.
- A booking system can be made available should the residents want this, for example - if the rooms are wanted for private events, family parties, yoga / reading class or to host a meeting.
- Residents must be mindful of others and let others know if there are any events where there may be music or excessive noise, ensuring minimal disruption.
- Residents will be responsible to arrange booking and cleaning after their use.
- A group of resident volunteers will undertake the duty to manage these tasks.
- Residents must keep noise in the corridors and stairwells to a minimum and be respectful of other residents.
- If problems arise, Kingdom Initiatives reserves the right to review the process.

6. Guest Bedroom

There is a fully furnished guest bedroom with ensuite bathroom available in the Earlsgate block. To allow residents to fully utilise the guest bedroom, we recommend that:

- The residents agree how the guest bedroom is to be allocated, for example: a set number of days per resident or open bookings.
- Residents set up a booking system and the rooms are booked in advance.
- A small, daily service charge is required at the time of booking to cover cleaning and electricity (where Kingdom are providing these services the service charge will be payable to Kingdom).
- Residents and guests are responsible for leaving the rooms in a tidy manner.
- Residents and guests to bring own bedding and towels or ensure the bedding / towels in the flats is washed and changed after use.
- Defects or repairs are reported to Customer Service team.

Kingdom Initiatives can help to set up a booking system and draft any "house rules" if needed.

7. Storage Spaces, Alcoves and Lounges

- The building has communal spaces equipped with furniture and artwork. These areas are provided for the use of residents and visitors. It is everyone's responsibility to look after these areas and make sure that any issues are reported to the landlord.
- Residents may decide that some of these spaces could be used for different purposes. Any decisions made regarding the repurposing of communal space or equipment has to follow the principles of resident participation highlighted in this Charter.

8. Gardens

- Communal gardens are for all residents to enjoy.
- The wooden garden furniture is for all residents to use in the communal areas and should not be used solely by one household.
- Residents may decide that some of these spaces could be used for different purposes. Any decisions made regarding the repurposing of communal space or equipment has to follow the principles of resident participation highlighted in this Charter.
- Residents can choose to have plants in their own terraces but we ask that they do this in a way that minimises the risk of plants escaping into the shared gardens and neighbours' terraces.

Kingdom Initiatives offers support to residents who wish to take part in the life of the community. Our Tenant Participation Officer can offer support, advice and access to funding to implement specific projects and make it easier for resident groups to achieve their goals.

If you wish to be involved, please email tp@kha.scot or contact 01592 630922.

Useful Resources

UK Cohousing Network - www.cohousing.org.uk

Community Led Homes - www.communityledhomes.org.uk/what-cohousing

DIY Committee Guide - www.diycommitteeguide.org/about-diy-committee-guide

Simple guide to setting up a charity - www.charitysetup.org.uk

Section 3: The Co-Housing Charter

I as a resident of the Earlsgate Co-housing Community for over 55s commit to the following principles of the community.

- I support the basic concept of co-housing/co-living within the Earlsgate development;
- I agree to engage with the other residents in order to establish the co-housing structure for our community;
- I agree to dedicate time to the shared responsibilities to be agreed by the community such as cleaning, gardening, maintenance (amount of time to be agreed by the residents as part of the co-housing structure to be developed);
- I'll support resident events, clubs and activities and take part in these where possible;
- If personal circumstances prevent me from taking part in some activities, I agree to make the community aware and I will work with the other residents to offset my absence or redistribute any tasks. As part of our community life, I also agree to help others when they have similar circumstances or challenges;
- I agree to follow the agreed rules/governance structure/code/consensus decision making process adopted by the community;
- I agree to take part in the ongoing governance of the co-housing community; and
- I will help and support the other residents within the community.

In summary, I understand that the success of the Earlsgate Co-housing Community depends on the active, continuous participation of our residents and I agree to these principles.

Signed

Dated.....

