


Thorngate Churcher Trust
HOUSING AND CARE SINCE 1868

ThorngateLiving

Housing Schemes



A photograph of a brick house with a white porch and a large red rose in the foreground. The rose is in sharp focus, while the house and other flowers are blurred in the background. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box in the center of the image.

Providing comfort and security to those in need since 1868, and committed to developing the highest standards of housing and professional care in a supportive, respectful and friendly community.

Thorngate Churcher Trust and Thorngate Living

Thorngate Churcher Trust is a modern and progressive charitable registered social landlord, offering independent assisted living and residential care from three locations in Gosport, Hampshire.

Thorngate Living is all about enjoying the benefits, comfort and security of independent living within a friendly, supportive and respectful neighbourhood; the sort of neighbourhood where people know their neighbours' names, smile and say hello to each other. And all our communities are within easy walking distance of local shops and have excellent public transport links.

The Trust manages 124 sheltered flats for assisted living. Thorngate Living flats are available to singles and couples of limited means, who are over 50.

Uniquely all our flats benefit from resident wardens supported by Careline at night and at weekends.

The Thorngate Living in-house professional maintenance team ensures that any maintenance or repair work is carried out to an excellent standard. The uniformed team is known to residents and inspires trust, confidence and the knowledge that all work is completed quickly and with the absolute minimum of inconvenience.

The Trust is committed to providing the highest standards of care coupled with the highest standards of accommodation and communal facilities.

How we can help

If you or a relative are looking for **sheltered housing** or retirement living in Gosport you may be eligible for one of our sheltered flats. These have 24 hour cover and are situated on three sites in Gosport; Elizabeth Court on Camden Street, Thorngate Court on Inverness Road and Melrose Gardens, off Station Road. There is a straightforward application process and we encourage a pre-application visit to one of our sheltered flats.

**Why not take a virtual tour to arrange to see one of our flats?
Call Jill Francis, our Housing and Support Manager, on 023 9253 4999
or visit thorngate.org.uk for a virtual tour to find out more about
enjoying Thorngate Living.**

Our properties

Elizabeth Court

Elizabeth Court, situated in Camden Street, is a modern block of 43 one bedroom flats purpose built for retirement living. The gardens are an attractive feature of the complex and there is parking for residents and visitors.

Thorngate Court

Thorngate Court was completed in 1984 and is situated in Inverness Road. It comprises 47 one bedroom flats divided into six blocks set in attractive gardens. Car parking is available for residents and visitors. The central block houses the communal laundry facilities and lounge.

Melrose Gardens

The Melrose Gardens sheltered housing scheme consists of two blocks of eight one bedroom flats in Clare House and Bagot House respectively, ten new self-contained flats at Lucas Court, four flats in Goyda House and two Garden View flats and two Bradbury House flats.

All Thorngate Living flats are double glazed and are complete with fully fitted modern kitchens including cooker and refrigerator. Telephone points and TV sockets are provided. Connections to cable television are also available to residents who wish to pay for this service.

Included in the weekly charges are warden/Careline support cover and fully serviced retirement accommodation including lifts or stairlifts to first floor accommodation. There are also guestrooms for the convenience of visitors for a small additional charge.

All our sheltered living properties have pull cord warden call system and secure outer doors.

The well-tended communal gardens are a key feature of our assisted living properties and residents have the option of cultivating their own garden plot should they wish.

Thorngate Living wardens

A key feature of Thorngate Living is the reassurance provided by the Trust's warden team covering all the housing schemes. This means that friendly, approachable staff are there to help with everyday matters such as arranging maintenance, deliveries and ensuring that the buildings stay secure at all times.

In addition, they can give guidance on local services and can help with making sure that you have support from the appropriate agencies should this be necessary. It should be noted however that wardens are not care staff and cannot take the place of carers or family members.



Guide to our charges

Thorngate Churcher Trust demonstrates commitment to this mission and to charitable public benefit, by not excluding those without the ability to pay. In housing this means we help even those with limited savings to access all the benefits to which they are entitled.

Licence and letter of appointment

Most local authority, private and housing association sheltered schemes offer either leasehold arrangements or tenancies. A few with charitable schemes similar to Thorngate Churcher Trust offer licences. There are important distinctions between a licence and a tenancy, mostly relating to the procedure around the end of the arrangement should difficulties arise. We do not have the power to offer tenancies. If this is of concern to you, you should seek independent legal advice.

However, from a practical point of view, living under a licence should feel no different to living under a tenancy.



Eligibility with regard to property ownership and savings

The Trust exists to help those in need. In line with our charitable governing documents all new licences are approved through a robust process involving an assessment by the housing manager and review by trustees.

We do have a guideline limit on the value of assets to ensure that those who could easily afford private sector provision are not depriving a more needy potential beneficiary. This means that if an applicant owns a substantial home, mortgage free and has a reasonable level of savings they are not likely to be successful in the allocation process.

Applicants with modest homes and little in the way of savings are much more likely to be successful. Assessment being needs-based, as well as the level of assets, we take into account the need and suitability for our particular type of supported accommodation.

What your Weekly Maintenance Contributions cover

Weekly Maintenance Contributions (WMC) cover all our services. These include the cost of the accommodation, the service charges including maintenance of the individual flats, maintenance of the communal areas, heating and lighting of communal areas, water charges (for most flats), laundry rooms, gardening and other property management costs such as legionella testing and lift maintenance. In our newest homes water and gas/heating are metered and not included. The cost of warden and Careline support is included in WMC. Rent and eligible service charge elements qualify for Housing Benefit depending on entitlement to benefits of the resident. Changes in charges based on the government's rent formula for social housing and the reconciliation of service charges are applied on 1 July each year.

The WMC does not cover the following costs:

- Council Tax (our properties are currently all Band A or Band B)
- electricity consumption within individual flats (heating is included in most flats) so for example electricity used during cooking, ironing, etc
- cable television and broadband to individual flats which can be installed at a cost to the resident



Maintenance and repairs

A key feature of living in our sheltered housing is the Trust's maintenance team that looks after our site and carries out any jobs required in individual flats. This means that through the warden any jobs within a flat are brought to the attention of the maintenance team and are prioritised according to urgency. Residents can also request maintenance jobs through a self-service portal.

Arrangements for payment

Payments are made to us four-weekly for WMC. These should be made using a standing order which will be prepared for residents by the Housing and Support Manager. There is a four weekly cycle so that we receive all payments in the same week. Thus a new resident may make an initial one, two, three or four week payment depending upon when in the cycle they join us as a resident.

Hardship and inability to pay

If you think that you may be about to encounter difficulties in payment of our charges you should contact us as soon as possible. We will seek to ensure that you are receiving the correct level of benefits and endeavour to reach a suitable payment plan with you to pay off any arrears and enable you to continue to make payments to us to enable you to maintain your licence.

The important thing is to get in touch with us as soon as possible so we can help.

If you have any queries on housing charges you should contact Jill Francis on 023 9253 4999 or by email at jill.francis@thorngate.org.uk

Why move into sheltered accommodation?

There are many advantages to be gained from living in sheltered accommodation.

- Retaining your privacy and independence with your own front door to a flat into which you have brought your own furniture and possessions.
- Support and peace of mind knowing that support is available 24 hours a day.

- Skilled Thorngate Living repairs and maintenance staff are on-site to deal with any repairs needed in your home.
- You can meet your neighbours in the residents' lounge, enjoy the gardens and take part in any of the social activities that interest you.

Thorngate Churcher Trust is registered provider with the Regulator of Social Housing and complies with the Government's Decent Homes Standard.



Almshouses

Almshouses are a special sort of housing charity, regulated by the Charity Commission. Larger almshouse charities like Thorngate, may also be Registered Social Landlords (also called Registered Providers) and are therefore also regulated by the housing regulator, the Regulator of Social Housing. If they provide residential care, as does Thorngate Churcher Trust at Russell Churcher Court, they are also registered with, and regulated by, the Care Quality Commission.

The history of almshouses can be traced back to the 10th century where the terms bedehouse, hospital, maison dieu, almshouse and others described the provision of accommodation for those in need.

The first recorded almshouse was founded by King Athelstan in York in the 10th Century, and the oldest still in existence is thought to be the Hospital of St Oswald in Worcester that dates from circa 990. By the middle of the 1500s, there were about 800 mediaeval hospitals spread across the country but following the dissolution of the monasteries, only a handful remained, and these were re-founded on secular lines, and rebuilt in the new domestic collegiate style.

Currently there are around 1,700 groups of almshouse charities in the United Kingdom today, most offer sheltered housing to those in need, with a few like Thorngate, offering both housing and care.

Thorngate Living at Russell Churcher Court

The Trust also owns and manages a comfortable modern residential care home providing 24 hour care for 44 residents in self contained en-suite rooms. Those living with dementia are welcomed into a safe and caring environment with the highest standards of professional specialist care.

Visit thorngate.org.uk or call our care home manager on 023 9252 7600 to find out more about Thorngate Living at Russell Churcher Court.



History

As early as 1794 a William Thorngate is listed as trading as a grocer in Middle Street (the old name of Gosport High Street). William Thorngate's sons, John Batty and his younger brother William, were substantial local landowners. William also owned land jointly with Emmanuel Churcher, a local solicitor who founded 'Churchers' in Gosport High Street. These three gentlemen conveyed land to Trustees of the Thorngate Charities in 1866 and 1867 to enable almshouses to be built to accommodate 'poor women of good character, being spinsters or widows, of not less than 50 years of age'.

Thorngate Churcher Trust was founded in 1868 by the Thorngate family. It was registered as a charity in its current form in 1981.

A redevelopment of the Trust's properties was carried out between 1971 and 1984 with further improvements in 2013 and 2014. A development of ten new homes was completed in 2018 and a further four flats completed in 2019. The name of the Trust was changed to better reflect the founding families. Today's accommodation consists of modern well-equipped one bedroom flats for retired single people and married couples.

Thorngate Churcher Trust is run by a Board of Trustees and an executive management team. The Trust is registered with the Charity Commission, Regulator of Social Housing (as a social landlord) and the Care Quality Commission (for Russell Churcher Court).



Popular questions answered

Who can apply?

People aged 50 years or over. The applicant must be able to live alone and be able to look after her/himself.

Is your waiting list linked to Gosport Borough Council (GBC)?

No, Thorngate Churcher Trust maintains its own waiting list distinct from those of GBC, or Hampshire County Council Adult Services.

How long is the wait for a Trust's flat?

This can vary, and could be months to a couple of years. It is dependent on the applicant's banding, priorities such as requiring a ground floor flat, desired site and the amount of movement we have had within our schemes.

Can I keep my property and move into a Trust's flat?

No, the Trust does not expect to provide second homes and therefore expects any property to be sold, and not rented out or made available to relatives.

Do I need to sell my home before moving into a Trust's flat?

It is extremely difficult for the timings of the sale and the Trust licence to match exactly. The Trust therefore accepts the need for some flexibility around the sale of houses and considers that it would be reasonable to expect you to have sold your house within 12 months of accepting a Licence with the Trust. Consequently, you will be invited to confirm on a regular basis the status of the sale of your house during the 12 month period.

Do you accept applications from out of the area?

Yes.

Where are your sheltered housing schemes located?

Melrose Gardens, off Station Road
PO12 3BZ.

Elizabeth Court, Camden Street,
PO12 3JB.

Thorngate Court, Inverness Road,
PO12 3HX.

What happens next with my housing application?

Upon receipt of an application form the application will be assessed on a priority banding system, which is broadly based on your current living situation and the Trust's ability to appropriately, safely and constructively support you in one of our schemes.

The Housing and Support Manager will contact you either by phone or in writing to arrange an assessment when nearing the top of the waiting list.

Once the assessment has taken place recommendations are made to the Trustees and they then ascertain whether you are acceptable within the terms of the Trust's constitution. If you have been assessed as suitable and there are currently no voids you will be informed that you have been put on the waiting list until a void is identified.

If the Trust is unable to meet your needs, you will be informed stating the reasons. You must contact the Housing and Support Manager if your needs significantly change or you decide you no longer wish to stay on our waiting list.

Is there a maximum financial income to be offered a Trust's flat?

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the Trustees would not consider an application for sheltered housing from an individual whose resources exceed £200,000.

As well as the applicant(s) capital/assets the Trust will also take into account their actual income level i.e. state pension, private pension, investment income, wages etc.).

Single Applicant £1400 a month

Couple Applicant £2000 a month

Do you have 2 bedroom flats?

No, all our flats are one bedroom.

How big is a flat?

There are different sized flats, they are either classed as a single or double which means that the bedroom is small for a single person or large enough to fit a double/king sized bed or two single beds. All flats have a bedroom, lounge (various sizes), bathroom with walk in shower and kitchen (most flats have separate kitchen and of various sizes).

Are the flats furnished?

The Trust provides fridge freezer, electric cooker and laundry room. You can bring your own fridge freezer and electric cooker, but you must notify the Trust. It is the resident's responsibility to carpet the flat, provide furniture and curtains etc.

Can I request a double flat instead of a single flat even though I am single?

Yes, but a couple will take priority for a double flat unless the need of a single occupant is deemed greater.

What is the council tax banding?

Thorngate Court – band B, Melrose Gardens – band A, Elizabeth Court – band A.

Why do you not call the housing charges rent?

We call the housing charges weekly maintenance contributions (WMC) and not 'rent' because you will not be a tenant.

Do you accept direct debits to pay WMC?

No we don't have the facility to set up direct debits, we prefer you to pay by standing order.

What do the housing charges cover?

- Central heating and hot water (most flats)
- Water and sewerage charges (most flats)
- Repairs and maintenance
- The support service (wardens, Careline and emergency call system)
- Buildings and contents insurance
- Upkeep of the gardens
- Cleaning of communal areas
- Cleaning of the outside of the windows of your flat

What do the housing charges not cover?

- Electricity bills for your flat
- Council tax
- Your own private telephone line, cable tv and own internet
- If you want a higher level contents insurance than the level we provide
- Mobility scooter insurance
- Any extra help you may need to help you live independently such as a private cleaner or carer

Can I have a pet?

Dogs and cats are not allowed, we will normally give permission for you to keep a small caged bird inside your flat, but you must ask in advance.

Can I choose my own energy supplier for electricity?

Yes, credit meters are installed in each flat.

Who decorates my flat?

The Trust has a dedicated maintenance team who will redecorate the flat before you move in.

I have a car, will I have an allocated parking space?

No, there are limited car parking spaces for residents and visitors.

I have a mobility scooter, where can I store it?

We provide areas for charging and storage of scooters, but spaces are limited so you must inform the Housing and Support Manager if you have a scooter. Scooters must be insured by residents and we will need to see your insurance documents each year.

What facilities are there at your schemes?

We provide communal lounges, laundry room, guest rooms (small charge) for relatives or friends visiting you for a short period, gardens where there are areas where residents can do some gardening themselves if they so wish and emergency call system.

To discuss whether you might
enjoy the benefits of Thorngate
Living, get in touch today.

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Registered non-profit private provider of social housing number 4839.

