RETIREMENT VILLAGES

Sales Frequently Asked Questions

Guaranteed Repayment and Open Market Lease

This FAQ document aims to address common questions from prospective buyers interested in purchasing a property at The Willowbury, part of the Thrive Living collection by Retirement Villages. The detail provided is intended to provide explanation, if there is a conflict between the lease and the FAQs, the lease will always take precedence.

Last Updated: 27.11.2026

Living At The Willowbury

The General Manager and the Village Management team are responsible for the on-site management of The Willowbury

What social activities and facilities are available?

The Willowbury offers a vibrant community with a range of facilities and extensive social program. Amenities include an on-site restaurant, residents lounge, convenience store, wellness studio and treatment rooms. Many of the activities and various events are resident-led and supported by the management team. Dining in the restaurant, treatments and certain events and activities will incur additional cost.

What emergency support is available?

A dedicated first aid trained member of the team is on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to provide an emergency call-out support service within The Willowbury.

This emergency support focuses on providing immediate first-response assistance. Tunstall alarms will be in place for every resident to automatically respond to emergencies such as falls or fires. The system will link to a receiving centre that communicates with the village team member to provide first response and assistance in the case of an emergency, 24 hours a day.

What emergency maintenance support is available?

The Willowbury has dedicated maintenance personnel on-site during the day to respond to any emergency situations, such as power failures, major leaks, or other urgent repair needs. Outside of office hours, our night responder will be available to assist.

Residents will be provided with a comprehensive Home User Guide with further information on how to get assistance in case of a maintenance emergency.
Can visitors stay overnight?

Guests may stay with you in your home for up to 60 days per calendar year, with a maximum of 28 consecutive days. Please inform the Village Management team of any overnight guests.

There are 2 Guest Suites available to book, priced between £75 and £85 per night (maximum stay of seven nights, unless approved by the General Manager). Guests are welcome to dine with you in the restaurant.

What are the parking arrangements?

Subject to availability, car parking spaces can be rented for £592 per year. Residents can rent a maximum of one allocated parking space per apartment. Parking permits increase annually on 1 January, in line with the Consumer Prices Index with Housing (CPIH), using the indexation figure from October of the prior year. If CPIH decreases, the current price will be maintained. A pool car will also be available for use by residents.

Are pets allowed?

Yes, pets are welcome at The Willowbury. Owners must complete a registration form and obtain permission from the General Manager. Owners must also ensure pets are well-behaved and do not cause a nuisance to other residents, personnel, or guests. Pets are not permitted in communal areas, except for assistance dogs. Pets are not permitted in indoor communal areas, except for assistance dogs.

Will I have a phone connection in my apartment?

In preparation for BT switching off its copper wiring system, residents will need to take out a connection with a VOIP (Voice over Internet provider) service provider - to assist with this, RVG will partner with a provider to allow for connection.

What provisions have been made for television services?

Sky TV, along with other providers like BT, are encouraging customers to transition from traditional satellite services to streaming options.

As satellite services such as Sky are phased out, it is anticipated that Sky will cease offering satellite services to new customers starting from early 2026.

Considering this, residents wishing to access television services must subscribe to either Sky Stream (Sky's streaming version of its old Sky Q offering) or another mainstream streaming service, including but not limited to Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and Disney+. Additionally, residents will have the option to connect to any Freesat offering.

Who is responsible for the redecoration of my property?

The Management Company is responsible for external redecoration, with costs covered by the Management Fee. Owners are responsible for the internal redecoration of their properties. Owners are required to keep their property in a good state of repair.

Can I make alterations to my property?

Structural alterations are not permitted. However, minor non-structural alterations and improvements may be allowed, subject to obtaining prior consent from the General Manager.

An administration fee of £90 (incl. VAT) is chargeable for approval and final inspection, which increases annually on 1 January, in line with CPIH, using the indexation figure from October of the prior year. If CPIH decreases, the current price will be maintained.

Under the Deferred Management Lease, the property must be returned in its original condition, excluding reasonable wear and tear. Thrive Living by Retirement Villages reserves the right to restore the property at the expense of the outgoing owner.

Am I allowed to sub-let my apartment?

No, sub-letting apartments is not permitted under the terms of the lease.

Is there a selection process for prospective purchasers?

Thrive Living by Retirement Villages does not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and is committed to a policy of equal opportunities and diversity.

Our communities are designed to provide an enjoyable and supportive environment for older people living independently, and we will endeavour to accommodate residents in line with our equal opportunities and diversity policy. All prospective purchasers will be required to meet with the wellbeing team, who will complete a pre-move in wellbeing assessment. This assessment will provide potential residents with a thorough understanding of their individual needs and preferences, ensuring a tailored experience when moving to our retirement village. The assessment will also help to identify overall health and fitness.

Purchasers who have identified specific health problems may be required to provide further information via their GP. In determining a person's suitability in such a case, we will rely on medical advice, and this assessment will be made using the criteria laid down by the Association of British Insurers to assess the need for long-term care.

What happens if I am unable to look after myself or my partner?

Our community is designed to promote independent living in retirement. We understand that circumstances may change, and additional care may become necessary. In such situations, we are committed to facilitating access to domiciliary care providers, whether privately arranged or through social services. The associated costs for these services would be covered privately by the resident.

For some residents, having a live-in carer can be vital in maintaining their independence within our community. If independence declines to the point where permanent nursing or specialised care is required, alternative living arrangements may need to be made.

In rare cases where the need for more supportive living is not acknowledged, and considering the welfare of all residents, personnel, and the individual in question, the lease includes a provision allowing the Landlord to serve notice as a last resort. We strive to address such matters with the utmost sensitivity and understanding for all parties involved.

In instances where a couple occupies a property and one partner becomes unable to care for themselves, there is no need for alternative arrangements to be made, if the other partner can manage, with the support of external agencies.

Purchasing on a Guaranteed Repayment Lease Financial and Legal

What is the Guaranteed Repayment Lease?

The Guaranteed Repayment Lease provides security by guaranteeing repayment of the original purchase price (minus the Deferred Management Fee and any arrears) and by limiting liability for ongoing payments of the Management Fee to two months after service of the Notice to Vacate. Council Tax and Utilities Fees remain payable until the property has been resold

The Deferred Management Fee is calculated based on the original purchase price and the length of ownership:

- 8% if leaving within the first year
- 16% in the second year
- 24% from the third year onwards

When you leave or resell your apartment, you or your family/estate will need to serve a "Notice to Vacate". A template is available at the back of the lease. Two months after the Notice has been served, the landlord will suspend payment of the Management Fee and reduce the Utilities Fee to cover standing charges only ('Reduced Utilities Fee').

The Guaranteed Repayment Lease provides security by guaranteeing a repayment sum, removing market sale risks, removing the liability to repair, and removing the liability to pay the Management Fee until the property is sold. Liability for council tax and utilities remains the responsibility of the legal owner.

What is a subsidised Management Fee?

The Management Fee is an annual fee that covers all the costs incurred in providing services and effectively operating The Willowbury, as set out in your lease agreement.

How much is the subsidised Management Fee and how does it increase?

The current index-linked Management Fee for the Guaranteed Repayment Lease is £6,500 per annum or £125 per week (from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2027). This is a subsidised fee for residents who have purchased a property on the Guaranteed Repayment Lease. The full Management Fee for living at The Willowbury is £10,000 per annum.

The Management Fee is calculated annually and collected monthly by Direct Debit. Once you or your estate serves the Notice to Vacate, the liability for this fee will cease after the two-month notice period has ended.

The Management Fee will increase annually on 1 January, in line with CPIH, using the October indexation figure of the prior year. If CPIH decreases, the current price will be maintained.

What does the Management Fee cover?

Set out below are the main costs covered by the Management Fee.
Operation of Management Office including salaries of all village staff
Central support services (legal, accountancy, HR, etc)
Service contracts (for lifts, alarms, health & safety, etc.)
Repairs and Maintenance of buildings and communal areas
Upkeep of grounds
External window cleaning
Insurance (buildings, public liability)
Utilities for communal areas
Refuse collection
Sustainability obligations
Food & beverage operations and associated costs
Wellbeing services
Licences, IT and ARCO registration

What happens when my property is sold when I pass away or move out of the village?

All properties sold under a Guaranteed Repayment Lease must be resold by the landlord; residents cannot sell them on the open market.

To initiate a sale, you must serve a written "Notice to Vacate" to the General Manager. A template notice document is provided with your lease and can also be obtained from the Village Management team. This notice will need to be completed, signed, dated and hand delivered or sent by recorded delivery to the General Manager.

Once the General Manager acknowledges receipt of the Notice, this will initiate a two-month notice period. During this time, you must clear your belongings from the apartment. Any remaining items will be removed and disposed of to allow Thrive by Retirement Villages to enter the property to redecorate, refurbish and market the property for sale. The Guaranteed Repayment amount, minus the Deferred Management Fee, and any arrears, will be released to you or your estate once the sale is complete.

It is not necessary for you to instruct or pay for a sales agent or solicitor to sell the property as the repayment amount is guaranteed, but you can seek legal advice if you wish to.

If you wish to remain living in your property until it is sold, speak to a member of the team and legal advisor for more information as the selling process will differ.

What is the Management Company's role?

West Malling Management Limited has been set up for the sole purpose of managing the estate, buildings, and services as set out in the lease and Residents' Charter.

To ensure the services provided are not reduced or diluted, a legal document known as The Willowbury Resident Charter sits alongside your lease. The Charter includes information about the services provided, responsibility for repairs and maintenance, and expectations regarding behaviour, communication, and complaints. The Residents' Charter is subject to change through consultation with residents.

How do I pay for utilities?

To make your move easier your water, electricity and internet costs are included in a monthly Utilities Fee, payable by Direct Debit. The Utilities Fee costs £144.09 per month for a one-bedroom apartment and £202.10 per month for a two-bedroom apartment. Your home has been built to be as energy efficient as possible, and we only use renewable energy providers.

The Utilities Fee will increase annually from 1 January 2027, in line with CPIH, using the indexation figure from October of the prior year. If CPIH decreases, the current price will be maintained.

To manage market change, if wholesale utility prices significantly increase or decrease, then RVG reserves the right to adjust the Utilities Fee to reflect the latest wholesale energy prices. RVG must act reasonably and evidence any change. The resident agrees to use utilities prudently and responsibly and in accordance with the Fair Usage Policy and Internet Usage Policy.

What other costs am I responsible for?

Residents are responsible for the following costs which sit outside the monthly fees:
Council tax
Telephone
Home contents insurance
TV license
TV subscriptions
Any other personal bills

Should I be legally advised?

Yes, you should obtain independent legal advice to fully understand the implications of the Guaranteed Repayment Lease and associated fees before purchasing a property at The Willowbury. Thrive Living by Retirement Villages will not grant or assign a lease without the purchaser being legally represented.

Can you show me a worked example of what all this might cost me?

An illustration outlining the financial implications of purchasing a typical apartment under the Guaranteed Repayment Lease, including a worked example of potential costs, is available upon request.

Does the Management Company consult Leaseholders?

Residents are encouraged to form a Residents' Association, which the General Manager can attend by invitation to discuss areas of concern.

What happens if I want to sell but continue living in the property until it is sold?

The Guaranteed Repayment lease is designed assuming you will vacate the property prior to sale to enable RVG to enter the property to redecorate and refurbish. However, if you wish to remain living in the property until it is sold, you will be required to redecorate and refurbish the property while you are living in it at your own cost. You must use RVG and their appointed contractors to do these works. You will continue to pay the Management Fee and the full utilities fee until the property is sold, and you leave the village.

To initiate this process, you must serve a written "Notice to Assign" to the General Manager. This notice will need to be completed, signed, dated and hand delivered or sent by recorded delivery to the General Manager.

All properties sold under a Guaranteed Repayment Lease must be resold by the landlord; residents cannot sell them on the open market. After 6 months you may appoint an external agent at your own cost to market the property.

The Guaranteed Repayment amount, minus the Deferred Management Fee and any arrears, will be released to you or your estate once the sale is complete.

You must instruct a solicitor to act on your behalf during the sales process.

Purchasing on an Open Market Lease Financial and Legal

What is the Deferred Management Fee?
The Deferred Management Fee (called an 'Event Fee' in the lease), is payable every time a property is re-sold. All properties sold by Thrive Living on behalf of Retirement Villages are sold on a long leasehold basis and when the property is re-sold the lease on that property must be assigned.

The Deferred Management Fee forms part of the original agreement when you purchase the property and is not charged in respect of any service(s) to be provided.

The Deferred Management Fee is calculated as a percentage of the sale price based on the length of ownership

- 5% if leaving within the first year
- 10% if leaving within the second year
- 15% if leaving within the third year
- 20% thereafter

When you leave or resell your apartment, you or your family/estate will remain liable for the payment of the Management Fee, council tax and utilities until the lease has been re-assigned.

When do I pay my Deferred Management Fee?
The Deferred Management Fee is payable on each occasion that the property is sold and deducted from the sale price. Since the sale price of the properties will fluctuate over time it is not possible to know what the precise payment will be until a contract to sell is exchanged.

What happens when I want to sell my property?
Thrive Living by Retirement Villages will have exclusive rights to sell your property using our in-house dedicated sales team that provides a full marketing and agency service, at a fee of 1.5% plus VAT. If after a 6-month period, a sale has not been agreed then the vendor may request an external estate agent to assist with the sale on a multi-agency basis.

If you choose to sell your property, you must serve notice in writing to the Landlord. The Landlord has the first option to buy your property back. If the Landlord decides not to make an offer the property will be released for sale on the open market.

You will also be required to return your property to its original condition.

What is the Management Company's role?

West Malling Management Limited has been set up for the sole purpose of managing the estate, buildings, and services as set out in the lease and Residents' Charter.

To ensure the services provided are not reduced or diluted, a legal document known as the The Willowbury Resident Charter sits alongside your lease. The Charter includes information about the services provided, responsibility for repairs and maintenance, and expectations regarding behaviour, communication, and complaints. The Resident Charter is subject to change through consultation with residents.

What is the Management Fee?

The index-linked Management Fee is an annual fee that covers all the costs incurred in providing services and effectively operating The Willowbury, as set out in your lease agreement.

What does the Management Fee cover?

Set out below are the main costs covered by the Management Fee.
Operation of the Management Office, including salaries of all village staff
Central support services (legal, accountancy, HR, etc)
Service contracts (for lifts, alarms, health & safety, etc.)
Repairs and Maintenance of buildings and communal areas
Upkeep of grounds
External window cleaning
Insurance (buildings, public liability)
Utilities for communal areas
Refuse collection
Sustainability obligations
Food and beverage operations and associated costs
Wellbeing services
Licences, IT and ARCO registration

How much is the Management Fee and how does it increase?

The Management Fee is £10,000 per annum £192 per week (from 1st January 2027 to 31st December 2027.)

The Management Fee covers all the costs incurred in providing services and effectively operating The Willowbury Village as set out in your Lease. The Management Fee is calculated annually and collected monthly by Direct Debit whilst you live (or remain the owner of the lease) at The Willowbury. The Management Fee will increase annually on 1 January in line with CPIH, using the indexation figure from

October of the prior year. If CPIH decreases, the current price will be maintained.

How do I pay for utilities?

To make your move easier your water, electricity and internet costs are included in a monthly Utilities Fee, payable by Direct Debit. The Utilities Fee costs £144,09 per month for a one-bedroom apartment and £202.10 per month for a two-bedroom apartment or a three-bedroom cottage. Your home has been built to be as energy efficient as possible, and we only use renewable energy providers.

The Utilities Fee will increase annually from 1 January 2027, in line with CPIH, using the indexation figure from October of the prior year. If CPIH decreases, the current price will be maintained.

To manage market changes, if wholesale utility prices significantly increase or decrease, then RVG reserves the right to adjust the Utilities Fee to reflect the latest wholesale energy prices. RVG must act reasonably and evidence any change.

The residents agree to use utilities wisely and responsibly, and in accordance with the Fair Usage Policy and Internet Usage Policy.

What other costs am I responsible for?

Residents are responsible for the following costs which sit outside the monthly fees:
Council tax
Telephone
Home contents insurance
TV license
TV subscriptions
Any other personal bills

Should I be legally advised?

Yes, you should obtain independent legal advice to fully understand the implications of the Open Market Lease and associated fees before purchasing a property at The Willowbury. Thrive Living by Retirement Villages will not grant or assign a lease without the purchaser being legally represented.

We encourage you to discuss your housing options with your family and friends and to seek independent legal, financial/benefits and any other appropriate advice, support, and representation in connection with a move to an integrated retirement community.

Can you show me a worked example of what all this might cost me?

An illustration outlining the financial implications of purchasing a typical apartment under the Open Market Lease, including a worked example of potential costs, is

available upon request.

Does the Management Company consult Leaseholders?

Residents are encouraged to form a Residents' Association, which the General Manager can attend by invitation to discuss areas of concern.

Acknowledgement

Please confirm that you have received and reviewed these FAQs by signing below. Note that the specific provisions outlined in the lease agreement for your property may differ in some detailed respects from the general statements provided in this FAQ document.

Purchaser 1:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Purchaser 2:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

The Willowbury General Manager:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____