



A member of The Almshouse Association

## More's Meadow Residents' Handbook

*(This Handbook is to be read with the Letter of Appointment but in the event of conflict the Letter of Appointment will prevail).*

# Contents

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## Section 1

### Introduction

- 1.1 Welcome
- 1.2 List of contacts
- 1.3 Emergency Out of Hours Contacts

## Section 2

### History, Governance and Management

- 2.1 Historical note
- 2.2 Constitution
- 2.3 Management
- 2.4 The Almshouses

## Section 3

### Health and Safety

- 3.1 Your emergency contact details
- 3.2 Fire precautions
- 3.3 Avoiding the risk of fire
- 3.4 Smoke detectors
- 3.5 Smoking
- 3.6 Slips, trips and falls
- 3.7 Personal property
- 3.8 Security
- 3.9 Keys
- 3.10 Routine visits

## Section 4

### Terms of Occupancy

- 4.1 Letter of Appointment
- 4.2 Monthly Maintenance Contribution (MMC)
- 4.3 Occupation
- 4.4 Consulting residents
- 4.5 Absence from home
- 4.6 Utility Bills - heating, electricity and hot water
- 4.7 Portable gas or paraffin oil heaters
- 4.8 Alterations to your Almshouse
- 4.9 Employment
- 4.10 Pets
- 4.11 Inventory
- 4.12 Moving out
- 4.13 Re-housing
- 4.14 Setting aside appointments
- 4.15 Gifts and legacies

## Section 5

### Services & Gardens

- 5.1 Furniture and fittings
- 5.2 Gardens
- 5.3 Repairs and decorations
- 5.4 Insurance
- 5.5 Television
- 5.6 Cleaning
- 5.7 Refuse collection and recycling
- 5.8 Telephone and Internet
- 5.9 Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery, Air Source Heat Pump & Humidity Ventilation System
- 5.10 Ventaxia Ventilation System
- 5.11 Heating System – Air Source Heat Pump
- 5.12 Foul Tank

## Section 6

### General Information

- 6.1 Meters, mains switch, fuse box, stopcock
- 6.2 Council tax
- 6.3 Benefits
- 6.4 Parking

## Section 7

### If things go wrong

- 7.1 Personal problems
- 7.2 A dispute with a neighbour
- 7.3 Complaints
- 7.4 Housing Ombudsman

## Appendix 1

### Charity Policies

- Complaints Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

## Appendix 2

### Standard letter of appointment

## Appendix 3

- User Manuals

## Section 1 – Introduction

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### 1.1 Welcome

The Great Shelford Village Charity (“the Charity”) would like to extend a very warm welcome to you as a new resident. We hope that you will settle in quickly and be very happy here. This handbook sets out useful information about the Charity and its general administration and management. It also explains your responsibilities as a resident. Please do not hesitate to speak to the Agent if you need further information on any matters.

Please note that the terms set out in this handbook form part of your Appointment with the Charity and supplement the regulations given in your Letter of Appointment which you signed when you accepted your appointment. It may be necessary to amend these terms and regulations from time to time, but the Charity will consult upon any proposed changes.

The Charity has tried to minimise these terms and regulations which have been designed for the benefit of all residents, present and future, and to ensure efficient management.

Once again, a very warm welcome.

### 1.2 List of Contacts

Chairperson: Jaspaul Hill

Directors: Brian Connellan, Sarah Kreckler, Si-Houy Lao-Sirieix, Alice Mann, Richard Mutty, Michael Pooles, Keith Sugden, Simon White.

Clerk: Samantha Rigby-Coghlan; email: [clerk@gsvc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@gsvc.org.uk)

Agent: Hannah Khan - DD: 01223 919011; email: [hkhan@rah.co.uk](mailto:hkhan@rah.co.uk)  
Redmayne Arnold & Harris  
30 Woollards Lane, Great Shelford, CB22 5LZ

Main Office Number: 01223 800860

If you have an emergency maintenance issue during office hours (Monday to Friday 8.45 am – 5.30 pm, Saturday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm), please contact the Agent. If Hannah is not available, please call the main office number.



## 1.3 EMERGENCY OUT-OF-HOURS CONTACT NUMBERS

If you have an emergency maintenance issue outside of the Agent's office hours (Monday to Friday 8.45 am – 5.30 pm, Saturday 9.00 am – 1.00 pm) then please contact one of the following contractors, advising them that Redmayne Arnold & Harris are the managing agents of your rental property.

### Plumbing & Boiler Problems

Nutcombes 07841 801008

Matt Macintosh 07931 488108

### Electrician

G M Pake & Son 07920 045861

### Drainage Problems

Drainco 07885 719446

Drain Burst 08000 698288 / 07590 028741

### Locksmith

Cambs Lock & Safe 01223 353077

Redlocks Locksmith 01954 202818

Halls of Cambridge 01223 416000

***Please leave a message with your name, address, and a brief explanation of the issue if the contractors are unable to answer your call straight away.***

**If you can smell gas**, are unable to contact one of our plumbers, and believe it to be an absolute emergency, please call the National Grids Emergency Number on **0800 111999**.

If the problem is through a fault of your own or is not deemed an emergency, the cost of the call out and any work completed will be sent for your attention and must be paid on demand. Please note that call outs after 5.30 pm or on weekends, public holidays etc are more expensive than a call out during normal working hours.

If any of the out of hours contractors listed are unreachable, you are welcome to get your own contractor to attend but please be aware that if the call out is not a maintenance issue you will be responsible for any invoices charged.



## Section 2 – History, Governance and Management

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### 2.1 Historical note

Established in 1890 and registered with The Charities Commission and the Almshouse Association, the reasons for the Charity's existence include to provide accommodation for "persons resident in the area of the Parish of Great Shelford . . . at low rents according to their means."

### 2.2 Constitution

GSVC is a registered charity governed by a Charity Commission Scheme – registered charity number 231486.

### 2.3 Management

The Charity is administered by a trust company (GSVC Trustee Ltd) which has a board of voluntary, local Directors. Day-to-day management of the Charity's affairs is provided by the Clerk (assisted by the Agent).

### 2.4 The Almshouses

The Charity allocates unfurnished Almshouses within its charitable terms. We currently provide one, two and three bedroomed properties designed for independent living.

The Charity seeks to provide comfortable and secure accommodation to deserving beneficiaries.

## Section 3 – Health and Safety

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### 3.1 Your emergency contact details

It is important that you let the Agent have details (names, addresses, email and telephone numbers) of you and your essential personal contacts. If the details change from time to time, please remember to inform the Agent.

### 3.2 Fire precautions

The Charity's individual Almshouses comply with the appropriate fire regulations. All are fitted with smoke detectors which, on sensing smoke, will trigger the fire alarm. *If a resident is hard of hearing, they should ask for appropriate equipment to alert them in the event of an emergency.*

### 3.3 Avoiding the risk of fire

Please be conscious of the risk of fire, for example, regularly checking at night and before going out that appliances have been fully switched off.

The Charity strives to achieve a reasonable balance between enabling residents to live their lives as they choose, while having regard for the interests of others who could be affected by their behaviour.

### 3.4 Smoke detectors

Smoke detectors are mains operated with a battery back-up. Should you hear it beep on and off, it will be because the battery is low and needs replacing. The Charity recommends that you hold at least one spare 9v replacement battery. It is the beneficiary's responsibility to replace the battery unless the beneficiary is incapacitated for any reason, in which case please contact the managing Agent.

### 3.5 Smoking

The Charity operates a non-smoking policy in the properties and any common areas in line with the general laws which apply to public places and requires residents to comply.

Residents must be aware that if, as a result of unauthorised smoking, an Almshouse dwelling is damaged or discoloured by cigarette smoke, they will be liable for the cost of repair or redecoration.

### 3.6 Slips, trips and falls

The Charity draws your attention to the need to exercise care when using the footpaths in wet, snowy or icy weather.

### 3.7 Personal Property

The Charity expects residents to keep public areas and footpaths clear of obstructions, such as toys, bicycles or cars. They can be a hazard, particularly for our older residents and visitors or at night.

### 3.8 Security

Please consider the following:

**DO:**

- Keep your front door locked at all times.
- Use the spy hole and chain (if fitted) to identify callers before opening the door if provided. *The chain should only be used to open the door a few inches when identifying callers and not kept in permanent use as this may prevent access in an emergency.*

**DO NOT:**

- Allow a stranger to enter your home without proof of identity. If you are in doubt, please call the Agent, a family friend, or the police.
- Leave ground floor windows open so that intruders can gain access when not in residence.

**BE AWARE** of bogus officials or doorstep salesmen.

Only let people into the house whom you know or are expecting. Never allow anyone claiming to be gas, electricity or water meter readers to enter the dwelling unless expected by you.

### 3.9 Keys

The Agent holds a master key which can open your front door, but it will only be used in accordance with the terms of your Appointment with the Charity which will seek to preserve your privacy. Unless in an out of hours emergency, you must not fit locks and chains without the Charity's written consent as this may delay access for emergency services. Should you need to fit new locks out of hours, then you must inform the Charity and provide the Agent with a set of the new keys as soon as possible. Chains should only be used when you wish to identify callers before deciding whether to let them in. The charity may advise on alternative security arrangements.

Please do not obtain duplicate keys without first obtaining the Agent's written consent.

Make sure that you and your visitors check that the main front door to your Almshouse is securely shut after entry or exit.

### 3.10 Routine visits

The Agent will inspect your Almshouse on a regular basis to check and advise the Charity about any maintenance or refurbishment that may be required. They may take photographs to support this process. Directors may accompany them on occasion. Per Section 4.4 below, the Charity or the Charity's Agent will always consult you before they visit.

This is an opportunity to get to know you better and to address any issues and concerns.

## Section 4 – Terms of Occupancy

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### 4.1 Letter of Appointment

Your Letter of Appointment, of which you have a copy, explains that you occupy your Almshouse as a beneficiary of the Charity, initially for three years, your appointment will be reviewed then and at every third anniversary thereafter. This means that you are not a tenant. The review is necessary as the Charity has a responsibility to a) ensure those who no longer meet the occupancy criteria move on and b) allow for moves within the estate.

It is a condition of occupancy that beneficiaries provide the Charity with accurate and complete information of their financial circumstances and inform the Charity if their circumstances change.

There is a copy of the standard letter of appointment in Appendix 2.

### 4.2 Monthly Maintenance Contribution (MMC)

MMCs are payable in advance on the first of each month by direct debit. If you are experiencing difficulties in making a payment, please let the Agent know promptly.

The amount you pay is a contribution towards the cost of running the charity. Items covered by the MMC include:

- Building repairs and maintenance;
- Grounds maintenance;
- Servicing and repair of water, gas and electrical installations, street lights/lighting, roads, footpaths, and car-park;
- Refurbishment; and
- Insurance of the building.

The Charity has the right to terminate the appointment of a beneficiary in the event of non-payment of MMC.

### 4.3 Occupation

The Charity grants occupation to named beneficiaries and identified minor children. Allowing others to share occupation of the Almshouse is not permitted. Occupation by others for more than 7 consecutive nights in a calendar month or a total of 50 nights per year (whichever is the less) requires the written permission of the Charity and any application shall be made to the Agent.

### 4.4 Consulting Residents

The Charity will hold meetings from time to time to discuss the running of the Almshouses with you and your neighbours. You can also talk to a Charity Director in private by asking the Clerk to arrange this. Consultation and involvement of the residents in the day-to-day running of the Charity's Almshouses is a form of participation which benefits all concerned. The Charity welcomes the residents' views on matters affecting their quality of life at the Almshouses.



The Charity will consult you:

- Before any work is done on your Almshouse (except in an emergency or if you are not contactable over a reasonable period).
- Before making changes to the communal facilities, including the gardens.
- Before making changes to the amount of MMC payable.
- Before anyone enters your home (except in an emergency or if you are not contactable over a reasonable period).

## 4.5 Absence from Home

You are expected to be in full time occupation of your Almshouse and extended periods away might lead the Charity to conclude that you have less need for your Almshouse than other potential beneficiaries. If you plan to be away from your dwelling for a total period of more than 28 days in any one year, please notify the Agent and explain the circumstances to the Charity.

Before going away, please ensure that all food has been put away, taps and appliances have been fully switched off and windows shut. If you are leaving your property during the winter months, please discuss with the Agent how much heating is required to minimise the risk of burst pipes, etc.

## 4.6 Utility Bills - Central heating, electricity and hot water

In addition to the MMC, residents are responsible for paying their utility bills.

## 4.7 Portable Gas or Paraffin oil heaters

Residents must not use portable gas or paraffin oil heaters, indoors or outdoors, as these pose a serious safety risk. Their use is strictly prohibited.

## 4.8 Alterations to your Almshouse

You must not affix to or carry out any alterations, repairs or decoration whatsoever to your Almshouse without first discussing your plans with the Agent and obtaining the written permission of the Charity. All such approved works to be done by a professional.

Residents must not:

- Apply wallpaper
- Fix anything to a wall - apart from:
  - Safety straps to secure heavy furniture
  - Pictures
- Fix anything to a floor
- Change any floor coverings

Residents must seek permission before:

- Fixing anything else to a wall - such as a tv, shelf, wall-mounted cupboard, etc.

Residents may:

- Paint walls - but please be aware, should our builder need to make repairs under warranty (e.g. to repair cracked plaster), then it will be the resident's responsibility to restore any non-standard paintwork.

Overall, if in doubt, please ask the Agent.

We will review these rules in 12 months.

## 4.9 Employment

Neither the Almshouse nor its garden may be used as a place of business, either from where to conduct a business or to store items connected with running a business, without the written consent of the Charity. Working from home may be allowed with the written permission of the Charity, however residents must ensure that this is not disruptive for other residents or neighbours and that it does not involve storage of items and/or visitors to the buildings.

### 4.10 Pets

Small animals or caged birds are usually acceptable but must not become a nuisance to other residents. Written permission must be sought prior to any pet living in the Charity's homes.

### 4.11 Inventory

Each Almshouse will have a photographic schedule of condition and an inventory of fixtures and fittings. The inventory will be carried out just before or at the point you move in and you will be expected to return the Almshouse in the same state when you move out.

### 4.12 Moving Out

If you wish to vacate the Almshouse, you must give the Charity written notice of at least 4 weeks. During this notice period you remain liable for your MMC payments even if you have already moved out. Residents or, in the event of death, their personal representatives, remain responsible for MMC payments until the Almshouse is cleared of personal possessions and the keys are returned.

If a resident vacates their Almshouse without giving the agreed notice, they remain liable for their MMC payments until the end of the required notice period, starting when the Almshouse is vacated and the keys are returned. Utility, service and any other bills must be paid up to the end of the notice period or later vacation.

### 4.13 Re-Housing

If you wish to change Almshouse, you should contact the Agent to discuss opportunities. While every effort will be made to assist a resident to move if there is a good reason, any decision will depend upon availability and will be entirely at the discretion of the Charity.



The Charity may require you to move to another Almshouses while major repair work is being carried out, or for some other unforeseen reason.

#### 4.14 Setting Aside (Terminating) Appointments

As you are not a tenant the Charity could in some circumstances ask you to find alternative accommodation and leave. Examples of such circumstances are if:

- You are no longer able to look after yourselves safely or to live independently, even with the help of social services or family support.
- You persistently fail to pay monthly maintenance contributions (MMC) promptly without good reason.
- Your behaviour, or that of your visitors, is considered to be unreasonable and anti-social particularly in respect of other residents or representatives of the Charity.
- Your circumstances change significantly to the extent that you are no longer considered suitable to be a beneficiary of the Charity.

The Charity will only revoke the appointment of a beneficiary after appropriate efforts have been made to resolve the issues of concern.

#### 4.15 Gifts and Legacies

It is the Charity's policy that no one involved in its operation should accept any gift or legacy from a Charity beneficiary or service provider. If you wish to donate anything to the Charity, please contact the Clerk. All such matters will be dealt with in confidence.

## Section 5 – Services & Gardens

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### 5.1 Furniture and fittings

The Charity's Almshouses are offered unfurnished. The Charity will maintain and, assuming normal wear and tear, repair or replace all items of equipment or fittings detailed in the inventory at check-in.

### 5.2 Gardens

You are required to keep your Almshouse garden properly maintained

#### Residents Responsibilities

To cultivate and manage the garden such that it is clean, neat, tidy and free of rubbish at all times.

To maintain / weed borders and mow the back garden lawns. MM1 Mores Meadow 5,6,7,8 and all houses in MM2 are to maintain their front gardens. The remaining hoses in MM1 are maintained by the Charity.

To prune the back garden hedge and large bushes to max height of 2 metres. The Charity will maintain all front hedges.

To seek consent from the Charity before any tree is cut back / pruned / removed.

To seek consent from the Charity before any changes are made to the shed, paths, or lawn.

To ensure the garden is at a similar state at the end of the occupancy as it was at the beginning.

To promptly notify the Agent of any damage to the Charity's property, e.g., the shed/fences/trees/hard-landscaping etc.

To arrange agreed repairs with the Charity and pay for any remediation for all damage to the Charity's property.

#### Charity's Responsibilities

To cut and maintain the Communal lawns and hedges in front of the properties.

To keep the external facing hedge sides that create boundary with communal paths to a height of no more than 2 metres unless otherwise agreed with the Charity

To prune and support boundary trees.

To maintain boundary fences and walls (normal wear and tear).

To replace damaged front wood panel fences with hedges and damaged back wood panel fences with pig wire.

To maintain sheds provided by the Charity, hard landscaping, including paths and patios. (normal wear and tear).

### 5.3 Repairs and Decorations

The Charity is responsible for both external and internal upkeep of your Almshouse and the communal parts. Please immediately report all necessary work to the Agent.

You will be consulted in advance about arrangements for any work to be carried out. Workmen will not be allowed to enter your Almshouse while you are out unless you have agreed to satisfactory arrangements. An exception will have to be made, however, if an emergency arises or if you cannot be contacted over a reasonable period.

## 5.4 Insurance

The Charity insures the buildings and its own contents only.

## 5.5 Television

You need a television licence to use any television-receiving equipment including TV set, set-top box, video or DVD recorder, PC or mobile phone to watch or record programmes as they are being broadcast. This includes foreign broadcasts. Permission is required for installation of devices to receive TV, e.g Sky dishes.

## 5.6 Cleaning

You are responsible for keeping your own Almshouse and garden clean and tidy, including cleaning the windows.

## 5.7 Refuse collection and recycling

For information about refuse, collection dates and recycling please visit <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/bins/>. You are responsible for the safe and hygienic disposal of all refuse, recycling and garden waste.

## 5.8 Telephone and internet

If you require them, you are responsible for making your own arrangements for installing these in your Almshouse through your chosen provider, and for payment of all bills.

## 5.9 Servicing of Mechanical Ventilation & Heat Recovery (MVHR) in MM2, Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) in MM2 & Humidity Ventilation System in MM1

The MVHRs and ASHPs in MM2 and the Humidity Ventilation System in MM1 will require an annual service which the Charity is responsible for and for which the Charity's contractor will need access to the property. Per Section 4.4 above, the Charity or the Charity's Agent will always consult you before they visit.

## 5.10 Vent-Axia ventilation system (MM2 only)

Please DO NOT switch off the Vent-Axia unit. It extracts stale moist air, odours and indoor pollutants, at the same time drawing in fresh, filtered air from outside. In winter it recovers much of the heat from the stale air and warms the incoming air, helping you save on heating costs.

The fan is set to run continuously 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and consumes very little energy. It helps prevent the build-up of moisture in the home and reduces the risk of black mould forming on walls and behind cupboards.

For further information, please see the user guide in Appendix 2.

## 5.11 Heating System: Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) in MM2

There are two videos, made in Pearson Terrace in January 2023, which explain how to make best use of the air source heat pump systems found in the Terraces. These can be found on our website under Services –



Housing – Frequently Asked Questions – at the bottom of the page, or follow the link: <https://gsvc.org.uk/residents-faqs/>

## 5.12 Foul Tank

The pump for the foul tank is a green cabinet located to the right side of the road on entering MMII. Should the orange light flash, please contact the Agent as this indicates a fault with the pumps.

## Section 6 – General Information

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### 6.1 Meters, mains switch, fuse box and stopcock

Electricity meter location	Agent to advise
Electricity mains switch location	Agent to advise
Fuse box location	Agent to advise
Gas meter location	Agent to advise
Mains water stopcock location	Agent to advise

### 6.2 Council Tax

You are responsible for paying your own council tax and will receive the annual Council Tax Notice from the local authority in March each year. People living alone are entitled to council tax relief of 25%.

Current Band of your Almshouse:           Agent to advise

### 6.3 Benefits Including council tax benefits

If your income consists of the basic retirement pension and you have little or no capital, you may be entitled to Benefits to help with your accommodation costs. It is important that you inform your local benefits office if there are changes in your financial circumstances as they have the power to demand reimbursement in the event of an over-payment.

Eligibility for state benefits changes from time to time. If you need advice on state benefits, please ask the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) in the first instance as they will have some experience of entitlements and benefits. Other sources of information include Age UK and various on-line resources including:

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits>

There is also a local source of advice and support in Sawston, John Huntingdon's Charity, as well as a CAB clinic.

For further information see <https://johnhuntingdon.org.uk/services/help-advice/>

### 6.4 Parking

You must not park in unauthorised places, on the pavements, or allow your visitors to do so, as cars so parked may block the way for ambulances or fire engines attending in an emergency, or inconvenience other residents with mobility issues, buggy/prams. The charity may consider persistent disregard of this obligation to be antisocial.

## Section 7 – If Things Go Wrong

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### 7.1 Personal Problems

If you have any personal problems over money or any other matter and you have no family or friends whom you feel able to consult, the Charity will be pleased to offer advice and help if it can. Please contact the Charity via the Clerk. Your concerns will always be treated in the utmost confidence. You may also contact the John Huntingdon Charity as they provide advice services: <https://johnhuntingdon.org.uk/services/help-advice/>

### 7.2 A dispute with a neighbour

Before making a formal complaint, try to discuss the problem with the neighbour. If you are worried about approaching the person, write a letter explaining the problem clearly. Stick to the facts. If the problem affects other people, involve them as well. It may be easier to settle the dispute if the complaint comes from several people. A residents' association might help if you are a member of one.

For further information, see:

<https://www.gov.uk/how-to-resolve-neighbour-disputes/talk-to-your-neighbour>

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/problems-where-you-live/complaining-about-your-neighbour>

If all else fails you may complain to the charity via our agent, Redmayne Arnold & Harris. We are unable to act on non-specific complaints so please provide as much information as possible, including:

- The date and time of the incident(s)
- The names and addresses of the individuals involved
- How often it happens
- How it is affecting you
- What you have done to try and resolve it
- Who else you have reported it to
- Any other evidence you have of the issue

Make a note of whenever the problem happens – your records will be useful if you decide to take things further.

If you think there has been a hate crime or hate incident, you should mention this even if you've already told someone else.

Incidents of anti-social behaviour – ie causing nuisance and annoyance – can be talked through with an adviser at the Citizens Advice Bureau. Examples include:

- making excessive noise
- dumping rubbish
- writing graffiti
- having a dog that barks or is otherwise troublesome



- using your garden without permission
- harassing you because of religion, race, sex, disability, or another characteristic.

It isn't anti-social behaviour if the problem concerns normal day-to-day living, eg a baby crying, cooking smells, etc. You should talk to your neighbour and try to agree a compromise.

If you are worried about a child:

- If you think you or the child is in immediate danger – call the police on 999
- If you have concerns about physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or neglect – report it to Cambridgeshire County Council at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families>

If you are worried about an adult who is in immediate danger or needs medical treatment contact the police and/or ambulance service on 999.

### 7.3 Complaints

If you have any concerns, please bring them to the attention of the Agent who will attempt to resolve them. In the majority of cases, minor issues can be dealt with informally, quickly and efficiently. The Charity and the Agent can only resolve problems and improve the service provided if you speak up when things go wrong. Set out below is a procedure to be followed if you wish to raise a complaint in connection with the occupation of your Almshouse, or about services provided by the Charity.

- Minor matters, such as small maintenance items, should be referred to the Agent.
- If the Agent is unable to resolve the matter, or if there is a persistent problem with pets, loud noise or matters affecting your health and safety, you should refer it to the Clerk in writing. All complaints will be treated in confidence.
- If you are dissatisfied with the response you receive, you should write formally to the Chairperson of the Charity asking for consideration of the matter by the Charity. The Chairperson will advise you of the Charity's response and inform you of any action taken to resolve your complaint.
- If you have a complaint about a representative of the Charity, other residents, or about a serious breach of health and safety regulations, you should put your complaint in writing to the Chairperson of the Charity, with a formal request for it to be considered at the next charity meeting.

### 7.4 Housing Ombudsman

If you remain dissatisfied with the Charity's decision, you have the right to take your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service whose address is:

Housing Ombudsman Service 81 Aldwych, London WC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

## Appendix 1 – Charity Policies

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[Complaints Policy](#)

[Equality and Diversity Policy](#)

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Safeguarding Policy](#)

# Complaints policy

## 1. Background

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### 1.1. This charity is not a Registered Provider

The Great Shelford Village Charity (GSVC) can only resolve difficulties and improve the service offered if it is made aware of difficulties or complaints. Residents are encouraged to speak up when things go wrong and may do so without fear of prejudice or recrimination. Individuals should act solely in their own interest rather than as a self-appointed spokesperson on behalf of others, unless those other residents expressly consent.

The following outlines the procedure to be followed when a resident wishes to raise a complaint in connection with the occupation of an almshouse or the services provided by the GSVC in relation to the almshouses or if an applicant for assistance wishes to lodge a complaint.

## 2. Purpose

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The aim of the policy is to ensure that the complaints process is flexible and responsive to the needs of individual complainants. The policy seeks to ensure that:

- complainants are listened to and treated with courtesy and empathy;
- complainants will never be disadvantaged as a result of making a genuine complaint;
- complaints are investigated promptly, thoroughly, honestly and openly;
- apologies are given as appropriate;
- complaints are dealt with confidentially and in compliance with data protection obligations.

## 3. Scope

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GSVC is unable to deal with an issue through the complaints process if:

- a complaint relates to a legal matter that is already being handled by a legal representative;
- the complainant is anonymous;
- Written consent is not received from the complainant or a representative has made the complaint but written consent cannot be obtained from the resident. However, consent is not required if a complaint is made in the name of:
  - a deceased person;
  - someone who lacks the [capacity](#) to take their own decisions;
  - a non-Gillick competent child.

## 4. Process

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Maintenance issues should be raised first with the agents appointed by GSVVC, currently Redmayne Arnold Harris.

Residents are encouraged to raise minor complaints informally in the first instance, preferably verbally, as this can lead to better understanding and very often to a quick resolution of any issue.

If the complaint cannot be resolved quickly or if the complaint is more serious, it should be made in writing. A written complaint should include sufficient detail to enable GSVVC to investigate it.

Complaints should be sent to the clerk in the first instance (contact details below), who will acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within 7 (calendar) days. This acknowledgement will indicate the next course of action and the anticipated timescale. GSVVC will appoint a director who will seek to resolve the complaint as a matter of urgency.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome proposed by the appointed director, they have 7 days from the date of the director's response to request a review, which will be dealt with by the Chair of the GSVVC who will convene a special meeting of a panel of within 14 days of the request being submitted.

The Chair of GSVVC will respond in writing to the complainant within 42 days advising of the outcome of the review and of any action to be taken to resolve the complaint. As GSVVC is not a Registered Provider, or formerly registered with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), it is not obliged to progress any complaint further. If a complaint is pursued unreasonably or where a complainant's actions or behaviour are considered to be unreasonable, GSVVC reserves the right to close the complaint at any time and will inform the complainant of their reasons.

A complainant who displays threatening or abusive behaviour or language (whether verbal or written) or causes contractors or directors to feel threatened or abused, or who continues to contact the charity with unreasonable demands, may have their appointment as a beneficiary ended.

The Clerk may be contacted via:

- Email - [clerk@gsvc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@gsvc.org.uk)
- Post - The Clerk, Great Shelford Village Charity, 18 High St, Great Shelford CB22 5EH
- Phone - 07979 184273

Complaints policy version 2.0 dated 10MAY2024

# Equality and diversity policy

## 1. Background and purpose

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The directors of the Great Shelford Village Charity Trustee Ltd (GSVC), the trustee of the Great Shelford Village Charity is committed to promoting equality and diversity in our policies, practices and procedures. We recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (see appendix). This applies to all aspects of GSVC operations and is promoted through the following values:

- Openness, by encouraging and supporting new ideas that will improve GSVC's performance.
- Respect for each other.
- Honesty, operating in an ethical way.
- Caring for the dignity of all people.
- Continual awareness and promotion of equality and diversity, and of the importance we attached to those issues.

The GSVC is restricted under its governing documents to follow set criteria in providing grants and accommodation. Subject only to this restriction, the directors do not discriminate by reason of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership status.

## 2. Scope

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This policy relates to our Beneficiaries, directors, contractors, volunteers, suppliers and visitors.

GSVC will take all reasonable measures to accommodate all relevant requests, subject to the relevant limitations of the GSVC's Charitable purposes and accommodation availability.

The directors are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.

## 3. Process

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The GSVC has designated the Chair as the person who takes lead responsibility for equality and diversity. She/he may be contacted using the following email: [clerk@GSVC.org.uk](mailto:clerk@GSVC.org.uk)

The directors of GSVC will not tolerate discrimination or harassment of any kind. Complaints of discrimination or harassment will be taken seriously and investigated.

Any individual(s) who feel that they have suffered or witnessed any form of discrimination should follow the GSVC complaints procedure set out in the complaints policy which is available on request.

## 4. Related policies and procedures

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This policy does not work in isolation. It connects and interlinks with the following policies, procedures and model documents:

- Letter of Appointment.
- Safeguarding policy.
- Resident's handbook.
- Complaints policy.

### APPENDIX

The Equality Act 2010 includes an exception for charities. This allows charities under certain circumstances to restrict benefits to people with a particular protected characteristic (but not a group defined by colour) if the restriction already appears in the charity's governing document.

Equality Act 2010 – Definitions

**Age:** An age group includes people of the same age and people of a particular range of ages. Where people fall in the same age group they share the protected characteristic of age.

**Disability:** A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Gender reassignment:** A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

**Marriage and civil partnership:** A person has the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if the person is married or is a civil partner.

**Pregnancy and maternity:** Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Equality and diversity policy version 2.0 dated 10MAY2024

# Health and safety policy

## 1. Background and purpose

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The directors of the Great Shelford Village Charity (GSVC) Ltd are committed to taking reasonable steps to ensure a safe living and working environment for all those who have lawful access to the charity's buildings and land.

This commitment has four elements:

1. Compliance with current health and safety legislation and regulations.
2. An assessment of the significant risks faced by everyone (residents, directors, staff, volunteers, visitors and agents/contractors) who have access to the charity's property with appropriate action taken to minimise these risks. The five practical steps to risk assessment are given below and further information is available at <https://www.hse.gov.uk>:
  - Identify the hazards
  - Decide who might be harmed
  - Evaluate the risks
  - Record findings
  - Review assessments.
3. Provision of appropriate and suitable training and information to ensure that directors are aware of the risks and know how to respond appropriately. All directors will achieve a minimum level of health and safety training (for example by accessing the training provided by the Almshouse Association) which should be achieved within twelve weeks of appointment. Directors will ensure that knowledge is kept up to date.
4. Regular recorded inspections of the properties and subsequent maintenance programmes will ensure that health and safety issues are given a high priority. Any defects that have health and safety implications will be addressed as a matter of urgency.

## 2. Scope

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This policy is applicable to all those who have lawful access to the charity's buildings and land.

## 3. Process

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When directors select contractors, they will take reasonable steps to ensure they are competent and capable of undertaking work in a safe way. Depending upon the nature of the task, this may include:

- Requesting contractors risk assessments.

- Requesting method statements.
- Requesting evidence of competent staff in relation to the planned works, e.g. Gas Safe competence for gas works.
- Adequate insurance.
- Requiring contractors to undertake to comply with all legislation relevant to their work activities and to exercise reasonable care towards their workforce, taking all necessary steps to ensure that the work is undertaken in a safe manner.
- Certain works will fall within the scope of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM). If so, directors will need to consider:
  - o The roles and responsibilities the charity holds as the client.
  - o Whether a project will require an F10 submission and what this entails.

Directors should also carry out an annual internal review of health and safety matters and risk assessments.

Michael Pooles is the designated health and safety lead with responsibility on health and safety matters. He has sufficient training and knowledge on how to access necessary health and safety advice. Nevertheless, all directors must immediately bring to the attention to the board of directors any issues of concern.

Details of the charity's health and safety policy and guidance must be brought to the attention of volunteers and residents.



# Safeguarding policy

## 1. Background

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Great Shelford Village Charity (GSVC) aims to support people in need, individually or generally, in the Parish of Great Shelford and the surrounding area, as well as others having a strong connection to the Parish of Great Shelford.

**Safeguarding adults and children** is about the safety and well-being of all and providing additional measures for those least able to protect themselves from harm or abuse and in particular by way of:

- Empowerment. People will be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions with informed consent.
- Prevention. Action will be taken before harm occurs where possible.
- Proportionality. The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented will be adopted.
- Protection. Appropriate protective steps will be taken.
- Partnership. Awareness and utilisation of other agencies will be encouraged.
- Accountability. Directors will review the policy and its operation on an annual basis.

## 2. Purpose

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To protect vulnerable adults, children and young people who receive support from GSVC from harm, and to ensure that any concerns about physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect are dealt with quickly and effectively.

To make available to directors, contractors, volunteers and residents, the overarching principles that guide our approach to protection.

To require directors, staff and contractors of GSVC to acknowledge that all grant applicants, residents, volunteers and visitors have the right to a safe and secure environment and respect for their dignity, privacy, independence and individuality.

This safeguarding policy has been developed to protect those who work and engage with the GSVC.

## 3. Scope

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This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of GSVC including the board of directors, contractors and volunteers.

## 4. Process

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This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children and adults, in England. A summary of the key legislation is available from: [www.nspcc.org.uk/learning](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/part/1/crossheading/safeguarding-adults-at-risk-of-abuse-or-neglect>

### 4.1 Raising a concern

Any resident / applicant who feels that they are being abused in any manner should immediately contact the charity. The charity will, where appropriate, work with other agencies, to resolve matters. The designated person will undertake an initial investigation to establish the facts.

Jaspaul Hill is currently designated as safeguarding lead, having responsibility for any safeguarding issues and can be contacted via the website. If unavailable, or if the concern involves the current safeguarding lead and the Chair/Clerk should be informed immediately of any safeguarding issue that has arisen.

### 4.2 Procedure to be followed if abuse is suspected

#### **Depending upon the circumstances of the individual case:**

- Ensure the individual is safe.
- If necessary, seek immediate medical assistance.
- Find out the wishes of the suspected victim of abuse (which are however not determinative).
- Ascertain the basic facts (but do not start investigating) including:
  - Date, time and place of alleged abuse;
  - Name of complainant;
  - Where different, name of person who has allegedly been abused;
  - Nature of alleged abuse;
  - Description of any injuries or visible manifestation observed;
  - Account(s) of the incident which has/have been given;
- Inform the directors /clerk immediately.
- Write a report recording any observation (photographs are acceptable with the person's permission) and details of the account(s) given (in the persons own words if possible).
- If a complainant requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that they are sensitively advised that cases of alleged abuse may have to be referred to the appropriate agencies.

The designated person will gather information and arrange a meeting between the clerk, designated person and Chair of directors, to establish the facts. A full record of the meeting will be made.

This meeting is to decide whether, given the nature of the report, the individual and the alleged incident fall within the Care Act section 42 criteria for referral to the safeguarding team or if another course of action is more appropriate. The safeguarding team may be contacted for advice. If the police or other emergency services were called, the incident must be reported to the Local Authority.

If a referral is made to the safeguarding team from then on, any action should be guided by them (see *appendix*).

If the safeguarding team are not involved, the situation will continue to be monitored by the safeguarding lead who will report to the Board of directors on a basis agreed at the meeting.

Any serious incidents of this nature which are reported to the Local Authority must also be notified to the Charity Commission if the allegation relates to the operation of the Charity.

Local contact details:

MASH: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/parenting-and-family-support/providing-children-and-family-services-how-we-work>

Safeguarding Team: (<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/adults/report-abuse-of-a-vulnerable-adult>)

## 5. Information governance

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GSVC will handle all personal data in line with GDPR guidance <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>

### APPENDIX - Information that may be needed by a Local Authority Safeguarding Team when raising a concern.

1. Alleged victim's name and addresses (including previous addresses if known)
2. Date of birth
3. The details of the concern or disclosure, circumstances, dates, times, witnesses
4. Type of alleged abuse
5. Key people, family, agencies, workers involved
6. Details of whether the alleged victim knows of the referral and has given consent. If not why not
7. Alleged victim's preferred outcomes
8. Any concerns about capacity
9. What discussion has taken place
10. Any others at risk
11. Extent of harm
12. Details of any immediate action taken e.g. police contacted or action taken to reduce risk.

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#### Online Training

<https://www.almshouses.org/news/safeguarding-vulnerable-adults-sova-online-training-course/>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training>

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Safeguarding policy version 3.0 dated 10MAY2024

## Appendix 2 - Copy of a Standard Letter of Appointment

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# Letter of Appointment

## Great Shelford Village Charity

Dear ^

I am pleased to advise you that the trustees of the Great Shelford Village Charity have considered your application for accommodation and have decided to appoint you, ^, as beneficiary resident of the Charity for the purpose of residence at ^ Mores Meadow, Great Shelford, CB22 5LS with effect from <date>. *The Charity will review your qualification for occupation for continued residence on the third anniversary of your occupation and every three years thereafter.*

The Charity's Agent overseeing the almshouses is Redmayne Arnold Harris of 30 Woollards Lane, Great Shelford, CB22 5LZ.

Residents occupy a Charity almshouse under licence in accordance with Charity law and as a nominated beneficiary of the Charity. Neither the resident(s) nor any relation or guest of his/her/theirs will be a tenant of the Charity or have any legal interest in his/her/their almshouse.

The appointment of a resident beneficiary is personal to the person[s] named above. No other person is allowed to occupy the dwelling unless they have formally applied to the Charity and been granted beneficiary status in their own right and have been jointly allocated the same dwelling.

A monthly maintenance contribution (MMC) of £XXX is payable monthly in advance towards the provision and upkeep of the dwelling. It is a condition of occupancy that the MMC should be paid by direct debit to the Charity's Agent. The MMC will be payable from the commencement of the week during which you take occupation. Please complete the attached direct debit mandate prior to taking up occupation. The level of MMC is reviewed annually with changes effective from January each year, but the Charity reserves the right to review this more frequently if it is in the Charity's best interests in which case one month's written notice will be given.

It is a condition of occupancy that the full amount of MMC is paid when due. If you are entitled to benefits in respect of your accommodation, it is advisable to make an application now to the council in this regard. If any difficulty in claiming is experienced, please let the Charity know as soon as possible.

Residents are responsible for payment of the utility bills (gas, electricity, water), council tax, and any other services e.g. TV, telephone, Broadband, relating to their dwelling. Meters will be read prior to occupation and upon departure. The resident will comply with all laws and with any recommendations of the relevant suppliers relating to the supply and removal of electricity, gas, water, sewage, telecommunications and data and other services and utilities to or from the Property.

The utility suppliers are currently (TBC) Should a resident choose another provider he/she/they should provide the Charity's Agent with details in case of emergency.

## Deposit

The beneficiary resident pays a deposit as security for the performance of their obligations as outlined in this agreement and to pay and compensate the trustees for the reasonable costs of any breach of those obligations. It is agreed that this sum shall not be transferable by the beneficiary resident in any way and at any time against payment of the MMC and that no interest shall be payable on this Deposit. The balance of the Deposit to be paid to the beneficiary resident as soon as possible after the conclusion of the tenancy, less any reasonable costs incurred for the breach of any obligation. The deposit will be lodged with the Tenancy Deposit Scheme.

The licence is subject to the following regulations for residents which ensure the smooth running of the almshouses and the wellbeing of all residents:

1. Residents may expect to continue in occupation for as long as they need the accommodation providing they continue to qualify as a beneficiary are able to care for themselves and their appointment as a beneficiary is not set aside. If a resident's health deteriorates, he or she must be willing to accept advice and guidance, either from their own doctor or a medical consultant appointed by the Charity. The Charity will also consult with the next of kin, Social Services and other agencies if it is considered appropriate.
2. Residents should provide the trustees with authority to contact their doctor and next of kin directly in the event of emergency by signing the attached form [Link to template form].
3. The name and address of residents' next of kin, or a nominated representative, should be supplied to the Charity's Agent prior to occupation and updated if subsequently changed. It is strongly recommended that residents make a Will and advise the Charity's Agent where it is deposited.
4. Residents are required to occupy the property quietly and with thought for other residents and neighbours. No radio, TV or music system should be operated in such a manner as to cause a disturbance, nor shall anything be done in, upon or about the premises which shall be a nuisance, annoyance or disturbance to the occupants of other almshouses, or to the general public.
5. The Charity will carry out all repairs, including internal and external decoration. Residents are not allowed to make any structural alteration to the almshouses, nor alter the plumbing or electrical installation. No shelves, cupboards, locks or fittings shall be fixed or removed, nor shall any alteration be made to any room or its fittings without the prior written consent of the Charity. All requests should be directed to the Charity's Agent.
6. Residents must make good any damage to the almshouse or the Charity's fixtures or fittings, caused by them or any member of their household, or by any visitors to the almshouse. If any resident is unable or unwilling to arrange this, the Charity may commission this work to be done and if they do, they will charge the resident all of the costs of doing so.

7. The Charity retains the power to set aside (terminate) a resident's appointment with good cause, e.g. in the case of serious misconduct, non-payment of MMC, a serious or persistent breach of the regulations, in any of the circumstances described in the Charity's Charity Scheme, if the resident is no longer a qualified beneficiary (e.g. by reason of income or capital) or is no longer able to live independently.
8. Whilst at all times the Charity will respect the privacy of residents of the almshouses, it is a condition of residency that residents allow reasonable and regular access to their almshouses for inspections (including photographs), and for necessary repairs and decoration to be carried out. Representatives of the Charity may visit from time to time by prior appointment.
9. Residents must keep their almshouse and garden clean and tidy and avoid storage of excessive or unnecessary items. In extreme cases hoarding of goods may be grounds for setting aside (terminating) an appointment and ending the licence. In the event of failure to comply with this obligation the Charity may commission the remedial work and charge the licensee the costs thereof.
10. Any defects which become apparent in the almshouse should be reported to the Charity's Agent as soon as possible.
11. The use of paraffin, oil and portable gas heaters is strictly prohibited. The Charity's Agent should be consulted if additional heating is required.
12. Residents must live in the almshouse as their permanent residence and not be absent for more than 28 consecutive days without the prior consent of the Charity.
13. The resident's attention is drawn to the Complaints and Grievance Procedure set out in the Residents' Handbook.
14. Occasional overnight visitors are permitted to stay in the almshouse but these must not be regular occurrences. For any visitor staying for more than 7 consecutive nights, the beneficiary must inform the Charity's Agent and provide contact details. Beneficiaries may not have overnight visitors for more than 50 nights per year.
15. Residents are expected to park on their driveway or in a parking bay [*There is no right to an allocated parking space with this property.*] Residents must apply to the Charity if they wish to have more than one car per property.
16. The Charity's Policy on Pets is that small pets may only be kept with the prior written consent of the Charity. More information can be found in the Resident's Handbook.
17. The Charity operates a non-smoking policy in the properties and any common areas in line with the general laws which apply to public places and requires residents to comply.

18. The Charity may alter these regulations as necessary for the efficient administration of the Charity and its objects or for the residents' welfare. Any alteration will be notified in writing to each resident.
19. There may be circumstances, for example during extensive refurbishment, when the Charity will need to require a resident(s) to vacate the almshouse and move, either temporarily or permanently, to another almshouse. The Charity reserves the right to do so but will consult with residents prior to making any such decision.
20. Should a resident wish to leave his/her/their almshouse to live elsewhere, not less than one calendar months' notice in writing must be given to the Charity's Agent. The MMC remains payable until the notice period expires and the dwelling is vacated and cleared of all furniture and possessions.
21. When the resident vacates the almshouse for whatever reason, all items belonging to the resident should be removed by him or her immediately. MMC and utility / service bills must be paid up to the departure date. Should a resident vacate the dwelling prior to expiry of the notice period, the MMC must be paid to the end of the appropriate notice period.
22. If any possessions, chattels, or goods are left by the resident in the almshouse without the written agreement of the Charity after the resident has vacated, the resident agrees by signing this Letter of Appointment that the Charity may sell those items and pay any outstanding amounts owing to the Charity, including any outstanding MMC and other expenses including disposal and removal costs, from the proceeds of sale.
23. It is the resident's responsibility to notify the Charity if their circumstances change. However, unless the income or capital of the resident[s] were to increase to the extent that they no longer qualify as a beneficiary, the likelihood is that they would be allowed to remain in the almshouse. The Charity reserves the right to review residents' financial circumstances from time to time.
24. With the written permission of the Charity, residents may be allowed to work from their almshouse, however they must ensure that this is not disruptive for other residents or neighbours and that it does not involve delivery or storage of items and/or visitors to the buildings.
25. Parking:
  - Residents are not to block or restrict, with vehicles or otherwise, access to local roadways, paths and other access routes, and to keep them and any car parking spaces clear of unroadworthy vehicles and other obstructions.
  - Residents are not to park or allow to be parked any lorry or van exceeding five metres in length or other non-domestic vehicle on the Charity's land.
  - No commercial vehicles or caravans are to be parked except with the express permission of the Charity.
  - Residents may apply to the Charity to keep a mobility scooter, or more than one car per household at the almshouse.



All such vehicles are kept by the residents entirely and solely at the resident's risk and must comply with any Health and Safety information in the Residents' Handbook.

26. It is a condition of occupancy that resident(s) sign a copy of this Letter of Appointment (copy enclosed), signifying their willingness to abide by the above regulations, before taking up occupation and that they have read and will comply with the regulations as laid down in this letter and in the Resident's Handbook.

*[In the event of an appointment being made to two persons, both should sign the copy Letter. A second copy/second copies is/are enclosed for the resident[s] retention. In the event of the death or departure of one partner or dependants, the Charity reserves the right to ask the remaining resident(s) to move to a smaller dwelling.]*

This Letter of Appointment will be reviewed periodically and may be amended by the Charity.

Agent of behalf of the trustees

Signature

Name

Date.....

We the resident(s) agree(s) to the conditions of this appointment and related handbook

Signature

Name

Date.....





## Appendix 3 – User Manuals

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