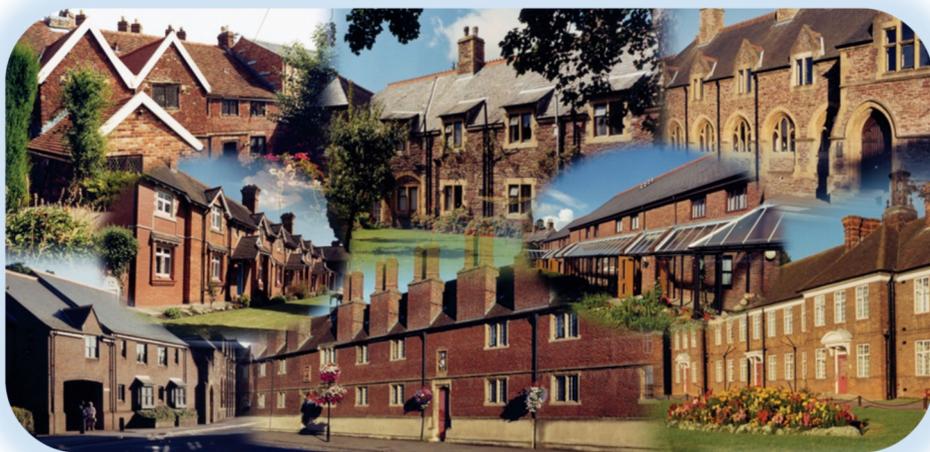


Taunton Heritage Trust



Resident's Handbook

Resident's Handbook

Introduction

The Trustees and Staff would like to welcome you to the Taunton Heritage Trust as a new Resident. We all hope that you will settle in quickly and be very happy here.

The Resident's Handbook sets out useful information about our Charity and its general management and administration. It also explains your responsibilities as a Resident.

The conditions stated in this handbook, together with the regulations set out in your Letter of Appointment, form your contract with the Taunton Heritage Trust which you sign and accept when you take up your residency. It may be necessary to amend these rules and regulations from time to time, but any changes would be discussed with Residents beforehand, when you would be given the opportunity to express any views or concerns.

The almshouse is your home and every effort will be made to enable you to live independently, free to choose your own lifestyle and able to benefit from the quiet enjoyment and dignity that the almshouse setting provides.

I am sure you will appreciate the importance of everyone in the community respecting the wishes of others, allowing them their privacy, if that is what they wish.

The Trustees and Staff have tried to minimise these rules and regulations which have been designed for the benefit of all Residents and to ensure the efficient management of the Taunton Heritage Trust.

Please do not hesitate to speak to your Warden if you need any further information or clarification.

Once again a very warm welcome.

Karen White – Clerk to the Trustees

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Resident's Handbook

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Chapter One: Taunton Heritage Trust

1.1 History

The Taunton Heritage Trust is an Almshouse Charity and is one of the oldest Charities in England and Wales, dating back to 1635 when Robert Gray founded Grays Almshouses on East Street, Taunton.

Over the years a number of small Taunton charities including “the St James’ Almshouses”, “Popes & Strickland’s Almshouses” and the “Hospital Branch of the Charity of Richard Huish”, came together to be known as the Taunton Town Charity. In 2010 the name of the Charity was changed to the Taunton Heritage Trust.

1.2 Management

The Trust is registered with the Charity Commission, is a Registered Social Landlord with the Homes and Community Agency (HCA) and a member of the Almshouse Association. A Board of Trustees, who give their services voluntarily, has overall control of the Trust but the day to day management is carried out by the Clerk to the Trustees, supported by the Treasurer, Properties Manager, Administrator, Administrative Assistant and Wardens, all of whom are employed on a part time basis.

A photograph of the Staff team is displayed on the noticeboard at each site.

1.3 Accommodation and Support

Taunton Heritage Trust owns five properties which between them provide 67 flats and guest accommodation. These are:

Bernard Taylor Homes, Magdalene Street

Huish Homes, Magdalene Street

Grays Almshouses, East Street

Leycroft Close, Hamilton Road

St James Close, St James Street

These properties offer self-contained flats designed to meet the needs of older people who are capable of independent living. The Trust’s objectives in providing accommodation are:

- **To provide affordable, suitable and safe accommodation for people on low incomes aged over 60 years.**
- **To provide Warden assistance to encourage Residents to live their lives as independently as possible.**
- **To work to secure appropriate assistance for Residents from relatives and relevant support agencies.**
- **To provide a community environment which encourages social wellbeing through a range of activities and events.**
- **To maintain the Trust's almshouses to the highest standards practicable.**

The services and level of support that we provide, together with the guidelines that we ask Residents to follow in order to meet these objectives, are explained more fully in the following chapters.

Chapter Two: Services Provided

2.1 The Wardens

Wardens support the general wellbeing of Residents without interfering in their lives or intruding on their privacy. Their role is that of “good neighbour”. Wardens are not trained carers and cannot therefore offer personal care support. They will ensure as far as practicable that Residents have appropriate assistance from relatives or relevant support agencies. These outside services might include help with personal care, meal preparation and provision of physiotherapy or occupational therapy aids for use around the home.

When you first move in your Warden will go through an induction process with you, explaining their role and show you how to use the Piper alarm system which is operated by Deane Helpline, stair lifts and laundry equipment where appropriate. They will introduce you to some neighbours and give you information about any planned social events.

2.2 Contacting the Wardens/Piper System

Our Wardens work on a part time basis and their working hours are as follows:

- Working Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 12.30 pm
- On Call Monday to Friday 8.00 am to 8.30 am and 12.30pm to 5.00 pm

During **working hours** your Warden visits Residents, deals with any relevant issues and liaises with colleagues in the office. They are available to contact via their mobile phone.

During **on call hours** your Warden is available to contact via mobile phone for any issues that you may have. It is possible that your Warden may be on call but off site, and so there will be times when Deane Helpline service will be used instead of the Warden during on call times.

Your Warden is **off duty** between the following hours:

- Monday to Friday 5.00 pm to 8.00 am
- Weekends
- Bank holidays

During these times, if you require assistance, you **must** use your Piper System and Deane Helpline will respond. In the event of an absolute emergency during non-working hours that requires Taunton Heritage Trust personnel being contacted, the Deane Helpline staff will have a duty contact telephone number. This number will not be available to Residents and so Residents must use Deane Helpline as the first point of contact.

Please respect the Warden's off duty time and privacy.

Under current employment law, there are limits to the hours that a Warden can work or be "on call" and Health and Safety regulations will prevent them from carrying out some activities. Please respect this too. The Wardens' monthly duty rota is displayed on the notice boards in all properties.

You will be asked to help the Warden complete a Support Plan, which will record details of your next of kin, GP, any medical problems you may have and medication you are taking. It will identify the support you need, how that will be provided or obtained, and will be reviewed at least once a year depending on your personal circumstances. If changes are made to your medication it is your responsibility to inform the Warden.

Each support plan is stored electronically on the Trust's secure computer system. Residents are provided with a copy. Any data that the Trust holds relating to you will only be used for the purpose for which it was supplied. Your data is stored and treated in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. We will not share your data with anyone else without your consent except when required by law or best practice to do so.

It is essential that you let the Warden know about any changes to your contacts or Support Plan information. This information will be

shared in confidence, with Deane Helpline, which provides 24 hour support.

Both Wardens hold a First Aid at Work Certificate but they do not provide a nursing service.

In an emergency:

a) The Emergency Call System

All flats are fitted with a Piper alarm system, including a pendant that you may wear, which you will be shown how to use.

Please do:

Use the Piper system at any time of the day or night to get help for an accident or incident.

Please do not:

Tie up the pull cords. The Piper alarm should not be used to make normal contact with the Warden or to report minor maintenance problems.

b) Testing the Emergency Call System

It is an essential part of our Health and Safety procedure that the Wardens test the Piper in every flat and that you become familiar with using it. This will be done regularly and will mean that they call you and ask you to call them back. We ask that you co-operate fully with them in undertaking these essential checks.

2.3 Confidentiality

You have the right to expect that anything of a personal nature you discuss with the Wardens or other members of staff will remain confidential. However, in some circumstances, it may be necessary for them to advise the Clerk, Trustees or appropriate statutory bodies.

2.4 Community room/social activities

The community rooms at Bernard Taylor Homes, Leycroft Close and St James Close are available to all Residents and their visitors.

The community room is used for lunches, coffee mornings and afternoon tea parties organised by the Warden, but Residents are very welcome to use this facility, for example, for birthday celebrations or family lunches at Christmas or other times. Bookings should be made through your Warden and you need to complete a booking form. If your group is made up of representatives of another Charity or organisation, they must have Public Liability Insurance and a risk assessment must be undertaken.

Residents will be responsible for their guests at all times. The Trust reserves the right to refuse a request or cancel a booking without notice should it be against the interest of the Trust or the majority of Residents.

A number of activities and outings are organised. The Trust provides two free outings per year for all Residents. Information about “in house” events or outings can be put on the notice boards and publicised in our regular newsletter. It may also be possible to obtain information about external events for anyone wanting to join in outside activities but is not too sure how to go about it.

2.5 Laundry facilities

Washing machines and tumble driers are available on all sites. The Warden will show you how to use the machines. The machines are provided for Residents’ personal laundry only and for the Wardens to wash the guest room linen. Please do not use the laundry room at inconsiderate times.

2.6 Overnight visitors/Guest rooms

Guest rooms are available at St James Close, Grays Almshouses and Leycroft Close for a modest price. They are for use by relatives or friends visiting a Resident and may be booked for a maximum of seven days at a time. Should a guest need to stay for more than seven nights, written permission must be obtained from the Clerk. Priority will be given to relatives and friends visiting a Resident who is seriously ill. Guests are asked to leave these rooms as they would wish to find them. Smoking is not permitted in any of the guest rooms.

It may be that you would prefer a friend or relative to stay in your flat overnight and this is acceptable for the occasional night only; but you must provide advance notice to your Warden. The Trustees reserve the right to refuse permission. It is also acceptable for children under 18 to stay for the occasional night.

2.7 Repairs

The Trust is responsible for all internal and external repairs and maintenance. This work is planned and organised by the Properties Manager and will be undertaken by one of our regular contractors. For Health and Safety reasons, no other contractors, friends or family members may do this type of work for you.

You will be consulted in advance about arrangements for work to be carried out. Contractors will not be allowed to enter your home while you are out unless you have agreed in advance to a satisfactory arrangement. An exception will have to be made, however, if an emergency arises.

From time to time, repairs may be necessary outside the planned schedule. Should you identify any repairs or maintenance problems, please inform the Warden either by telephone or during their visit.

No Contractors should be admitted unless they can identify themselves.

If an emergency occurs in a flat the Trust reserves the right to enter without notice and to carry out repairs and other necessary preventative measures. We aim to respond to requests for repairs and maintenance as quickly as possible.

2.8 Light bulbs

Residents are responsible for their own light bulbs and these should be energy efficient.

2.9 Internal redecorations

Your flat will be freshly decorated on arrival. All flats are redecorated on a rolling programme by the Trust and you will be consulted with regard to this.

2.10 Cleaning

You are responsible for keeping your own flat clean, including cleaning the windows inside. If cleaning becomes difficult or you cannot clean the windows safely, you may wish to employ a cleaner at your own risk.

If any of the Trust's properties become so unclean, untidy and/or filled with rubbish which could cause a health hazard, the Trust reserves the right to arrange for the flat to be "deep cleaned" and the cost charged to you.

Cleaning the communal areas is the responsibility of the Trust and the cost of this service will form part of the weekly maintenance contribution.

2.11 Gardens

The communal gardens are for the benefit of all Residents and the cost of maintenance is included in your weekly charges. We hope that you and your visitors will enjoy using them.

2.12 Insurance

The Trust insures the almshouses and its own contents. You are advised to insure your own belongings.

2.13 Television licence & satellite TV

The Trust's current policy is that all Residents under 75 years old pay £7.50 annually. Communal aerials have been installed on all sites and include satellite TV.

Should you want to buy a satellite "package" please ensure it is compatible with the facilities we have installed. **Individual satellite dishes are not permitted at any of the sites.**

Should you experience any problems with your television equipment and an engineer has to be called out but finds no fault with the Trust's equipment, you will need to pay the cost of any call out charge.

Chapter Three: Safety in the Home

3.1 Fire precautions

Fire instructions must be displayed by your front door. You will be given a Health and Safety induction on arrival. You should ask the Warden if anything is not clear.

There are a range of safety devices including electrical smoke detectors, fire alarms and fire blankets in every flat. All are checked or tested regularly to comply with current regulations. You will be shown how to use the fire blanket.

3.2 Avoiding the risk of fire

Please be conscious of the risk of fire, for example, regularly checking at night or before going out that appliances have been fully switched off. It is especially important that those who smoke in their own flat do so responsibly and are aware of the risk of falling asleep or getting too close to curtains while smoking.

- Do not wedge doors open or leave chip pans unattended and use ash trays if you smoke.
- Do not attempt to fight any fire. Leave the flat immediately shutting the door behind you.

Evacuation policy

Every Resident will be issued with a Personal Evacuation Plan (PEP) which will be prepared in consultation with you. When you hear the fire alarm, you must follow the agreed procedure in the PEP.

3.3 Electrical safety

All electrical goods supplied by the Trust will conform to current regulations and will be checked for safety at appropriate intervals. If in the process of checking those items the electrician notices that any of your personal appliances are defective or dangerous he is obliged by law to condemn them and remove them from your flat. The Trust will not be responsible for replacing them.

Please keep kettle and toaster flexes away from the cooker rings.

3.4 Security

All Residents are individually and collectively responsible for site security.

Do:

- Keep your front door locked at all times.
- Use the spyhole to identify callers before opening the door.

Do Not:

- Allow strangers to enter without proof of identity. If you are in doubt pull the emergency cord.
- Use door chains except when answering the door as this will seriously delay help reaching you in an emergency.
- Ask any Trust staff or contractors to take care of money for you.

3.5 Master key

The Wardens, Clerk and Properties Manager hold master keys which can open your front door, but will only use them in an emergency. You must not fit additional locks or chains without the Trust's consent. Your privacy will be respected. Nobody will enter your home unless:-

- You ask them to.
- You have given permission for work to be done in your absence.
- There is a suspected emergency relating to your health or requiring essential repairs and/or safety checks.
- There is a suspected breach of Licence conditions.

3.6 Heating

Heating is provided by the Trust and recharged to you via the weekly maintenance contribution charges.

Paraffin or portable gas heaters are strictly forbidden.

3.7 Showers

The Trust changes the shower heads on a regular basis. It is advisable to run your shower for a few moments before using it to comply with legionella policy.

Should you have any difficulty getting in or out of the shower please speak to your Warden as there may be aids that can be obtained to make life easier for you.

Chapter Four: Terms of Occupancy

4.1 Letter of Appointment

You will be given a copy of the Letter of Appointment that you signed when you were appointed a Resident. As a beneficiary of an Almshouse Charity, neither you, nor any relative or guest will be a tenant of the Trust or have any legal interest in the accommodation you occupy.

Conditions of Residency

- 1 *The Trustees undertake to carry out all repairs, including internal and external redecoration. Residents are not allowed to make any structural alterations, nor to alter the plumbing or electrical installations without prior consent of the Trust.*
- 2 *Residents should permit reasonable access for inspection of their flats and for repairs and redecoration to be carried out.*
- 3 *The use of paraffin oil and portable gas heaters is strictly prohibited.*
- 4 *Residents should not vacate their dwellings for more than a total of 28 days in any one year without the prior consent of the Trust and should inform the Warden of any short absences in advance. This includes, for safety reasons in an emergency, any overnight absences.*
- 5 *Details of your next of kin should be supplied, and if you have made a Will, where it is kept.*
- 6 *Residents are asked to occupy the property quietly and with thought for other Residents. For the benefit of all, you are especially asked to ensure that no noise can be heard in neighbouring flats after 11pm.*
- 7 *Neither you nor any relations or guests of yours will be a tenant of the Charity or have any legal interest in your Almshouse.*
- 8 *The Trust may take whatever steps it thinks proper in the administration of the Trust and for the Residents' welfare.*

Any changes to these conditions will be notified in writing to each Resident.

- 9 *Residents can expect to continue in occupation for as long as they need the accommodation and can look after themselves. If your health deteriorates you must be willing to accept advice and guidance from time to time, either from your own doctor or from a medical consultant appointed by the Trust. The Trust will also consult with next of kin, Social Services or other appropriate agencies to help you make the most suitable arrangements.*
- 10 *No pets are allowed except for a caged bird or fish in a tank.*
- 11 *If you have a friend or relative stay overnight in your flat you must inform the Warden for safety purposes. Guest rooms are available at a modest price for relatives or friends visiting for longer periods but not normally exceeding seven days. While staying in a guest room, or with you, visitors will be subject to the conditions contained in this Letter of Appointment.*
- 12 *The Trust reserves the right to ask a Resident or Residents to vacate their dwellings and move, either temporarily or permanently to another Almshouse belonging to the Charity.*
- 13 *Taunton Heritage Trust is a Registered Social Landlord. Your attention is drawn to the Complaints Procedure set out in the Residents Handbook and to the availability of the Housing Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is available to resolve disputes and complaints that cannot be settled by the Trust's own complaints procedure.*
- 14 *The Trust retains the power to set aside a Resident's appointment for good cause, e.g. in the case of serious misconduct or if there is a breach of the regulations as outlined in the Charity Commission Scheme dated 02 October 1981.*
- 15 *Neither the Almshouse nor its gardens may be used as a place of business either from where to conduct business or to store items concerned with running a business.*

- 16 *Residents must inform the Trust of any change in their circumstances that could affect their entitlement to Housing Benefit or a concessionary TV Licence.*
- 17 *It is a condition of occupancy that a new Resident should sign and return a copy of the 'Letter of Appointment' signifying agreement to abide by the Conditions of Residency.*

4.2 Keys

You will be given two keys to your flat when you move in. A spare key will be held in the office. These are security keys and if you do require more than two keys you will need to send a written request to the Clerk stating your reasons for needing extra keys. They can only be obtained from the supplier by the Trust. The cost of obtaining the additional key will be charged to the Resident.

4.3 Weekly Maintenance Contributions

The 'rent' element of your weekly contribution is based on a national formula approved by the Homes and Community Agency (HCA).

All charges are payable two weeks in advance. Payment is made by Direct Debit. The Trust reviews the charges annually and when an increase is required you will be given at least one month's notice of the new amount in writing. Some of these charges are eligible to be claimed as part of Housing Benefit.

The amount charged covers the cost of running the Almshouses and includes:

Eligible	Non eligible
Rent	Electricity
Repairs, maintenance, cleaning and gardening	Gas
Communal electricity where appropriate	Water rates

At Bernard Taylor Homes, domestic electricity is separately metered and is the responsibility of each Resident to pay. Communal electricity is identified separately and is claimed as part of Housing Benefit. This is reflected in the charges made.

Huish Homes Residents are also charged for communal electricity and can claim Housing Benefit for it.

A separate charge is made for Residents who have the use of the mobility scooter stores at Bernard Taylor Homes, Leycroft Close and St James Close and this payment will be added to the weekly charges (see paragraph 6.3).

4.4 Council Tax

You are responsible for paying Council Tax and on taking up residence you must inform Taunton Deane Borough Council of your new address. You may be entitled to some relief with the cost of this charge depending on your circumstances.

4.5 Housing benefits

If your income consists of the basic retirement pension and you have little or no capital, you will almost certainly be entitled to Housing Benefit to help with your housing costs. Even if you do have income in addition to your basic retirement pension, you may still be entitled to some help with housing costs. To claim Housing Benefit you should ask for an application form from Taunton Deane Borough Council. 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, you should consult the Citizens Advice Bureau or Age UK.

4.6 Noise

Please be considerate to your neighbours with regard to the use of TV and radios. For the benefit of all, Residents are asked to ensure that no noise can be heard in neighbouring flats after 11pm. Should you find that a neighbour or their visitors are noisy, please speak to them yourself in the first instance as they may not realise there is a problem. If you are unable to resolve the situation, you should inform the Warden who will try to deal with the issue, referring it to the Clerk if necessary.

4.7 Problems with neighbours

As with all independent living, Residents must take responsibility for resolving any personal disputes with other Residents. Should you encounter a problem where you consider a neighbour is displaying anti-social behaviour, please speak to your neighbour about it first. If you are unable to resolve the matter, speak to the Warden.

The Warden will try to resolve the issue with both parties, but if unable to do so, will inform the Clerk. The Clerk will see both parties to try to resolve the situation and may consider the involvement of a mediation service. If there is no improvement, the Trustees will be informed and, if the problem persists, the Residents may be given notice to leave.

4.8 Anti-Social Behaviour

The Trust has a zero tolerance policy regarding anti-social behaviour. This means any behaviour that is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance and which directly or indirectly relates to or affects Trustees, Staff, Residents, visitors and external neighbours. It is imperative that Residents and their relatives treat each other and members of the Trust's staff with respect.

Any Resident who wishes to complain about anti-social behaviour that affects them should speak to the Warden who will investigate it. If it transpires that a Resident is in breach of their Letter of Appointment or the guidelines in this handbook, warnings will be given and if ignored, this could result in an appointment being terminated.

Should the complaint be about visitors or other outside bodies then an anti-social behaviour order may be sought on behalf of one or all of the Residents. Should the complaint be about a member of Staff or Trustee, the Trust's disciplinary procedures may be followed.

4.9 Preventing abuse of Residents

No Resident should have their dignity or quality of life damaged through abuse or fear of abuse. Abuse can take a number of forms e.g. physical, sexual, emotional, discriminatory, neglect or financial. Should you consider that a member of Staff or another Resident or a

visitor has abused you in any way, you should contact the Clerk immediately who will investigate your complaint. Should someone outside the Trust's control abuse you, we will help and support you as necessary through any appropriate investigation.

4.10 Absence from home

If you go away for any period, please inform the Trust of your temporary address and contact phone number. Should you return earlier than planned, please inform the Warden immediately you get home as it is important in an emergency to know if any Residents are away.

You are expected to be in full time occupation of your almshouse and extended periods away during the year might lead the Trust to conclude that you have less need for almshouse accommodation than others. If you plan to be away from your dwelling for a period of more than 28 days in any one year, please would you explain the circumstances to the Clerk and ask permission.

4.11 Residents consultation

The Trustees will seek your comments on any important changes that may affect you. Your views will be considered as part of any consultation process. Should you wish to raise any points you should speak to the Clerk. Coffee mornings are held at which members of Staff and Trustees attend on a regular basis.

4.12 Pets

No pets are allowed except for a caged bird or fish in a tank.

4.13 Transfers

A request for a transfer to an alternative Trust flat will only be considered on the grounds of mobility/health reasons. An application should be made in writing to the Clerk. Any removal costs will be met at your own expense.

4.14 Moving out

If you wish to move out of your flat you must give the Trust two weeks written notice. During this period you will be liable for your weekly payments in full even if you have already moved.

You or your representatives will be responsible for clearing the flat of all your personal possessions. This includes any mobility aids that you introduce to the flat. Please ensure that your pendant alarm is left behind as it is programmed exclusively for your flat. A charge will be made if the pendant is not left.

Subject to usual wear and tear, it is expected that any vacant flat would be left in the condition in which it was found. The Trust reserves the right to charge for any expense unnecessarily incurred for any work required or the clearance of any items/rubbish left behind.

All Residents must be capable of independent living. If circumstances prevent you from living independently, the Trust may advise, along with consultation with your relatives, Social Services or other professional agencies, a move to more suitable accommodation to meet your needs.

Should the Trust require you to move to another flat while major repairs or alterations are taking place, you will normally be given a period of notice unless it is as a result of an emergency. Any moves of this nature will be at the Trust's expense.

4.15 Repossession

The Trust can only repossess your home by setting aside your Letter of Appointment if you:

- persistently and without reasonable excuse disregard the terms of occupancy contained in your letter of appointment/ Residents handbook.
- and/or your circumstances change so that you cease to be eligible to be a Resident.
- You have an impairment that results in you being unable to comply with the Trust's Health and Safety policy and fire evacuation procedure.

4.16 Gifts

Staff may accept small gifts such as chocolate, wine, flowers etc. offered at Christmas or birthdays.

If on the death of a Resident their family wishes to make a gift, it should be made to the Trust and not to a member of staff or a Trustee.

All personal gifts will be recorded in the gifts register held in the office.

4.17 Business activities

Neither the flats nor the grounds may be used as a place of business either from where to conduct business or store items relating to a business.

4.18 Complaints

Should you have a complaint about any of the services we provide, you should contact the Clerk. Your complaint will be investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you feel the complaint has not been handled appropriately, you have the right to put your complaint in writing to the Chairman of the Trustees and ask to see him or her. You will, if you wish to exercise that right, be entitled to be accompanied by a friend or a professional advisor. The Trustees will be informed of all formal complaints made and their outcome.

If after raising the issue with the Chairman, you consider that your complaint has not been properly handled, you may contact the Housing Ombudsman Service at **81 Aldwych, London WC2E 4HN**. Telephone number: **0300 111 3000**, email: **info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk** website: **www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk**.

The Ombudsman will only be able to consider a complaint if they are satisfied that the Trust's complaints procedure outlined above has been fully exhausted and that the complaint falls within their jurisdiction. A leaflet "*Making a Complaint*" is available in the office or can be obtained directly from the address above.

Chapter Five: Health

5.1 Doctor and Dentist

If you do not have a General Practitioner (GP), the Warden will be able to give you the names of GP practices in the neighbourhood. The name of your GP must be given to the Warden.

You have every right to see your doctor, nurse or other carer in confidence and to keep your medical affairs entirely to yourself if you wish. However, if you have a chronic health problem, it would be advisable, and you might feel safer, for the Warden to be made aware of it so that appropriate action can be taken in an emergency. Anything you tell the Warden will be kept in confidence within the Trust.

“Message in a bottle” is a free system that encourages people to keep their basic personal information and details of their current medication in a common place where it can be found in an emergency. The small plastic container is kept in the fridge where emergency services will find it. They will know Residents use this system by two discreet labels. One is fixed to the front entrance of the Resident’s accommodation, the other is displayed on the fridge where the information is kept. “Message in a bottle” is available from the Warden. Residents are responsible for ensuring their information is kept up to date.

5.2 Medication

Taunton Heritage Trust staff are not allowed to assist you with taking medication or assist with any medical care as outlined in our Health and Safety Policy.

5.3 Mobility problems

There are a number of causes of reduced mobility and it is advisable to discuss these with your GP. There are many aids available to help make life easier and the Wardens can give you information about them.

Should you require any adaptations to your flat to help you with your mobility, please speak to your Warden in the first instance.

5.4 Mobility aids

All Residents are responsible for the loan/purchase and return of their mobility aids.

5.5 Sensory loss

Some people suffer some loss of feeling in their hands and feet as they get older and this could increase the risk of scalding.

Please ensure that you tell the Warden if you suffer from this so that we can arrange for a water regulating device to be fitted in your flat.

5.6 Independent living

It is a requirement of Almshouse Residents that they are capable of independent living. It is possible to maintain this with the help of a care package. All Residents are responsible for organising and funding their own care package if necessary. The Warden can advise you or your family on how to apply for this.

5.7 Medical opinion

The Trust reserves the right to seek medical opinion if it is considered that you are no longer coping independently.

Chapter Six: General information

6.1 Alterations to accommodation

If you want to make any alterations to your flat you must discuss the work first with the Properties Manager. Only approved contractors may do the work. Permission may be refused if the Trust considers that the alteration will reduce the amenities for subsequent occupants. However, if you live in part of a listed building some alterations may not be possible.

6.2 Car parking

Resident car parking is only available at Leycroft Close in clearly designated areas. At Bernard Taylor Homes and Huish Homes there is **no Resident parking**. The limited parking on site is reserved specifically for:

- Health and care workers visiting our Residents
- Emergency vehicles coming to the site
- Taunton Heritage Trust contractors
- Staff and Trustees

Residents are permitted to park on site for up to 30 minutes to pick up and drop off. Resident's visitors are also permitted to park on site for up to 30 minutes to pick up and drop off.

There is no car parking at Grays Almshouses and St James Close.

Current guidance must be followed and visitors must not block access for emergency vehicles.

All vehicles are parked at the owner's risk.

6.3 Battery operated mobility scooters/wheelchairs

Covered storage areas have been built to store mobility scooters at Bernard Taylor Homes, Leycroft Close and St James Close.

Mobility scooters are not allowed in individual flats.

Designated spaces are allocated to Residents as appropriate,

for which an additional weekly charge will be made. Residents who are thinking of buying a scooter must consult the Clerk in advance to ensure the availability of a parking space. For safety reasons the Trust will not allow mobility scooters, wheelchairs or mobility aids to be parked in corridors or other communal areas. Scooters must be fully insured and parking will be at the owner's risk.

You will only be able to store your scooter when you have received and signed a formal agreement outlining the terms and conditions for doing so and provided the office with a copy of the insurance document. On annual renewal of your policy please supply a copy to the office.

6.4 Wills/Power of Attorney

You will be asked in the Support Plan whether you have made a will and made arrangements to appoint someone as Power of Attorney. You should consult a Solicitor to advise you on these processes. Trust staff are not able to sign any part of these documents as witnesses.

Residents should be aware that if they die without making a will, all keyholders will be asked to return their keys to the office. Staff will use all reasonable endeavours to find the person who is to have legal responsibility for administering the estate under the laws of Intestacy. This may include involving the Trust's solicitor, the cost of which will be borne by the Resident's estate. Until legal responsibility has been established no access will be allowed to the flat.

6.5 Rubbish

Communal rubbish bins are provided for you. The Warden will show you where they are located and tell you the collection arrangements. Please make sure that the rubbish area is kept clean and tidy and that all kitchen refuse is wrapped before putting it in the bin.

6.6 Recycling

There are different recycling arrangements on each site. Your Warden will explain the arrangements with you.

6.7 Policies and Procedures

The Trust has a range of detailed operating Policies and Procedures. Should you want to see any of these please ask the Clerk. The Trust's Health and Safety Policy Statement is shown below.

Health and Safety Policy Statement

1 Introduction

This is a statement of policy by the Taunton Heritage Trust about its intentions, organisation and arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of its employees, Residents, visitors and contractors, whilst in the offices, communal areas and Residents' accommodation.

Supplementary to this general policy statement, there will be specific policies and procedures describing in detail health and safety provisions in each part of the organisation.

2 Statement of intent

It is the policy of the charity to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees while they are at work, and of others who may be affected by the charity's undertakings, and to comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other allied relevant legislation, as appropriate.

3 Objectives

In order to achieve compliance with the statement of policy the charity has the following objectives:

- 3.1 To set and maintain high standards for health, safety and the protection of the environment at its offices and in the Residents' almshouses.
- 3.2 To identify risks and set in place programmes to remove or reduce these risks.

- 3.3 To ensure that these standards are communicated to all employees, Residents and visitors.
- 3.4 To ensure that all personnel are given the appropriate equipment, necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to work in a safe manner.
- 3.5 To ensure that the appropriate resources are made available to enable the policy to be implemented.

4 Responsibilities

To ensure the prevention of ill health, the avoidance of accidents and the promotion of safe and healthy workplaces, the following responsibilities have been established:

4.1 Board of Trustees

The trustees are responsible for establishing the overall Health and Safety Policy for the charity and have ultimate responsibility for all health and safety matters.

This involves:

- The promotion of good practice within health and safety
- The allocation of necessary resources
- The monitoring of the implementation of health and safety practice.

4.2 The Clerk, authorised through the board of Trustees, has personal responsibility for Implementing and monitoring the policy and will:

- Keep the Health and Safety Policy under review, bringing to the Trustees' attention any faults or areas of weakness in the policy and ensuring that it is revised as and when necessary.

- Monitor the Policy's implementation, set targets or objectives where appropriate and report progress to the board.
- Ensure the dissemination and discussion of relevant information on health and safety.
- Report details to the board of trustees where an accident/incident has occurred which may result in prosecution.
- Make annual reports to the board of trustees on the management of health and safety at the charity.

4.3 The Properties Manager

Is responsible for:

- The practical implementation of the Health and Safety Policy, the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other relevant legislation.
- Ensuring that the operations under his/her control, so far as is reasonably practical, are conducted without detriment to the health and safety of employees or others who may be affected by their activities.
- Ensuring that his/her area of responsibility is subject to risk assessment, regular inspections and audits.

Ensuring that all accidents, incidents and near misses, within his/her area of responsibility, are reported to the Trustees reviewing all such reports and ensuring, where appropriate, that a full investigation is carried out and appropriate remedial action taken, where necessary.

4.4 Individual Responsibilities

All employees are required to:

- Co-operate in implementing the requirements of the Health and Safety Policy, legislation, related codes of practice and safety instructions
- Refrain from doing anything which constitutes a danger to themselves or others
- Bring to the immediate attention of their line manager/supervisor any situations or practices that are noted which might lead to injuries or ill health
- Ensure that any equipment issued to them, or for which they are responsible, is correctly used and properly stored
- Be responsible for good housekeeping in the area in which they are working
- Report all accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses, in accordance with the charity's guidance.

5 Contractors

All contractors working in the Trust's property are required to comply with appropriate rules and regulations governing their work activities. Contractors are legally responsible for their own workforce and for ensuring that their work is carried out in a safe manner.

6 Communication

The name of the person designated with the responsibility for health and safety is to be prominently displayed for the information of all employees. The policy statement will also be prominently displayed for the information of all employees, Residents and visitors.

7 Consultation and Training

The Board of Trustees and the Clerk are committed to involving employees at all levels in the maintenance of health and safety standards and to provide them with adequate information, instruction and training. External health and safety consultants will be used to provide professional health, safety, environmental and occupational advice, as required.

8 Policy Review

The effectiveness of this general policy statement and other specific policies in use throughout the charity will be subject to annual review by the charity.

9 This policy has been approved for issue by the Board of Trustees of the Taunton Heritage Trust

Name: *Alan Nash*
Signature: *Alan Nash*
Date: *28/7/2015*

6.8 Frequently Asked Questions

The following section has been compiled by the Trust to provide quick, concise answers to questions that are frequently asked by Residents.

Is the Warden able to collect my prescriptions?

Please don't ask the Warden to do this for you – it is not their role.

Is the Warden able to do my shopping?

Please don't ask the Warden to shop for you – it is not their role.

Who is responsible for replacing the light bulbs in my flat?

Residents are responsible for replacing the light bulbs in their own flats. If a Resident is unable to change their lightbulb safely, please speak to the Warden.

Who is responsible for cleaning the windows of my flat?

The Trust is responsible for cleaning the outside of windows, Residents are responsible for internal window cleaning.

Does the Trust provide mobility aids?

No. Residents are responsible for the purchase/loan of their own mobility aids and for returning them when they are no longer needed.

Are Residents allowed to store items in the communal cupboards?

Some of our sites have communal storage cupboards. These are for the storage of mobility aids for those Residents living in first floor flats. This is on a first come first served basis, and Residents must understand that property is stored at their own risk. Items must not impede Trust access to services. Any other use of the communal cupboards is at the discretion of the Clerk and/or the Properties Manager.

What white goods are supplied by the Trust?

The Trust provides the following white goods – freestanding cooker and freestanding fridge.

Who is responsible for the gardens?

The Trust is responsible for the upkeep of all communal grounds and gardens. There are some areas where Residents are able to do some gardening, and this is by prior agreement with the Trust.

Are Residents allowed to make alterations to their flats?

No – residents are not allowed to make any alterations to their flats. If a Resident needs to make a change to ease mobility (introduce grab rails etc), they must speak to the Trust and this will be organised for you.

Are residents allowed to put up satellite dishes?

No, the flats are wired for the basic Sky package only. The Trust does not allow satellite dishes on individual flats.

Who is responsible for internal redecoration of flats?

All flats are refurbished when a Resident moves into their flat. The Trust is responsible for the internal redecoration of the flat, including upgrade of kitchens, flooring etc, and this is done on a rolling programme.

How many keys are Residents allocated with?

Residents are issued with two keys to their flat on arrival. If a third key is required, Residents must speak to the Warden. An additional key will be ordered and the cost charged to the Resident.

Does the Trust get involved in personal disputes between Residents?

As with all independent living, Residents must take responsibility for resolving any personal disputes with other Residents. Should you encounter a problem where you consider a neighbour is displaying anti-social behaviour, please speak to your neighbour about it first. If you are unable to resolve the matter, speak to the Warden. The Warden will try to resolve the issue with both parties, but if unable to do so, will inform the Clerk. The Clerk will see both parties to try to resolve the situation and may consider the involvement of a mediation service. If there is no improvement, the Trustees will be informed and, if the problem persists, the Residents may be given notice to leave.

Will a Resident ever have to leave their almshouse due to ill health?

The Trust will do everything to support a Resident during a period of ill health, however it is a condition of residency that Residents must be capable of independent living. This can be maintained with the help of a care package. If a circumstance arises where the Trust considers a Resident's health is putting them and other Residents at risk, we do reserve the right to seek medical opinion, to ensure the best possible outcome for the individual. In some circumstances this may necessitate a move to a more supported living environment.