

TIVERTON ALMSHOUSE TRUST RESIDENTS' HANDBOOK



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TIVERTON ALMSHOUSE TRUST

RESIDENTS' HANDBOOK

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Chapter One

A Welcome from the Chief Executive



Welcome to Tiverton Almshouse Trust.

We are a Tiverton / locally based charity with two key aims:

- 1. To provide high quality homes and support for older people in Tiverton, within a friendly and safe community environment to include warden support.**
- 2. To ensure the Trust's commercial properties and investments produce the optimum financial return in order to maximise the support we provide.**

Our team will continually strive to enhance the quality of life for all our residents, whilst providing a vibrant, caring and empowering community that enables our residents to live full and active lives.

Our five core values are central to what we do:

Wellbeing: The wellbeing and welfare of our residents, tenants, commercial partners, staff and volunteers is at the heart of everything we do. By promoting wellbeing, we wish to create a positive environment where individuals and Tiverton Almshouse Trust can thrive and grow.

Honesty: Honesty 'sets the stage' for us all to be transparent and open while maintaining the dignity of those around us. For us to grow and evolve both personally and as an organisation, we have to be honest with each other. The Trust is also committed to being accountable in all aspects of its work. We will embrace difficulty and uncertainty and never fail to challenge the status quo.

Respect: Respect means going beyond simply being polite. Respect means we treat each other with dignity and worth at all times, regardless of background, position, or opinions. We acknowledge the unique contributions each individual makes to Tiverton Almshouse Trust.

Understanding: We will always seek to understand others' values, personal ethics or ideals that will then guide us when making decisions, building relationships and solving problems. By understanding what is important and meaningful to others we can, together, develop and achieve personal and professional goals.

Patience: In being patient and sticking to our core values, we trust that things will turn out right. We will be patient without unnecessary complaining, tolerant and accepting of difficulties and mistakes, and will persevere to meet the needs of those around us. If you have any questions or feedback for me, please do come along to the monthly drop-in session or feel free to drop me a line at CEO@tivertonalmshouse.org.uk

I sincerely hope that you have a long and happy stay with us and I look forward to meeting you soon.

Paddy Dummett, Chief Executive Officer

Chapter Two

The History of the Trust

Almshouses

Almshouses are dwellings originally provided by a benefactor for specific groups of people. These days most almshouses are run as charitable organisations and are often governed according to a deed or legal document specific to that particular organisation. Residents occupy their homes under licence and pay a contribution to maintenance and upkeep.

Tiverton Almshouse Trust owns 85 almshouses as well as investment property consisting of housing for private rental and commercial property including shops, offices and the historic Market House (courtesy of benefactor, Walter Tyrell), where the Trust is based.

Many almshouses have a long history and Tiverton Almshouse Trust is no exception dating back to about 1520 and three benefactors in particular.

John Greenway (c 1460 - 1529)

John Greenway was the first great Tiverton merchant, exporting West Country cloth in the late 1400s. He had a fleet of ships, armed to protect sailors from pirates, and was one of the first merchants outside London to be admitted to the Drapers Company and the Merchant Venturers Company, in London.

John Greenway employed staff and trained apprentices. In order to house five poor men who could no longer work for him, he provided the original almshouses and chapel on Gold Street in the 1520s. Each man received eight pence per week and, in return, had to pray daily for the souls of John Greenway and his wife, Joan. An inscription instructing this practice can still be seen on the chapel. At around the time the chapel was built, John Greenway's property was assessed at £200 making him the richest man in Tiverton.

Throughout history many additional units have been built at John Greenway Close notably in Victorian times and again in 2004 when thirty-two homes were built to a design by the Trust's architect, David Yarham. In 2005 these almshouses were opened by Prince Charles, who awarded them the Patron's Award for design excellence.

John Waldron (c 1520 - 1579)

John Waldron is the founder of the original almshouses and chapel in Wellbrook Street (now known as Greenway Gardens) originally for eight poor men. The building was started in 1579 but John Waldron died before the work was completed and his wife, Ricord, ensured the project was completed.

A prosperous local merchant, Tiverton-born John Waldron is believed to have bought the bell that hangs above the roof of the chapel while on his travels abroad. The bell dates back to 1539 and it is believed to be the oldest bell in Devon that bears an inscription. It was cast by Aelbert Hackman, a famous bell founder, in Cleve, West Germany.

The friezes carved on the ornate stonework of the chapel show the ships that John Waldron used for trading and many images of his travels, including an elephant. It is believed that the

alms originally given to the inhabitants of Waldron's almshouses came from the Manor of Daccomb near Paignton and not from land or property owned by John Waldron in Tiverton.

Between 1950 - 1970 further almshouses were built on the garden behind the original building. There are now forty-three almshouses at Greenway Gardens.

George Slee

George Slee was a farmer's son from Coldridge, believed to have moved to Tiverton in the late 1500s. He became a prominent merchant-clothier and in 1603 built the Great House on Angel Terrace at the top of Angel Hill. Slee imported exotic goods from the Americas and West Africa and in 1590 he was recorded as importing 74lbs (about 30 kilos) of 'elephant teeth' (ivory).

The Great House was destroyed by fire in 1598 and George Slee's daughter died in the blaze. He built the almshouses next door in her memory. Originally intended for six, poor, aged widows or maidens, today the building houses three one-bedroom flats. George Slee, like John Waldron, died before his almshouses were completed and his widow, Joan, has dated the building with her initials and an inscription '1614'.

Chapter Three

Governance and Management

Regulatory Bodies

Tiverton Almshouse Trust is a registered charity and a registered provider of social housing. As such it is regulated by two separate bodies: the Charity Commission and the Homes and Communities Agency.

Governance

The Trust is governed by a Scheme produced by the Charity Commission in September 2009 (amended in 2014). There is one corporate trustee which is a company limited by guarantee known as Tiverton Almshouse Trustee Ltd and within that company there are voluntary directors. The directors are responsible for governance matters and meet on a quarterly basis.

In addition to the almshouses, the Trust owns investment property: shops and offices within Tiverton and residential dwellings that are rented out on shorthold assured tenancies (not almshouses).

Management

The Chief Executive is responsible for the overall management of the Trust. There are nine members of staff in total comprising two Wardens who work at John Greenway Close and Greenway Gardens; Housing Manager; Office Manager; Finance Assistant, Administration Assistant; Maintenance Manager and a Housekeeper.

The Trust offices are in The Market House, Bampton Street (the contact details are at the back of this handbook).

Managing our Almshouses

The Trust owns 85 almshouses situated on three sites within Tiverton:

- John Greenway Close, Gold Street, Tiverton EX16 6QF
- Greenway Gardens, King Street, Tiverton EX16 5JL
- Sleees, Angel Terrace, Tiverton EX16 6PB.

John Greenway Close and Greenway Gardens each have a Warden.

Accommodation is suitable for independent living and each flat is a self-contained unit. There are three criteria for allocating accommodation which are set down in the governing Scheme:

1. Applicants must be over 60 years of age, and
2. Have lived in Tiverton or environs (the parish of Tiverton or the EX16 postcode) for the past two years* and
3. Applicants must be in need of our accommodation. "Need" is often financial but sometimes may also apply to other circumstances.

(*There is an exceptions policy in certain circumstances which is kept in the office.)

Residents move in to unfurnished accommodation and are expected to live independently at the outset. Given the current government policy to care for people at home instead of in nursing homes and local hospitals, there are an increasing number of residents who are in receipt of care packages. This is considered further in the Chapter Four entitled Care and Support of Residents. Accommodation at John Greenway Close and Greenway Gardens has an emergency call system for residents to use when the Warden is off-duty.

The almshouses are directly maintained by Trust staff including the communal facilities and gardens.

Chapter Four

Care and Support of Residents

The Housing Manager

Hours of Duty and Contact

The Housing Manager is based in the Trust office and is responsible for the well-being of residents. Their hours of duty are 8.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday.

The Role of the Housing Manager

The Housing Manager is responsible for liaising with health-care professionals and hospital discharge teams to ensure the most effective care for residents who are unwell for any length of time and for those being discharged from hospital.

Where a resident suffers from a long-term condition or requires extra support, the Housing Manager will regularly liaise with the resident's chosen relatives and work with them to provide the best solution for the resident given the need for directors and staff of the Trust to be able to discharge their duty of care.

Aids and Adaptations

The Trust recognises the government's shift in caring for the older person at home rather than in hospital. In such circumstances, every effort will be made to work with health and social services when they provide aids and adaptations to a resident's flat.

Structural changes will not be permitted, issues such as modifying bathrooms/kitchens will be considered on an individual basis, following an occupational health assessment to see if this is possible, but this may not be the case in all circumstances.

Night Sitting

Guests are not allowed to stay in residents' accommodation other than in exceptional circumstances as a result of an urgent health need. There is a detailed policy providing guidance on this matter and the Housing Manager can provide copies. In summary, night-sitters must be professional carers required by the GP to meet a specific need within a specific timeframe. Exceptions may be made for family members to night sit but only in specific circumstances (please ask the Housing Manager for further details).

Falls

Members of staff are not permitted to assist a resident who has fallen to get back up. Instead, staff will call an ambulance. This policy is for the benefit of residents and staff. Potential injuries for both residents and staff can be made worse by inexperienced lifting.

Administering Medication

Staff will never administer medication to residents.

Moving to Another Flat

Residents are only permitted to move to another almshouse either in Sles or on one of our other sites but only when there are justifiable medical grounds. The usual circumstances for such a request would be a move downstairs due to failing mobility, restricted vision or respiratory problems, although these are by no means the only reasons.

Whatever the medical circumstance, it is most likely that a letter from the GP supporting the move will be required.

Requests not supported by medical evidence are extremely unlikely to be successful.

Powers of Attorney and Wills

Powers of Attorney are documents that give a chosen individual power to make decisions for another living person over financial and/or wellbeing matters in the event that their capacity to make decisions has diminished. Such agreements are made prior to there being a problem and are usually activated when mental capacity is lost. Wills, on the other hand, contain the wishes and instructions to be carried out after a person has died.

Both documents are essential if residents wish to be clear about what they would like to happen in the future. Staff cannot advise or become involved in the drawing up of these documents. In the event that a resident has suffered an illness and cannot communicate, it is very helpful if relatives, friends and staff know who to contact. A Power of Attorney is strongly recommended because it allows a trusted person of choice to act for the resident. If the Trust is unable to communicate with the resident, for reasons of illness, and no Power of Attorney is in place, the Court of Protection may become involved. This is often a slow and time-consuming process.

Personal Information and Data Protection

Gathering personal information is necessary in order for staff to carry out their duties and to enable the emergency call centre to access the correct people in times of need. Staff and directors at Tiverton Almshouse Trust take confidentiality and data protection seriously and copies of the approved policy and procedures are available to all residents and their families. Please ask the Housing Manager or the Trust office for a copy.

There are two formal occasions when residents will be asked for information such as contact details, GP name, key holders and where any documents such as wills or Power of Attorney are kept. The first is when a resident moves in and the second is at a yearly resident update meeting between the Housing Manager and each resident. The need for an annual check is because contact details (especially mobile numbers) change regularly. If a resident has any changes or updates during the year, please let the Housing Manager know immediately.

Each time information is collected, it is handled in accordance with our approved policy and only accessed on a need to know basis.

When information is out of date or no longer relevant it will be shredded on site or confidentially disposed of.

Housing Benefit

Residents whose income consists of the basic state retirement pension with little or no savings may be entitled to Housing Benefit. Mid Devon District Council will be able to help. Assistance in filling out forms and claiming benefits can be found through CAB (Citizen's Advice Bureau) and CHAT (Churches Housing Action Team). Contact numbers are in Chapter Ten.

Chapter Five

Safety and Security

Fire Precautions

The Trust takes fire precaution measures extremely seriously and expects residents to also take responsibility for their own safety and that of their neighbours.

- **Smoke Detectors**

Smoke detectors are fitted in all flats. They are checked every month by Trust staff.

- **Portable Appliance Tests**

Residents are responsible for the safety of their own electrical equipment within your home.

- **Smoking**

Residents are requested to refrain from smoking in their homes.

Please remain respectful of your neighbours and surrounding areas.

- **Candles**

Lit candles must never be left unattended and must always be placed on a fire-proof surface such as a ceramic plate or metal tray (please note that nightlights/tealights can burn through the thin metal container they sit in and set fire to the surface below).

- **Toasters and Air Fryers**

Toasters and air fryers must not be placed directly under a kitchen wall unit.

- **Fire Doors**

Must not be wedged open.

- **Front Doors**

Must be kept shut (most are fire doors).

- **Additional Heaters**

Are not permitted unless issued by the Trust in an emergency situation.

The Fire Drill

A summary of the fire drill is in each flat – on the back of the front door. All residents must familiarise themselves with it.

If a smoke detector is activated and a fire has broken out please vacate your flat immediately shutting the door behind you. Make your way to the pavement at the front of Sleaford. **Call the fire brigade dial 999.** Alert other residents if it is safe to do so.

If you hear the fire alarm please vacate your flat, shut the door and make your way to the pavement at the front of Sleaford. **Call the fire brigade dial 999.** Alert other residents if it is safe to do so.

Residents must meet outside Sles on the pavement in Angel Terrace while waiting for the fire service.

Security

The Trust recommends that residents keep their front door locked at all times. Please do not open your door unless you are confident that you know the caller.

In the past, some residents have opened their doors to unscrupulous visitors asking for money (or selling unwanted goods). In these circumstances, if a resident feels unsafe in any way, the police should be called immediately. The Housing Manager should always be informed.

Residents are asked to be vigilant at all times and to keep windows shut and doors locked when they leave their flat.

Keys and Keyholders

Residents can have front door keys cut for a relative or friend, but permission must first be given by the Trust office. This not only ensures that a record of keyholders can be kept but is necessary for the required authorisation needed by a key cutter before the key can be cut.

Staff will not unlock a resident's flat for anybody who is not authorised by the resident. Strict records are kept by staff of who is given permission to enter a flat and these records are signed by residents each year to ensure the details are up to date and verified.

Access to a Resident's Flat

Access to a resident's flat when the resident is away on holiday or in hospital	The Trust requires each resident to provide information on who the resident gives permission to enter their flat if they are absent on holiday or in hospital. Under no circumstances will access be given by the Trust staff unless the resident has previously given written permission signed by them (even if they are next of kin). This information and signing process will be reviewed with the resident once a year:
Access to a resident's flat by Trust staff	All residents must allow Trust staff to access their flat for emergency purposes or for carrying out routine essential maintenance. Notice is usually given by staff for essential maintenance such as fire detection checks.
Access to a resident's flat by sub-contractors	In the event that non-emergency maintenance is needed, the resident will usually have informed Trust staff of the problem and signed permission will have been granted by the resident willing to allow sub-contractors to access their flat if they are out. If the resident does not consent to allowing access in their absence, the sub-contractor will make an appointment to carry out the work at a time when the resident is present. In an emergency and where access is urgently needed and the resident is absent, trust staff will admit the sub-contractor. Out of office hours, the sub-contractor will be able to access keys from a secure safe for emergency repairs.

Access to the resident's flat in the event of a resident's death	If a resident passes away all keyholders will be asked to give keys back to Trust staff without delay. Keyholders are known to the Trust from the information provided by the resident. It is essential that residents provide accurate and up to date records to the Housing Manager. Opportunity to do this is given at the yearly meeting with the Housing Manager. Trust staff will only give keys to the proven executor of the Will. In the event of there being no Will, the Chief Executive will undertake to contact all family members known to the Trust and seek to find a consensus on who should be appointed as a spokesperson.
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Trip Hazards

Residents are asked to be vigilant on hazards which could give rise to a trip, slip or fall. Rugs and mats are best avoided as they are liable to curl or slide across a surface. Electrical extension leads can be hazardous. The Housing Manager should be contacted if additional electrical sockets are needed.

Gritting and Salting Paths

Paths in the garden will not be gritted or salted in winter

The Trust recommends that residents do not leave their flat in icy conditions or when snow has fallen. Residents are required to take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of their visitors. Residents are asked to telephone any visitors who are due to call that day if conditions underfoot are hazardous.

A small tub of grit will be provided for residents to use. If restock is needed, residents should advise the office.

Chapter Six

Housekeeping Matters

Residents are requested to keep their accommodation in a clean and tidy condition at all times.

Guest Room

Friends and relatives are not permitted to stay overnight in residents' flats due to the terms of occupancy under licence. There is a guest room available at both John Greenway Close and Greenway Gardens that guests are welcome to use for the nominal charge of £30 per night for a short period (normally up to seven days). The guest room is en-suite and has twin single beds. The beds will be made up and towels are available.

The room is available from 2pm on the booked day and must be vacated by 10am on the day of departure. Further housekeeping notes will be made available to all guests when they arrive.

Booking forms for the guest room can be found online at www.tivertonalmshouse.org.uk or from the Trust office. Payment is to be made via bacs. Cash will not be accepted.

Residents are responsible for ensuring that their guests respect the Trust's property and leave the guest room in the same condition as they found it. The nominal charge is a contribution to the upkeep of the room, linen change, facilities and staff time.

Gifts to Staff and Directors of the Trust

Staff and directors of the Trust are not permitted to accept gifts apart from a one-off small token gesture such as a box of chocolates. The gift must be less than £10 in value unless it is a one-off collection for a very special occasion and a number of residents are contributing. Staff and directors of the Trust are not permitted to accept gifts of personal items.

Staff, directors and residents are not permitted to buy or sell items to each other for personal gain. No director, nor member of staff or their families are permitted to receive any cash gifts at any time of the year from residents or their families.

Gardens

The gardens are maintained by Trust staff. Residents are welcome to tend a dedicated area or keep a limited number of pots. The Housing Manager should be consulted prior to pots being displayed in order to ensure they do not create an obstruction.

Ornaments are not encouraged.

Regretfully, the Trust cannot allow trees to be planted in memory of residents or dedicated memorials to be placed in the garden.

Repairs and Redecoration

Repairs:

Please see the section in Chapter Five regarding accessing flats for repairs and maintenance. Residents should inform the Trust office on 01884 251444 in the event that a

repair is needed. The Maintenance Manager is not to be instructed directly or requested to undertake a task by the resident. If the office is closed and the repair is urgent, residents should call the emergency numbers made available by the office.

Floor coverings:

At the beginning of occupancy, the Trust will ensure flats are fully carpeted with vinyl in the kitchen and bathroom. Residents are welcome to change the floor coverings, after consultation with the Trust office, and always ensuring that carpets and vinyl are not foam-backed or glued to the floor. Vinyl in the kitchens and bathrooms must be non-slip.

Redecoration:

The Trust is responsible for external and internal redecoration of flats. The Trust will monitor the condition of all flats periodically/where necessary.

Property Visits

Where necessary, the Trust may need to carry out periodic visits to your home in order to review the internal condition. You will be given advanced notice of this (at least 24 hours' notice) unless in the case of an emergency.

Insurance

Residents are responsible for insuring the contents of their home. The Trust insures the buildings.

Some insurance companies work on a postcode system and have been known to refuse to insure the contents of certain properties close to the rivers in Tiverton. In these circumstances, it may be more productive to use local insurance brokers. Please call the Trust office if you wish to discuss this.

Television

The Trust pays the television licence for all residents who work under 15 hours. Residents who work over 15 hours must pay for their own TV licence.

Digital television signal (freeview) is available free of charge to all properties but residents wishing to use satellite television must pay for a contract with a provider of their choice. The Trust office must be consulted in this instance to ensure satellite dishes are kept to a minimum and sited appropriately. Existing dishes may have capacity for additional connections but permission from the Trust is necessary.

Council Tax

Residents are responsible for paying their council tax. Enquires should be made to Mid Devon District Council.

Parking

There are no car parking spaces available for residents on any of our sites.

Waste Collection

Residents are asked to make sure that the bin stores areas are kept clean and tidy and that all (non-recyclable) rubbish is securely bagged and placed in the plastic lidded containers provided to avoid vermin. This is especially important for food waste.

Pets

Animals must not be kept.

Chapter Seven

Terms of Occupancy

Letter of Appointment

Residents are not tenants but beneficiaries of Tiverton Almshouse Trust and occupy under licence. The terms of occupancy are detailed in the Letter of Appointment signed before moving in. Many of these terms are outlined again in this chapter but the Letter of Appointment provides the legal basis for occupancy, and it is the responsibility of the resident to familiarise themselves with the detailed terms. Residents requiring more information about the terms of occupation should not hesitate contact the Trust office and are encouraged to contact the Chief Executive.

Weekly Maintenance Contribution

The Trust charges a weekly contribution and not a rent. This is because residents occupy under licence. Contributions for maintenance are charged weekly but residents are asked to pay monthly in advance by standing order on the first of every month.

The maintenance contribution is a payment towards the cost of maintaining the homes and the essential services in them. It is reviewed by the Trust every year in April. Notice of any change in the maintenance contribution is given at the beginning of March. The level of contribution is regulated by Homes England and Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). Mid Devon District Council is consulted to ensure that contributions are fully covered by Housing Benefit where residents are eligible. There is an approved policy covering the detail of how all contributions are set. Copies can easily be made available.

Absence

Residents must occupy their home as their prime residence and must live in the accommodation and **not be absent from it for more than 28 days per person per year without the permission of the Trust**. This is not designed to restrict holidays or impose unnecessary regulation, but it is a condition of occupancy required by the Charity Commission within our governing document.

Please be rest assured, residents are encouraged to visit and stay with family and friends, however, repeated absence may indicate that there is no need for our accommodation. Allocation of the almshouses is based on need.

Guests

All guests must stay in the guest room. Residents are not allowed to share their accommodation or sub-let or give up possession of it to someone else.

Further information is available in Chapter Six.

Moving Out

Residents are asked to give four weeks' notice period before moving out. There may be exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, in which case the Trust may accept a shorter notice period.

During the notice period residents are responsible for the maintenance contribution even if the resident has moved out.

The resident is responsible for keeping the Housing Manager informed of the moving out date and must meet the Housing Manager on the day of departure to complete a checklist and to hand over the keys.

The resident's responsibility for paying the maintenance contribution ceases when the keys are handed to the Housing Manager at the agreed time.

The Trust may ask a resident to move home, temporarily or permanently. This would normally only be necessary in the event of essential maintenance or repairs where it would be unsafe for the resident to stay in occupation.

Setting Aside an Appointment

Residents may be asked to leave their accommodation in exceptional circumstances such as:

- The resident no longer fulfils the criteria to be eligible for the accommodation because their circumstances have changed.
- The resident persistently breaches the terms of their appointment.
- The resident is no longer suited to be a resident because of illness or disability.
- The resident causes repeated nuisance, annoyance or offence to other residents.

These Terms are set down by the Charity Commission in the governing document and must be repeated within the terms of occupation. Residents can be reassured, however, that the Trust would only consider taking such measures in exceptional circumstances and after discussion with the resident.

Tiverton Almshouse Trust is a member of The Housing Ombudsman service whose contact details are in Chapter Ten. Generally, The Housing Ombudsman will only be able to consider a complaint from a resident if the Trust's own complaints policy has been fully exhausted. The complaints policy is detailed below.

Complaints Policy

The Trust is committed to providing an excellent service and complaints are seen as a positive way to improve services. All complaints will be taken seriously and handled fairly and sensitively. Due regard must be paid to confidentiality.

In the first instance complaints should be made to the Housing Manager. The complaint should be made as soon as the problem arises or shortly afterwards unless there is a good reason for delay. Initially a complaint may be made verbally.

In the event that the complaint is not solved this way, it can be made in writing to the Chief Executive at the Trust office. Written complaints will be acknowledged within five working days and an investigation will follow. The resident will be kept informed as to the course of action to be taken and the anticipated timescale. The Trust will aim to investigate all written complaints within 14 days of acknowledgement. The Trust will seek to resolve the complaint as a matter of urgency and provide a written response to the complainant.

If the complainant is still not satisfied by the outcome, they have five further working days to submit a written appeal.

The appeal will be dealt with by the Chair of the Board, or a director appointed by the Chair who will convene a meeting within seven days of receiving the appeal. The Chair will respond in writing to the complainant within seven working days advising of any action taken to resolve the complaint.

If the resident remains unsatisfied with the way the complaint was handled or the outcome, the matter can be taken to The Housing Ombudsman service (contact details are given in Chapter Ten).

Chapter Eight

Policies

The Trust holds policy documents on a comprehensive number of topics. The most relevant have been briefly summarised below.

- **Health and Safety Policy, Procedures and Management**

This is a detailed policy including all statutory requirements and all procedures to be carried out by Trust staff including risk assessments, servicing, legionella protection, asbestos registers and staff training.

- **Allocating Almshouses**

This sets out the criteria for allocating accommodation as contained within the Trust's governing document produced by the Charity Commission and the procedure taken during the application process.

- **Residents' Appointment and Occupation**

This policy provides detail on the licence for occupation and the terms of appointment. More information on this can be found in Chapter Seven of this handbook.

- **Weekly Maintenance and Utility Contributions**

Every year the maintenance and utility contributions are reviewed. The policy outlines the formula used, the regulatory requirements and procedure for that review.

- **Residents' Involvement**

This sets out how residents are involved in and informed about Trust decisions such as monthly drop-in sessions with the CEO, annual residents' meetings, the monthly newsletter, an annual questionnaire and contact with staff and directors.

- **Gifts and Legacies**

This policy was introduced to establish clarity and to protect staff and residents alike. Chapter Six provides more detail.

- **Professionalism**

This policy, which covers directors and staff ensures consistency and rigour in the manner in which the Trust carries out its work.

- **Data Protection and Privacy**

The Trust protects all sensitive and personal data using a rigorous procedure involving secure storage, the need to know, and disposal of data within prescribed time limits by shredding.

- **Equality and Diversity**

The directors and senior management of the Trust are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion within our policies, practices and procedures. This applies to all aspects of the work of the Trust and within the organisation itself.

- **Safeguarding**

All directors and staff of the Trust shall adopt a zero tolerance to abuse and/or neglect. Each staff member shall ensure they give positive regard to human rights legislation and ensure dignity is maintained at all times.

- **Whistleblowing**

This policy applies to residents, directors, employees, volunteers, other third parties including suppliers and members of the public.

- **Complaints**

The procedure for complaints is outlined in full in Chapter Seven.

Chapter Nine

Frequently asked Questions

Can I move to another flat?

Any move must be accompanied by medical evidence. The usual circumstance is the need to move downstairs for mobility, respiratory or visual reasons. Other reasons may apply. Please discuss with the Housing Manager in the first instance.

Can guests stay in my flat overnight?

No. All guests are invited to stay in the guest room (a twin-bedded en-suite room on site) for £30 per night. Details in Chapter Six.

Can I give a present to a member of staff?

Yes, but only a one-off token gesture of limited value (the value of any gift must not exceed £10). Gifts of personal belongings are not permitted. Collections made by a number of residents for a special one-off occasion are not limited by this policy.

Am I allowed to have a care package?

Yes. Generally, we ask that new residents join us before they require a care package but we recognise as time moves on many residents need a little extra help. We will do our best to help to accommodate your needs, subject to our approved policies, but we are mindful that our historic accommodation can sometimes limit our intentions and our wardens do not provide personal care.

Can I go away regularly?

This is a difficult subject. Your flat is your prime residence and is allocated on the basis of need. If you stay away regularly for a number of nights each time this may indicate that you no longer need our accommodation. **The terms of the Trust's governing document are that residents must live in their home and not be absent from it, without the Trust's permission, for more than 28 days in any year.** Annual holidays and periodic visits to family or friends are encouraged. If you are in doubt, please talk to the Housing Manager.

Can a member of staff help me with my medication?

No. Definitely not.

Can I do some gardening?

This is a possibility and encouraged although you need to double check with the Housing Manager which area is available, and you need to be sure you can maintain the area regularly.

Who can I talk to when I am not happy about something?

The Housing Manager is always happy to be contacted on 01884 251444 or 07553373791 or the CEO who can be contacted on 07980 941432. The full complaints procedure is given in Chapter Seven.

Who will carry out any necessary repairs in my flat?

When something needs repairing, please call the Trust office during opening hours (8.00am – 4.00pm Monday – Friday 01884 251444). If it is an emergency out of office hours, please call the relevant sub-contractor from the list that you have been given. If our Maintenance

Manager is able to fix it, he will, otherwise we will ask one of our sub-contractors to mend it. Full details on access to your flat is given in Chapter Five.

Chapter Ten

Contact Details

Office Staff:

The Tiverton Almshouse Trust Office, Market House, 18A Bampton Street, Tiverton, EX16 6AA is open 8.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).

T: 01884 251444: Email: trust@tivertonalmshouse.org.uk Web: www.tivertonalmshouse.org.uk



**Nikki
Housing Manager**

housingmanager@tivertonalmshouse.org.uk

Mobile: 07553 373791



**Nicky
Office Manager**



**Gavin
Maintenance Manager**



**Lorna
Administration Assistant**



**Shelley
Finance Assistant**



**Monica
Housekeeper**



**Paddy
CEO**

Other useful numbers

Mid Devon District Council
Phoenix Lane
Tiverton

01884 255255

CAB

Advice line: 0800 144 8848

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us

CHAT - Mid Devon

0800 059 0104

The Housing Ombudsman

0300 111 3000

info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

We hope you enjoy a long and happy stay in your new home.