

HOSYERS-FOXE CHARITY

Hallgarth Almshouse Church Walk Ludlow

Resident's Handbook



This handbook provides you with information about occupying your almshouse, about the Charity, its general administration and management. It supplements and explains the rules and regulations set out in the Letter of Appointment, a copy of which you signed when you accepted appointment. The Trustees hope that the information this book provides will help you to be happy here.

1) Introduction:

This handbook provides you with information about the occupation of your Almshouse at Church Walk Ludlow, about the charity which runs the Almshouses and about its management.

Your letter of appointment, which you sign when you accept the appointment, is the formal contract between yourself and the charity.

This handbook explains your appointment terms but is not part of your contract.

The Trustees of the Charity hope that this information will be helpful. The Clerk of the Trustees will try to provide any further information you may need.

2) History:

Hallgarth Almshouse which consist of four one bedroom flats were developed by the Hallgarth Charitable Trust in 2016 and as part of a scheme involving the Jubilee Gardens from which the Almshouses are accessed.

The Hallgarth Charitable Trust handed over the newly developed Almshouses to the Hosyer-Foxe Charity with part bequeathed and part funded by a mortgage.

3) Constitution:

The Hosyer- Foxe Charity, registered with the Charity Commissioners on 31st December 1992, is designated as a “Social Housing Landlord” due to initial funding for modernising the Almshouses.

The original scheme defines qualification for residents as “poor persons who are aged not less than 60 years and who are inhabitants of the Parish of Ludlow and Bromfield”. Primarily the wording of poor persons has been redefined as persons who may be in Need perhaps due to lack of appropriate accommodation.

The Hallgarth Almshouse are for elderly persons.

4) Trustee Body:

The Charity is administered by an “Administrative Board of Trustees” made up of 12 Trustees which manages four separate Charities, Hosyer-Foxe Almshouse Charity, Sir Job Charlton Hospital Charity, Louisa Powell Almshouse Charity and Elizabeth Massey Almshouse Charity.

The Clerk of The Trustees is responsible for the general management of the Almshouses reporting to the Administrative Board.

The Trust employs a Facilities Manager to oversee daily repairs and maintenance of the Almshouses. They also assist residents with welfare issues, such as completing Universal Credit or Housing Benefit applications and liaison with Social Services. The Facilities Manager is not a trained carer and cannot provide personal care support.

The charities responsibility is limited to the provision of accommodation and maintenance of the buildings and communal areas such as the communal garden. Residents are in every other respect normal house holder who must take full responsibility for their own health, safety and security.

5) Hallgarth Almshouses:

The Almshouses consist of 4 one-bedroom flats with a combined living room/Kitchen and bathroom. Heating is provided by separate combi-gas boilers

6) Slips, Trips and Falls:

Residents should exercise care when using the communal outside area in wet, snowy or icy weather as the pathways will not be treated by the Trust.

7) Call Systems:

There is no warden call system in the flats

8) Fire Precautions:

The Almshouse complies with the fire regulations.

The building is fitted with a watering system should a fire occur and the alarm is directly linked to the local fire station.

The building is fitted with flame-retardant doors, which must not be left open.

When you hear the fire alarm, follow the Fire Procedure. If it is safe to do so, please evacuate the building by the nearest route to the fire assembly point. Do not attempt to put the fire out or to collect personal belongings. Stay calm and help other residents to leave the building.

Please DO ask the Facilities Manager Warden what to do if the alarm rings, or if you discover a fire and how to use the fire blankets provided.

Please DO dispose of smoking materials safely

Please DO NOT wedge fire doors open; they prevent fire and smoke spreading only when shut, leave pans unattended or attempt to fight any fire.

Please make sure you know the location of Fire Points and can find them in the dark in case the emergency lights fail.

The Fire Assembly Points is **IN THE GARDEN OF REST ALONGSIDE THE CHURCH**

9) Security:

Please consider the following:

Do keep your external doors always locked

Do not allow a stranger to enter your home without proof of identity; if you are in doubt, it is always better to refuse entry.

Do not leave windows open when you are not at home.

Do not keep large amounts of cash or valuables in your home.

10) Living in Your Home:

a) The Trustees are responsible for the following items:

The Structure of the property including the communal area and the garden sheds and washing lines etc.

External Decoration.

Fixed plumbing and electrical systems, electrical heating which are permanent fittings in the property.

Insurance of the Buildings

Communal Garden Area

Water and sewerage charges

b) Residents Responsibilities:

Internal decoration, including carpets and curtains

Replacing light bulbs and maintenance and safety of all your own electrical equipment

Keeping your property clean and tidy

Ensuring all doors and escape routes are free from obstruction

Maintenance of any additions made by yourself

Electrical, telephone, TV Licence (unless you qualify under the concessionary TV Licence scheme (Facilities Manager will provide information if requested) and Council Tax bills.

Day to day running and maintenance of the Almshouses is managed by the Facilities Manager in consultation with the Clerk of the Trustees.

The Clerk to the Trustees is responsible for any major maintenance or repair issues.

Although the Facilities Manager will endeavour to visit the Almshouses on a regular basis, maintenance issues can be reported between the hours of 9am – 1pm (Monday to Friday).

The number is also available in extreme emergencies only

c) The Charity will endeavour to resolve the following issues within 24 hours, but this depends on the availability of the required contractors:

Leaking internal water pipes

blocked main drains

blocked, broken or leaking toilet

external locks – except for loss of keys

Any defect or issue that presents immediate risk to person or property (e.g. water leaks likely to damage electrics or fabric of building, blocked drains resulting in backup of sewage, an immediate risk to security of property i.e. broken external locks or windows)

d) The Charity will endeavour to resolve the following issues within five working days, but this depends on the availability of the required contractor:

External overflowing water cisterns

Faulty taps

Faulty Waste pipes

All other housing repairs not mentioned above unless seen as an urgent Health and Safety issue by the Facilities Manager within 4 weeks

General fencing, path maintenance, ground works unless seen as an urgent Health and Safety issue by the Facilities Manager within six weeks.

You are requested to take normal steps to prevent further damage before a repair can be carried out, e.g. collect water from a dripping internal pipe.

e) Keys

The Facilities Manager does hold keys in the secure cabinet at the Hosyers Almshouses. You are responsible for the security of your dwelling.

Your privacy will always be respected.

Please do not get extra keys cut without first asking the Clerk because this affects security.

The Trustees, the Clerk and the Facilities manager will only enter your home –

- if invited
- if you have given permission for work to be done in your home
- in an emergency
- to ensure compliance with the terms of your licence.

f) Location of Stopcocks, Electricity Mains Switch and Fuse Box

The Facilities Manager when moving into your home will advise you of the location of the Water Stopcock and your main electricity switch box and fuse box.

11) Damp and Condensation

Please report any issues with Damp and Condensation to the Facilities Manager so that they can be investigated.

The trust recommends that residents adopt the following simple measures to help reduce possible damp and condensation:

- Try to keep the property as well-ventilated as possible.
- Ensure that the property is adequately heated particularly in cold weather.
- Cover pans when you are cooking, keep a window open and the kitchen door closed.
- Try not to dry clothes inside, but if this is unavoidable dry them in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open.
- Use the extractor fans in kitchen and bathroom.
- If you have a tumble drier, keep it ventilated to the outside.
- Make sure all plumbing leaks are reported; however small they are.
- Cold Spot Condensation, Damp and Mold etc. is wrongly attributed to damp problems. It is therefore essential that all areas of your property are adequately heated and aired.

12) Quinquennial Report:

The Charity undertake a five yearly independent check of all properties to determine future maintenance work that may be required over the following five- year period

13) Insurance:

The trustees do not have insurance cover for residents' possessions. Residents are advised to maintain their own insurance.

14) Pets:

Pets are not allowed to stay overnight in the Hosyers Almshouses. You are responsible for the control of dogs that may be brought onto the premises by a visitor which must not become a health and safety danger to other residents.

15) Terms of Occupancy:

a) Letter of Appointment

You will have a copy of the letter of appointment which you signed when you were appointed as a resident, and this is the basis for your terms of occupancy.

As a beneficiary of an Almshouse Charity, you are not, in legal terms, a tenant, but the Trustees will not ask you to leave unless there are exceptional circumstances, like those set out in your letter of appointment.

b) Relatives and Visitors

If you wish to have a relative or friend to stay overnight, it is essential that the Facilities Manager is informed. In the event of a fire, all persons on site would need to be accounted for. This advice has been set out by the Almshouse Association's Fire Safety Consultant. Remember that you are responsible for your visitors at all times. Note that visitors are not allowed to stay in your property when you are away.

c) Next of Kin

We hope that your relatives and friends will give you just the same support as they would if you were living in ordinary housing. With their help and co-operation, and support from social services, if necessary, we hope you will remain independent for as long as you wish. All Almshouse residents are required to nominate a next of kin who can be contacted in an emergency. Normally this would be a close relation, but it is important that you nominate someone who lives within a reasonable distance and who is willing and able to provide you with any assistance and support you may need, either now or in the future. By signing your letter of appointment, you agree to the Trustees contacting your next of kin if they consider it necessary in an emergency to safeguard your welfare. Please remember to inform the Clerk if you change your designated next of kin for any reason, since it is important that records are up to date in the event of an emergency.

If you are ill or in difficulties, your next of Kin should help get in touch with relatives, friends the GP or social services on your behalf. However, the Facilities Manager is also available to help and offer advice in an emergency but only with your permission the Facilities Manager cannot provide any personal care.

d) Absence from Home

You should notify the Clerk if you intend to be absent for more than seven days at a time. You should not, without the prior consent of the trustees, be absent for more than 28 days in any calendar year.

e) Maintenance Contribution

You will be required to pay a maintenance contribution (Rent) at the agreed rate per month which will be adjusted from time to time at the discretion of the Trustees. You will receive at least four weeks' notice of any adjustments of the contribution.

(The Maintenance Contribution (rent) is claimable by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit provided you qualify – The Facilities Manager will be happy to provide advice and support in claiming any benefits applicable to you)

f) Possession

You may not take lodgers or share possession of the Almshouse unless they are your partner. You may not transfer possession of the Almshouse, nor let any part of it, nor use it for any business purpose other than administrative office work not involving visitors to your house. Occasional overnight visits by relatives or friends are permitted. The Trustees may, at their sole discretion following appropriate investigation, set aside your appointment if you contravene or do not comply with the Licence agreement. If your appointment is ever set aside, the Trustees will require and re-take possession of the Almshouse, having given you one month's notice in writing. Your liability to pay all relevant contributions will continue until you have vacated the Almshouse, removed all your property and returned all keys.

g) Notice

If you wish to leave the Almshouses, please give one month's notice in writing to the Clerk of the Trustees.

16) 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 trustees will be pleased to help or offer advice if they can. You can ask to see the Facilities Manager or the Clerk to the Trustees your concerns will be treated in the utmost confidence.

17) Complaints:

If you have any concerns, please bring them to the attention of the Facilities Manager or the Clerk to the Trustees who will do their best to resolve them. In the majority of cases, minor issues can be dealt with informally, quickly and efficiently and to the resident's satisfaction. Set out below is a procedure to be followed if residents wish to raise a complaint in connection with the occupation of their Almshouse, or about services provided by the charity. Minor matters, such as small maintenance items, should be referred to the Facilities Manager

If the Facilities Manager is unable to resolve the matter, or if there is a persistent problem with pets, loud noise or matters affecting health and safety, the resident should refer it to the Clerk of the Trustees in writing. All communications about complaints will be treated in confidence.

If you are dissatisfied with the Clerk's response, you should write formally to the chairman of trustees asking the trustees to consider the matter.

The chairman will write to you afterwards to advise you of the trustees' decision and to inform you of any action taken to resolve your complaint.

If you remain dissatisfied following consideration by, and the decision of, the Trustees, you have the right to take your complaint to the Independent Housing Ombudsman whose address is; Exchange Tower, Harbour Exchange Square, London E14 9GE – Telephone 0300 111 3000, giving your full name and address, telephone number (if any) and the details of the complaint. The ombudsman would only be able to consider a complaint if he was satisfied that the charity's own complaints procedure has been fully exhausted and that it fell within his jurisdiction.

Contacts:

Chairman of the Trustees:

Mrs A Cundall – Email address alison@cundallsy8.co.uk

Vice-Chair of the Trustees:

Ms Jean Jarvis MBE – Email address jeanjarvismbe@icloud.com

Clerk to the Trustees:

Mr C E Williams – Email address cewilliams1@btinternet.com

Phone 07854497702

Facilities Manager:

Mrs Ann Jenkins – Email address a5akj@btinternet.com

Phone: 07368124206

Normal hours of work

In an Emergency:

Please phone the Facilities Manager or The Clerk of the Council

If the Emergency relates to a repair it is difficult to obtain contractors in an evening or a weekend