



RESIDENTS' HANDBOOK

**V.08
2016**

INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides you with information about occupying your almshouse, about the almshouses and about the Charity and its management. It supplements and explains the rules and regulations in your Letter of Appointment. The Director and Trustees hope that the information which this handbook provides will help you to be happy in your home with The Richmond Charities.

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USEFUL CONTACTS

- Benefits Office:** Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham
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020 8891 1411
benefits@richmond.gov.uk
www.richmond.gov.uk
- Citizens Advice Bureau:** Sheen Lane Centre, Sheen Lane, East Sheen
SW14 8LP
020 8712 7800
www.rcabs.org
- Age UK:** First Contact, Suite 301, 3rd Floor, Parkway,
Sheen Lane, East Sheen SW14 8LS
020 8878 3073
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- Age UK Handyperson Service:** 020 8876 0620 or 0800 917 9980
handyperson@ageukrichmond.org.uk
- Richmond Police:** Dial 101
In an emergency, always dial 999
- NHS Non-emergency Number:** Dial 111
(Use this number if you need medical help or advice urgently but it's not a life-threatening situation)



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CHAPTER 1

THE CHARITY AND ITS GOVERNANCE

Constitution

The Richmond Charities is run in accordance with its Governing Instrument. This is a Charity Commission Scheme dated 17 December 2008. This Scheme is kept at the administrative office at 8 The Green and can be seen by residents by appointment.

Trustees

The Charity is governed by a board of voluntary trustees. Day-to-day administration, management and governance is carried out by the Director. A list of current Trustees as at 2016 is included in this handbook, along with brief biographies.

Almshouses

The Charity's almshouses are unfurnished dwellings, designed with the needs of older people in mind. The aim is to provide convenient and comfortable accommodation in a setting that allows residents to come and go as they please. Residents must be able to live independently within their almshouse.

Almshouses provide security and residents are encouraged to make friends and to share a wider social life through use of local facilities where available. Our almshouse estates are managed by Scheme Managers and every home has an emergency alarm system. In an emergency, such as sudden illness or after a fall, a resident can get help quickly.

Residents' Handbook

This handbook has been prepared in conjunction with advice on good practice from the Almshouse Association, of which HRH Prince Charles is the Patron.

Trustees of The Richmond Charities as at July 2016

Frances Bouchier

Frances has lived in the Borough of Richmond for 40 years and worked as an adviser and trainer for the London 30 Citizens Advice Bureaux. When she retired, she was elected as a Conservative local councillor for Richmond. She stepped down in 2014 after 12 years of working with Adult Services - Planning, Licensing and being on the Foster Panel. Frances was 'champion for the elderly' and was a Trustee of Age UK for 14 years. She is currently a Governor of the Vineyard Primary School, a board member of SPEAR, a Friend of INS and on the landscaping Committee of the Richmond Society. Frances has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2002 and is Group Trustee for Hickey's Almshouses.

Emma Davis

After university, Emma was employed by Edinburgh District Council, working in sheltered housing management for the elderly and disabled. Following a move to London in 1980, she worked for TSB Bank and Aviva plc for 15 years, providing financial and insurance services to medical practitioners throughout the UK. More recently she has worked and still volunteers for Richmond Association for the Blind. Emma has lived in Richmond for 15 years. She has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2010 and became its Chair in 2014. She is a member of the Welfare & Visiting Committees and Group Trustee for Bishop Duppa's Almshouses and Queen Elizabeth's Almshouses.

Susan John

Susan has lived in Richmond for 46 years. She worked in the NHS for nearly 50 years; 10 years as a Practice Nurse in Richmond and 26 years in Contraception and Sexual Health mainly with young people. She was a co-ordinator for Richmond Good Neighbours for 5 years and has been a volunteer for the same organisation for 27 years. She is married with 2 children. Susan has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2010. She is a member of the Welfare & Visiting Committees.

Stephen King

Stephen King is a qualified accountant (Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants) who worked for Ford, ITT, Schlumberger, Ladbroke, Inchcape and Gestetner (latterly as Group Finance Director) both in the UK and overseas. He also worked for 2 years on secondment to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office to manage UK participation in the 2005 World Expo in Japan and 6 years as Chief Operating Officer at The Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA). Stephen is currently a Trustee of the British & Foreign School Society (BFSS), a grant giving charity in the field of educational opportunity. Previously he has been a member of the Board of Governors of Kingston University. Stephen has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2013 and is a member of the Finance & Risk Management Committees and Group Trustee for Michel's Almshouses.

Serge Lourie

Serge Lourie is a former Leader of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and was a Kew councillor for 28 years. He is a chartered accountant and was a member of Westminster City Council (1971–74) and the Greater London Council (1973–77). He chaired the London Boroughs Grants Committee, awarding grants of around £29m to the voluntary sector in London. Serge was formerly a board member of the London Tourist Board and the Metropolitan Police Committee. He chaired the Independent Panel on members' remuneration for the Association of Police Authorities. Serge was Chairman of the United Kingdom Housing Trust, Kingston Hospital NHS Trust and Sanctuary Housing Association. He has also been the General Secretary of Help the Aged and a board member of the London Pension Fund Authority and Notting Hill Housing Trust. Serge is a Trustee of Kew Community Trust as well as chairing Poems in the Waiting Room, a British charity providing poetry cards to doctors' waiting rooms in England and Wales. Serge has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2009 and is a member of the Finance & Property Committees and Group Trustee for Church Estate Almshouses.

Jean Love

Jean is a Chartered Surveyor and before retirement she was a partner in a West End firm heading the Property Management Department. Jean is a regular member of the congregation of St Mary's Church, Twickenham, and was invited by the Vicar to become a Trustee and then Chair of Twickenham Almshouse Charity. In 2008 it was decided that Twickenham Almshouse Charity should merge with The Richmond Charities and the Twickenham Almshouses became known as Candler Almshouses. Jean has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2009 and is Group Trustee for Candler Almshouses.

Peter Marr

Peter Marr is a Partner at William Blair International and was previously a Managing Director at Citigroup. Prior to that Peter worked at Lehman Brothers and Schrodgers. He graduated with an Honours degree from Edinburgh University. Peter is married with four children and lives in East Sheen. Peter has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2005 and is Chair of the Finance Committee.

Margaret Marshall

Margaret is a long term Richmond resident, who holds many voluntary posts, including 1st Community Health Council and Chair of Richmond Mencap. Margaret has been a Trustee of Fitzroy Support for 20 years, with eight years as Chair. Fitzroy Support provides over 60 care homes. She has also been a Trustee of Richmond Parish Lands Charity and is currently a Trustee of Kew Community Trust. Margaret founded a Residential Property Management Company and still runs a family property company. Margaret has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2012 and is Chair of the Property Committee.

Katherine Maxwell

Katherine is a partner and head of the employment law team at Moore Blatch solicitors. She works from the company's Richmond and Southampton offices, handling all aspects of employment law, acting for clients ranging from large corporations to small companies, as well as senior executives. Katherine has lived locally for over 14 years and is involved in a number of local networking groups. She is also a governor of Marshgate Primary School. Katherine has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2015.

Revd Wilma Roest

Revd Wilma Roest will be taking up her post as Team Rector of the Richmond Team Ministry in July 2016. Wilma has been the Vicar of the Parish of St Mary and St John the Divine in Balham since 2006, and Area Dean of Tooting since 2009. One of her duties as the Team Rector with responsibility for St Mary Magdalene, Richmond, is to be an ex-officio Trustee of The Richmond Charities. Wilma will become a Trustee of The Richmond Charities from July 2016.

Robert Thompson

Cllr Robert Thompson is a Chartered Surveyor and, following training in the West End, worked as Development Surveyor for Swire Properties Ltd. in Hong Kong before returning to work in the family business based in Richmond. Robert has lived in Richmond for a number of years and is a councillor representing East Sheen. He is also a Trustee of the Mortlake Almshouses and Relief Charities. Robert has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2015 and is a member of the Property Committee.

Jeremy Williams

Jeremy was born in Kew and has lived in the London Borough of Richmond for virtually all his life. He lives in Sheen with his wife and one of his three adult children. Jeremy was a partner in a local firm of solicitors, Calvert Smith and Sutcliffe, for 35 years until he retired in January 2013. Jeremy now devotes most of his time to his membership of the Richmond Golf Club, supporting Fulham Football Club and his voluntary work. Jeremy has been a Trustee of The Richmond Charities since 2014 and is a member of the Property Committee, Risk Management Committee and is also Group Trustee for Houblon's Almshouses and Benn's Walk.

The Staff of The Richmond Charities



Juliet Ames-Lewis
Director



James Dorey
Property & Estates Manager



Alison McAlear
Administrator



Stuart Lee
Chaplain



Gerry Wilson
Caretaker & Maintenance



Michael Tinson
Health, Safety & Security Officer



Lorraine Bradley
Scheme Manager



Linda Prendergast
Scheme Manager



Gail Sullivan
Scheme Manager



Debbie Flaherty
Deputy Scheme Manager



Jackie Golding
Deputy Scheme Manager

CHAPTER 2

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Careline Emergency Call System

An emergency alarm connects each resident to Careline, which is manned 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Careline will handle emergency calls for health, police and fire.

When you move into your almshouse, your Scheme Manager will need to take some details to pass on to the Careline control centre. You will also be shown how to use the pendant or wristband and alarm. Whichever Scheme Manager is on duty will be the first point of contact for Careline. You will be required to test the Careline system every three months. The point of testing is to ensure the equipment is working and that talking to the Careline operator becomes second nature, which is vital in an emergency. The Careline system also does an automatic test once a week.

It is a requirement of your appointment that you have a telephone land line and one that is compatible with Careline.

Please use the Careline alarm - day or night - to get help for a sudden illness or accident. Please do **NOT** use Careline to make normal contact with your Scheme Manager. Please do **NOT** leave the pendant or wristband out of reach, i.e. behind the kitchen door. Never switch off your Careline box.

You are strongly advised to wear your pendant or wristband whenever you are in your almshouse, especially if you are unwell. Remember that slips, trips and falls can happen anytime to anyone.

In addition Careline provides a monitoring service for the detectors (smoke, heat, bogus caller, CO₂) in each almshouse and quarterly testing is undertaken by our Health, Safety & Security Officer or Caretaker.

In the event of an electrical power cut, please be reassured that the Careline system continues to work; there is a battery back-up in each unit including the alarm box itself.

Keys

Each estate has its own master key system. Residents cannot gain access into their neighbour's home using their own front door key.

Your Scheme Manager holds a master key, which can open your front door, but it will only be used in special circumstances. You must not change your lock or add locks or bolts as doing so may delay helpers in an emergency.

Your privacy will be respected. All staff have strict instructions only to enter your home:

- In an emergency, for example in the event of fire or flooding, or if we have serious concerns about your well-being and cannot raise you on the telephone.
- If you have asked a member of staff to do so.
- If you have given written permission for work to be done in your almshouse in your absence.
- If you have had to go into hospital and it is necessary to check on your almshouse.

Your Scheme Manager will not allow access into your home to any of your relatives or callers in your absence. Please be careful to whom you give a spare key; staff cannot deny access to anyone to whom you have given a key.

You can order spare keys via your Scheme Manager or via the Health, Safety & Security Officer, the cost of which will be met by you.

Security

The Trustees seek to improve security measures without jeopardising your safety.

Please bear in mind the following:

- Keep your front door closed at all times.
- Keep the chain on the front door at all times. Scheme Managers hold a key to unlock the chain in an emergency.
- Use the spy hole and keep the chain on to identify callers before opening the door.
- Never allow a stranger into your home, no matter how genuine she/he appears.
- Be wary of unknown callers. Let them wait outside while you telephone the estate office for assistance.

The Charity will never send anyone who is unfamiliar to you around to your home without prior notice.

Fire Precautions

The almshouses comply with appropriate fire regulations. By recommendation of the Fire Brigade, notices are fixed in each almshouse advising what to do if fire breaks out.

Each almshouse has a monitored heat and smoke detector. Careline monitor the detectors and will call the Fire Brigade if a fire occurs.

Fire prevention saves lives. Take care – **don't let a fire start.**

In the kitchen

- Do not let fat overheat and never leave pans unattended.
- Never put water on burning fat.
- Do not cook if you have consumed a lot of alcohol.

Smokers

- Never smoke in bed.
- Always use a proper ashtray.
- Put your cigarette right out.

Electrics

- Never overload plug sockets – one socket, one plug is the rule.
- Before bed, ensure appliances such as TVs and cookers are switched off (never switch your Careline box off) and **make sure doors are closed.**

Candles

- Do not use them.

If fire breaks out

- Warn anyone else in the almshouse.
- Leave the premises immediately shutting all doors behind you.
- Call the fire brigade – 999, then call your Scheme Manager. You will need to call from a mobile phone or ask to use a neighbour's telephone.

It is imperative that you keep the following areas clear: staircase, front door, back door, steps and porches to enable easy access in an emergency.

Please read the Fire Safety Policy and Procedure in this handbook.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

Residents are required to allow staff (usually the Caretaker or Health, Safety & Security Officer) to test any of their portable electrical appliances, if staff think it necessary, to ensure the appliances are safe and are not likely to cause an electrical fire. This is normally done within a few weeks of a resident moving into an almshouse.

Smoking Policy

Smoking is not allowed in any of the estate offices, Chapel, guest rooms, 11-18 Church Estate internal communal areas or any other communal indoor area including marquees.

If you are a smoker, please be considerate of others when in the almshouse grounds.

The Richmond Charities has a duty of care to its staff and contractors who are entitled to work in a smoke-free environment. They should not be expected to enter almshouses which are full of cigarette smoke. If a Scheme Manager or other member of staff is visiting you or a job is required in your almshouse, please refrain from smoking in your almshouse for at least an hour before the member of staff or contractor's arrival and leave a window open for at least an hour before their arrival to clear the almshouse of smoke and to save staff/contractors from second-hand smoke inhalation/passive smoking.

CHAPTER 3

SERVICES PROVIDED

Scheme Managers

Scheme Managers manage the estates and watch over the health and welfare of residents without interfering in their lives or intruding on their privacy. Your Scheme Managers check and call on residents when on-duty to ensure that all is well and to check whether there are any problems. The minimum contact which is required with all residents is once a week. Where the Trustees feel there could be a risk to the health and welfare of the individual or other residents, they may have to insist that more frequent calls are made.

In an emergency the Scheme Manager will notify your family or friends or call the doctor on your behalf. At other times the Scheme Manager can help you arrange for health care or social services.

Scheme Managers do not provide personal care themselves, fetch shopping or prescriptions except in emergencies. However, they will advise you about how you can get the help you need elsewhere.

Scheme Manager Cover

Weekday mornings:	on-duty
Weekday afternoons:	on-call for emergencies & limited on-duty (special visits, administration, etc.)
Other times:	on-call for emergencies only

If the Scheme Manager is called out at night, then the expectation is that the emergency services or GP will also be called out and will require access to your almshouse.

Scheme Managers must only be contacted out of normal office hours for emergencies. Locking yourself out of your almshouse is not deemed to be an emergency. The Charity cannot guarantee that the on-call Scheme Manager would be able to come out to let you back into your almshouse as they may be attending to an emergency. If you feel concerned about the possibility of locking yourself out of your almshouse, please consider leaving a spare key with a neighbour or ask the Age UK Handyperson service to fit a key safe for you. If you are having a key safe fitted, please ensure that you ask the Caretaker or Health, Safety & Security Officer first about where the key safe should be positioned.

Please do not call the Scheme Manager out of hours for any non-emergencies, such as booking the guest rooms. Please respect the Scheme Managers' off-duty time and privacy in their homes.

The only phone numbers you need to use for contacting estate staff are the main office numbers at Hickey's (020 8439 9294) and Michel's (020 8332 2839). These numbers are always diverted out of hours to whichever member of staff is on-call. Please do not call any member of staff on a mobile number; please only use the office numbers.

Maintenance

If you have a maintenance issue, please talk to your Scheme Manager or visit the estate office to report the problem. The matter will be dealt with as soon as reasonably possible. Please do not contact the Caretaker or Health, Safety & Security Officer directly. All maintenance problems must be reported to your Scheme Manager.

Laundry Facilities

Laundries are provided at Benn's Walk, Church Estate, Hickey's, Bishop Duppa's and Michel's Almshouses. A laundry is to be built at Houblon's in 2016. The small charge (currently £2) covers one wash and one dry.

The cost is £1 if you wish to use just the tumble dryer. The washing machines at Hickey's and Church Estate are operated using tokens which can be bought during normal office hours from the Hickey's Office. Your Scheme Manager will show you how to use the machines and will, at some sites, arrange times when they will be available to each resident. The machines are to be used for residents' laundry only. **Please respect the displayed laundry rules.**

- Residents must use only one machine at a time (whether washer or dryer) even if other machines are free. This means one machine per almshouse. If you are a couple, you cannot use two machines at once.
- If you come to use the laundry and someone else's washing is in the machine, as long as the machine has stopped you are allowed to take their washing out and put it in a basket. However, it would be courteous if residents could ensure that they remove their washing from the machines as quickly as possible after their washing/drying cycle has completed so that the machine is free and empty for the next resident who wishes to use it.
- Please always ensure that you choose a programme which will have finished before the laundry closing time for that day. Otherwise your washing/drying will have to remain in the machine until the following morning.
- Please ensure that you always clean the filter in the tumble dryers after use. It is vitally important to de-fluff the filters each time tumble dryers are used as fires can be caused by using tumble dryers which have fluff in them.
- Please ensure that you always close the doors of the tumble dryers after use. If the doors are left open, moist air from the machines percolates in the Laundry. This then condenses onto the walls, windows and door surfaces which we would like to avoid.
- Please use only liquid detergent in the washing machines.

If drying areas are provided, please consult your Scheme Manager about their use. Washing must not be hung in porches or outside the almshouses.

Repairs

The Trustees are responsible for both external and internal repairs. Please report all necessary work to your Scheme Manager, who will arrange for it to be carried out. Contractors will not be allowed to enter your almshouse whilst you are out unless you have agreed to satisfactory arrangements. An exception will have to be made if an emergency arises or if access is required to rectify an urgent problem. Please do not let anyone into your almshouse unless you know who he or she is; when in doubt, call the Scheme Manager.

Normally the Caretaker will be asked by your Scheme Manager to attend to small repairs.

Light Bulbs

If a resident wishes a member of staff to change a light bulb, then the resident should supply the requisite light bulb. Staff will change light bulbs during normal working hours (9am – 5pm, weekdays).

When a ceiling light blows, the mains switch for the lights will trip, turning off all remaining ceiling lights on the same floor. Table and standard lamps will not be affected, so it is advisable that you switch these on in the interim. All that is required to turn on the overhead lights is to flick down and up the appropriate mains switch on the consumer box. Your Scheme Manager will be able to demonstrate this to you.

Decoration

Each almshouse is decorated by the Charity prior to a new resident taking up occupation. Thereafter you are responsible for your own internal decoration. If you wish to redecorate the inside of your almshouse in full or in part, please let your Scheme Manager know who is going to undertake the decoration. Only neutral paint colours are permitted.

Insurance

The Charity insures the buildings. Residents are advised to arrange their own contents cover.

- Please do not keep more cash in your home than you need for your day-to-day expenses.
- Please place excess funds in a bank or building society.
- Please do not ask the Scheme Manager to take care of money for you, as they are not allowed to do so.

Television

For residents aged over 75 years, the television licence is free. Those over retirement age but below 75 years may be entitled to a concessionary television licence (£7.50 per year). Scheme Managers collect the £7.50 from residents annually.

Televisions are served by a communal aerial. Satellite dishes cannot be installed on the estates because they are Listed sites. Virgin Media have been reluctant to install cable television onto the almshouse estates, despite keen interest.

Staff are not qualified to deal with televisions or associated equipment.

Please be considerate to your neighbours with the use of TVs, radios, stereos and musical instruments. Wireless headphones are excellent, particularly if you are hard of hearing and require the volume to be turned up high in order to hear. If not already installed, it is possible to install a loop system in your home; you will need a hearing aid with a “T” option. Please discuss this with your Scheme Manager.

Internet facilities

Many residents set up their own internet and broadband services in their almshouse. However, staff at both the Hickey’s office and the Michel’s office are very happy to search the internet for information for those residents without access online in their almshouses. Please feel free to ask staff to do a Google search for you. This can be useful for things such as finding out about side effects of medication, sourcing mobility products/aids or finding information on illnesses and conditions, for example.

Cleaning

You are responsible for keeping your home clean and tidy. If this is difficult, please tell your Scheme Manager who will be able to give you some recommendations for cleaners who you or your next of kin could contact. The Trustees employ a window cleaner to clean the outsides of all windows; residents are responsible for cleaning the insides of all windows.

It is imperative that you keep the following areas clear: staircase, front door, back door, steps and porch. This is for your safety and to enable easy access in an emergency.

Gardens

The communal gardens at all estates have been laid out for the use, benefit and enjoyment of all residents. The major work of grass cutting is the Charity's responsibility. The Charity employs gardeners to tend all the communal gardens.

Many of the almshouses have their own individual flower beds which residents are required to maintain. Conifers and large shrubs are unsuitable for the small flower beds; they cut out daylight and undermine the foundations of the buildings.

Residents may stand a few plants in pots outside their almshouse in their garden area, but these pots must NOT be in porches, on steps or on the communal paths and must not cause any sort of obstruction. Large objects are not allowed at all. Paths must be kept clear for the safety of all residents, staff, contractors and visitors.

Residents' gardens are not watered by staff or contractors. There should be a nearby hose to use – all hoses attached to outside taps are the property of the Charity. In times of drought, the Charity may have to remove the hoses to comply with water use restrictions. It is not necessary to water grass as grass always recovers quickly without additional watering. Hoses are usually stored away during the winter months.

Where the gardens are communal, benches are provided for the enjoyment of residents and their visitors. Residents are welcome to use their own foldable garden furniture, but it must be put away at the end of each day. No permanent fixture, other than the Charity's garden furniture, is allowed on the lawns or surrounding area.

Whilst the Charity encourages residents to use the gardens, residents are not permitted to host parties or hold barbeques in the gardens or behind their almshouse.

If your visitors are children, such as your grandchildren, please ensure that they are never left unattended in your almshouse or in the almshouse grounds. Please ensure that they do not cause noise or disturbance to other residents.

Guest Rooms

Guest Rooms are available at Michel's and Hickey's. The Guest Rooms have twin beds, their own shower or bath and toilet. Bookings can be made at the estate offices and payment is due at the time of booking. The rate is currently £25 per night for the first three nights and £75 a night thereafter. Please note that you cannot make a booking for the Guest Rooms out of office hours. Therefore please do not call to book out of hours – the on-call Scheme Manager will not have access to the Guest Room booking diaries out of office hours.

Please note that smoking is not allowed in the Guest Rooms.

Please note that no one under 16 can stay in the Guest Rooms without an adult.

CHAPTER 4

TERMS OF OCCUPANCY

Letter of Appointment

You will have a copy of the Letter of Appointment that you signed when you were appointed as a resident. In 2016 all residents are being asked to sign an updated Letter of Appointment, a copy of which is at the back of this handbook. As a beneficiary of an Almshouse Charity you are not a tenant and you do not have security of tenure. However, the Trustees will not ask you to leave unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as if you cease to be an eligible beneficiary of the Charity (for example, if you are no longer able to live independently in your almshouse and need more care, or if you won or inherited a substantial amount of money) or if you do not comply with the terms of your Letter of Appointment. You have agreed to pay a Weekly Maintenance Contribution, which may in the future include, but does not currently include, an amount for the services provided or water rates. You must be prepared to accept the installation of Careline as a condition of occupancy.

Included at the back of this handbook is a copy of the current Letter of Appointment. RECEIPT OF THIS HANDBOOK AND LETTER OF APPOINTMENT IS DEEMED TO BE NOTIFICATION IN WRITING OF ANY ALTERATION TO THE RULES.

Next of Kin, Relatives and Visitors

Your Scheme Manager cannot take the place of your next of kin, relatives or friends. We hope that your next of kin, family and friends will give you just the same support as they would if you were living in the wider community. With their help and co-operation, and with support from Social Services if necessary, we hope you will be able to live

independently for as long as you wish. If you need extra help from Social Services and carers, it is the responsibility of your next of kin to arrange the extra care necessary.

Your home has been specifically designed as housing for older people and is not suitable to accommodate extra people. If you do have a friend or relative to stay overnight, your Scheme Manager must be informed. We need to know who is in the almshouses for the safety and security of the whole community and for fire safety reasons. However, do remember that you are responsible for your visitors and their behaviour at all times. If you wish to have an overnight guest to stay for more than two nights, please book one of the Guest Rooms. We much prefer residents to book the Guest Room for their visitors, rather than having them stay in your almshouse.

Under no circumstances may guests stay in an almshouse during the resident's absence.

Absence from your Almshouse

If you are going to be away overnight or longer, please inform your Scheme Manager. For the safety and security of the whole community and for fire safety reasons, we need to know who is in the almshouses overnight and who is away. Please write to the Director for agreement if you plan to be away for more than 14 days. The Charity Commission insists that all almshouse charities have a rule which states that almshouse residents are not permitted to be absent from their almshouse for a total of more than 28 days in a calendar year. This is because almshouse charities have to show that their accommodation is being used at all times by those in housing need. However, there is flexibility with this rule and we would never deny a resident a holiday. We are delighted when residents go on holiday to visit family and friends and all we ask is that you seek agreement if you are planning a trip of over 14

days and also seek agreement if you are going to exceed the maximum of 28 days away in one year.

Weekly Maintenance Contributions (WMC)

WMC is the payment which residents make for occupying the almshouses. Payment is collected by direct debit. You will always be given at least a month's notice of any increase in WMC.

The amount you pay covers part of the cost of maintaining the almshouses. Amongst other things, this includes:

- repairs and maintenance
- buildings insurance

The cost of other services, which is currently met by the Charity, includes the following:

- upkeep of the gardens
- window cleaning
- staff salaries
- Careline emergency call system
- water and sewage charges

Housing Benefit

If your income consists of the basic state retirement pension and you have little or no savings, you may be entitled to Housing Benefit to help you with the cost of your WMC. If you have some additional income over and above your basic retirement pension, you may still be entitled to some help with housing costs. To claim Housing Benefit you should ask for a form from Richmond Council's Benefits Office (address, email and telephone number are at the front of this handbook).

Your Scheme Manager will be pleased to arrange help if you are unsure of your entitlement or if you need help in completing the form.

If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit, please remember that it is your responsibility to regularly inform the Council's Housing Benefit Department if any of your financial circumstances change, for example if your WMC increases, if your income from pensions or other sources increases or if you come into money through e.g. an inheritance which takes your savings over the £16,000 threshold. Failure to inform the Housing Benefit Department could result in you being overpaid Housing Benefit, which the Council will then claim back from you at a later date.

Central Heating & Storage Heaters

At some estates there is a communal central heating system installed. Residents in these almshouses pay a weekly heating charge in addition to their WMC. This contributes to covering the energy costs.

Alternatively, almshouses are fitted with Economy 7 electric night storage heaters to provide background heating or Economy 10 heating. Residents pay their own heating bills. Please ask your Scheme Manager to show you how your heaters and timers work.

Economy 7 has two tariffs: night rate and normal rate. The night storage heaters store heat overnight using the lower off-peak rate of electricity. During the day the heat should be let out on a low setting, i.e. 1, and in the evening the outlet dial should be turned up to release the remaining core of heat if it is needed. Most of the storage heaters in the living rooms have the benefit of a convector heater which provide heat at any time or when all the stored heat has been released.

Economy 10 has two tariffs. The heating system is instantaneous but can be programmed by the resident. Economy 10 provides cheaper electricity at specific times of the day.

Paraffin, Calor gas or similar portable heaters are not allowed, as they are dangerous. Halogen heaters provide instant, less expensive heat and switch off if they fall over.

Electricity

Electricity is supplied by EDF, which is our preferred supplier. Should you wish to change supplier, you must contact the administrative office on 020 8948 4188 with the name of the supplier and customer service telephone number. This information will also be recorded on your Resident Record Sheet.

Savings can be made by careful use of electricity:

- only boil as much water as you need in kettles and saucepans, and use the right size pan for the job, with a lid if possible.
- turn off lights, TV, CD player, etc. when you leave a room.
- do not leave appliances on standby or charging unnecessarily.
- fit energy saving light bulbs.
- hang thick curtains so heat does not escape through windows and your front door.

The Charity has produced an energy saving and household tips leaflet. If you would like a copy, please ask your Scheme Manager. It is also a good idea to review regularly your energy tariff with EDF to ensure that you are on the correct tariff for your level of usage.

Businesses

You may not run a business from your almshouse.

Moving Out

If you wish to move out from your almshouse you must give the Trustees four weeks' written notice. During this notice period you will be liable for your WMC payments even if you have already moved out. Residents, or in the event of their death or in the event of a move to a care home, their next of kin, are responsible for completely clearing the almshouse (including cellars, for those almshouses which have a cellar) of all personal possessions and for paying the WMC and utility bills up until the date on which the almshouse is cleared and the keys have been returned. When your almshouse is cleared, furniture or other items must not be left outside your almshouse at any time. If things are left outside, it advertises the fact that the property is empty which is a risk.

In certain circumstances the Trustees may ask you to leave your almshouse. These are:

- If you do not comply with the rules set out in your Letter of Appointment and Residents' Handbook. These rules are made for the benefit of all residents. Please comply with them.
- If you are no longer qualified to live in the almshouse. It is possible that your circumstances could change or make you no longer eligible, for example you could win or inherit a significant sum of money.
- If you are no longer able to look after yourself and live independently, even with the help of your family and Social Services, and you become a danger to yourself, to other residents and/or to the property.

The Trustees would only set aside your appointment as a last resort, after a fair process of investigation and warning.

Gifts and Legacies

It is the Trustees' policy that no-one involved in the running of the Charity should accept any monetary gift or legacy from a resident. If you wish to donate anything to the Charity or leave a legacy to the Charity, please contact the Director. All such matters will be dealt with confidentially.

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL INFORMATION

Alterations to the Almshouses

Residents must not make any alteration to the almshouse which they occupy without consulting the Trustees. Any work undertaken must be done by a qualified person and the appropriate certificate obtained and given to the Director. Residents should first talk to their Scheme Manager or to the Caretaker who will obtain a decision. Permission may be refused if the Trustees consider that the proposed work will reduce the amenities for subsequent occupants or will increase future maintenance costs. Some alterations will be forbidden by law for a Listed Building.

It is the Trustees' policy to charge residents for the requested work AND in some cases for its re-instatement, i.e. where an amenity is to be taken away.

Where residents wish to have the bottom of internal doors cut to accommodate new carpets, the work must be undertaken by a professional company at their own expense.

Almshouse staircases in the main are narrow and unsuitable for stair-lifts. If stair-lifts are installed they can block access to others; carers may have difficulty in getting to residents and it can be impossible for paramedics to carry a patient downstairs. Stair-lifts are unreliable and residents have been known to be stuck halfway up the stairs when the battery has run down. Therefore the Charity is likely to refuse permission for a resident to have a stair-lift installed and may grant permission only in very exceptional circumstances. If a resident does have a stair-lift, once that resident is no longer in-situ, the stair-lift must be removed by the next of kin clearing the almshouse.

Bird and Animal Feeding

Residents are not allowed to put food out for birds or animals.

Some people feed pigeons in the mistaken belief that the activities of the birds are harmless to humans. Fouling occurs where birds nest or roost. Apart from being unsightly, the acidic droppings can erode stonework resulting in costly long-term damage. Gutters and drainpipes can become blocked causing flooding. Pigeons carry a number of potentially infectious diseases such as Salmonellosis, Tuberculosis and Ornithosis. Contamination of food by pigeon droppings or by the birds themselves can transmit these diseases to humans.

Cellars

At Hickey's and Church Estate the majority of almshouses have a cellar. The cellars were designed for the storage of coal. Many of them are very inaccessible for older people, because of small low doors, awkward entrances and low ceilings. Once inside, the cellars are large, so it is tempting to store unwanted items which would soon be forgotten. Please dispose of such items rather than putting them in the cellar. The Charity may permanently lock the cellars if it considers them to be unsafe.

Council Tax

You are responsible for paying your own Council Tax. The administrative office notifies the Council Tax department when you move into your almshouse.

Data Link Tubs

We recommend that you keep a current list of your medication in your data link tub as well as our Resident Record Sheet containing your

various contacts, so that it can be handed to paramedics should an ambulance need to be called. These tubs should be kept in the refrigerator. Everyone has a refrigerator and paramedics know where to look for the tubs.

Doctor

When you move into your almshouse, if your existing GP is nearby you will not need to change surgery. If you do not have a GP, or you are moving to your almshouse from further afield, your Scheme Manager will be able to give you the names of recommended GPs working in the neighbourhood. The name of your GP must be given to your Scheme Manager so that help can be obtained in an emergency.

You have every right to see your GP, nurse or other carer alone and to keep your medical affairs entirely to yourself if you wish. However, if you have a chronic health problem, you may well feel safer if your Scheme Manager knows about it so that sensible action may be taken in an emergency.

Emergencies and Sickness

If you are ill or in difficulties, your Scheme Manager will make every effort to get in touch with your next of kin, relatives, friends, the doctor, ambulance or Social Services on your behalf.

To make it possible to act quickly, your Scheme Manager will need a note of the names and addresses of your nearest relatives or friends and of your doctor. Please let them know about any changes of address or telephone numbers of your relatives or friends and of your doctor. Your Scheme Manager will update your Resident Record Sheet with you every three months.

Please make sure your Scheme Manager is notified if you are ill. This is particularly important if you are going into hospital or returning home after admission.

If you have a disability or become disabled while living in the almshouse, it may be possible to obtain equipment or to make alterations to your home to help you to continue to live an independent life. Your occupational therapist will identify what is required. Please do not make any alterations to your home without the Trustees' permission.

Fixtures & Fittings

The newer almshouse refurbishments have insulation fitted internally on the walls to help retain heat. When hanging items on any of these walls, the correct plasterboard screw fixings, hooks, nails and picture hooks must be used so that the insulation is not damaged beyond repair. The Caretaker can advise residents on this.

Handyperson Service

This service is arranged by Age UK. The contact details are at the front of this handbook. The service is to help with odd jobs around the house and garden and is for residents of the London Borough of Richmond who are over 60 years of age or have a disability. There is a subsidised charge for the service. The sorts of jobs undertaken include:

- Putting up shelves
- Fitting key safes and grab rails
- Replacing broken toilet seats
- Repairing curtain rails
- Fitting draught proofing
- Moving furniture
- Changing light bulbs, fuses and plugs
- Gardening – cutting grass and cutting back shrubs

- Help with computers and PCs

Household Information & Tips

Shower heads:

- It is important to clean and descale your shower head every couple of months with a limescale remover. The water flow will be improved.
- If you haven't used your shower for a few days or you've been away, before use it's important to let your shower run hot for a minute or two to ensure there is no bacteria in the water which was retained in the shower head.

Washing machines:

- For those residents who have a washing machine in their almshouse, and for those who use the Charity's laundries, always wash a full load and, if you can't, use a half-load or economy programme if the machine has one. Always use the low temperature programme (30 degrees) because modern washing detergent is just as effective at lower temperatures.

Condensation issues:

- If you're one of the many that battle against condensation and sometimes mould, there are a few basics that can be done to help. Lack of air circulation is the main cause. Vents, vent windows and extractor fans all help to remove moist air, especially from kitchens and bathrooms, so always use your extractor fans while cooking or taking a shower and leave the extractor fan on for at least 20 minutes afterwards. Condensation also forms if your almshouse is cold, so it is important to heat your almshouse as well as ventilate it, to keep condensation down. If you do have patches of mould appear, you can buy a mould inhibitor & removal spray which are very effective. Your Scheme Manager has further information on dealing with condensation.

Household Waste – Rubbish & Recycling

Rubbish

Rubbish bins are provided. Please make sure that the rubbish area is kept clean and tidy. All kitchen refuse should be wrapped in black bin liners before putting it in the bin. Cat litter should be bagged up separately and securely.

Rubbish collection and recycling each week is on:

- Tuesday in Richmond
- Wednesday in Twickenham

Please do **NOT** leave rubbish out overnight as foxes will rip bags apart.

Recycling

Communal recycling bins are provided on most of the estates – **please use the recycling bins correctly otherwise the Council will not empty them.** At Hickey's there are large four-wheeled communal recycling bins and there are two of each type – one for mixed card, paper and cartons and the other for food tins, cans, glass bottles and jars, foil, household plastic packages and aerosols. All the other estates have two smaller wheelie bins that take the same recyclable materials as listed above.

Please do NOT put any of the following in the recycling bins: polystyrene, plastic bags or film, shrink or bubble wrap, plastic toys, CDs/DVDs or garden pots or anything else which is not specified as recyclable on the information labels on the side of the bins. In addition, please do NOT leave any other items on or near the rubbish bins or recycling bins in the hope that the Council waste and recycling teams will take them away – they will not do so. If you have bulky items which you need to be collected, you can contact the Council and book a bulky waste collection by calling them on 020 8891 1411 or by going onto the Council website at

http://www.richmond.gov.uk/bulky_items_and_other_waste_collections.

The collection is free for residents on Pension Credit and the fee is reduced for residents over 60.

All sites also have green bins for garden waste.

If you arrange to have a recycling container for your personal use (such as a food waste bin), you are responsible for ensuring that it is emptied. Under no circumstances are recycling bins or boxes to be placed outside the almshouses where they can be seen or cause a hazard. Food waste is collected on the same day as your dustbin is emptied. Liners for the kitchen caddy and outside storage bin can be purchased at local supermarkets and shops. Please ensure that your food waste bin is securely in the locked position when you put it out for collection so that it does not attract vermin.

Keeping Warm

In winter, Richmond Council makes the following recommendations:

- Wrap up by wearing lots of thin layers rather than one thick one. This will trap the warmth from your body between the layers, keeping you snug and warm.
- Hot meals and drinks will give you extra warmth and energy that will help keep you well.

Laminate Flooring

It is the responsibility of residents to keep their almshouse clean and tidy. This includes caring for your laminate flooring for those almshouses which have a laminate floor. To prevent a build-up of dirt and debris, you should sweep or vacuum your floor on a daily basis. All hard flooring is sensitive to scratching and excess grit is bound to affect the finish of your laminate flooring. Use a soft brush or, if you're using a vacuum cleaner, make sure you use the soft-brush attachment.

Clean up spillages fast – laminate flooring is not waterproof. Using a clean, dry towel or sponge, soak up the moisture and dry well.

Washing and wiping – all laminate floors will require a good clean now and again. Thorough laminate floor cleaning should be carried out every few months. Fill up a bucket with clean, warm water and soak a flat mop in the bucket. Wring out the mop well and lightly mop the floor so it is left lightly damp, rather than soaking wet. Avoid puddles by regularly soaking the mop and wringing it out, ensuring it is just damp throughout.

Furniture should never be pushed or dragged across the laminate floor as this can cause damage.

Location of Water Stopcocks

A location notice can be found in every almshouse. Your Scheme Manager will discuss the information with you soon after moving in.

Parking of Vehicles

Parking is not permitted on the almshouse estates. This applies to both residents and their visitors. Please do not park on the estates or allow your visitors to do so, as they may block the way for ambulances or fire engines in an emergency. At Hickey's and Church Estate cars are allowed on the estates for collecting or dropping off residents or shopping for up to 10 minutes only. At Hickey's, residents can ask at the estate office for permission for visitors to park on the estate, which may be granted in certain circumstances. Visitors parking permits for Hickey's can be obtained from the estate office. It is not permitted for residents to give their visitors permission to park on the estate. Permission must be obtained from staff.

Residents' Visitor Permits for street parking can be purchased from the Council. More information can be found on parking permits on the Council's website, www.richmond.gov.uk

Personal Problems

If you have any personal or money problems and have no family or friends whom you feel able to consult, the Chaplain will be glad to give whatever help or advice they can. Please let your Scheme Manager know if you wish to see the Chaplain or contact the Chaplain direct (phone number on page 34).

Personal Waste

Please ensure that only body waste and toilet paper are flushed down the toilet. Wipes, pads, cat litter and other objects must not be flushed as they block drains and can cause flooding; please dispose of these items using small plastic bags and then place them in your general waste.

Pets

It is the Trustees' policy that residents may keep a small pet; however this excludes any dog except a Guide Dog for the Blind. If you wish to keep a pet you must first obtain permission from the Trustees by writing to the Director. Small animals or caged birds are usually acceptable, but must not become a nuisance to other residents.

Please tell the Scheme Manager about arrangements you have made for the care of your pet if you are away on holiday or become ill. Pets' food and toilet facilities must be kept inside the almshouse. Leaving food outside is forbidden as it will attract vermin or scavenger foxes.

Cat flaps in doors or windows are not allowed and any request for a cat flap to be installed will be refused.

Residents' Effects

Having written your Will and left instructions for the disposal of your belongings, there may be residue items that your executor will have to dispose of. The Charity has a procedure called 'Permission for My Effects to be Distributed to Other Almshouse Residents' which may suit you.

The practicalities of this procedure are to reduce wastage and to recycle items for the benefit of others.

Scheme Managers hold the necessary form, which requires completion and sending to the Director. The form is copied and filed; the original is returned to you to attach to your will. A copy of the form is included at the end of this handbook.

Come the day that you are no longer with us, your Scheme Manager will discuss your wishes with your executor and next of kin and arrange for residents to view and select from your remaining items, usually the day before the almshouse is cleared.

Scams

Every day we are bombarded by bogus/nuisance calls on the telephone and every day we get information about scams either warning us about cold callers on the telephone or someone calling at your door. We are all told never to give out information about bank details, especially card details, but sadly millions of people still do.

With phone scams, the simple thing to do is just hang up the phone. Don't let them engage you in conversation. If someone comes to your door at night asking you for money to help them get to a sick relative, watch out, it could well be a scam. Don't give them anything and certainly do not let them into your home. If you have a bogus caller alarm in your almshouse, use it. If you have a security chain on your front door, use it.

If you would like more information on avoiding being the victim of a scam, please ask your Scheme Manager for a copy of a booklet from the Police entitled 'The Little Book of Big Scams'.

Telephone Preference Service (TPS)

You are strongly advised to take advantage of this service as it will ensure that you do not receive marketing calls via your telephone. The easiest way to register for the service is via the internet; the service is free. Once your telephone number is on the database, telesales are not permitted to contact you – unfortunately this does not apply to telesales calls from outside the UK.

To register, logon to www.tpsonline.org.uk, or ask a member of staff to undertake this simple procedure for you.

Wills

You are strongly advised to make a Will. If you wish to leave personal property to a relative or friend, a Will is essential. If you do not have a Will, it will make things much more difficult for your next of kin after your death. Please tell your Scheme Manager or the Director where your Will is kept and who is your executor.

A solicitor is the best person to help you make a Will, and if you require assistance in finding one, we suggest you contact the local Citizens Advice Bureau. Contact details for the CAB are at the front of this handbook. If you need help, please ask your Scheme Manager.

Scheme Managers and other staff are not allowed to witness residents' Wills or other legal documentation. Staff are not permitted to become executors or next of kin for residents.

CHAPTER 6

CHAPLAINCY

Outline

The Chaplaincy respects the fact that residents will come from a variety of backgrounds and faith traditions, or will not subscribe to a formal religious tradition at all. The Chaplaincy is offered as a resource for those who wish to use it, and will in no way intrude upon your home and privacy uninvited.

The Chaplains

Stuart Lee is The Richmond Charities' Chaplain. David Thomas is a resident and Honorary Assistant Chaplain. Both are ordained Anglican priests licenced by the Bishop of Southwark.

The Chaplains are available to residents for confidential counsel or advice, or in times of need or sickness. Both Chaplains take services in Hickey's Chapel and can take home communion to the sick or house-bound.

At times we all have difficulties and anxieties and it can often be helpful to talk them over with another person. The Chaplains are happy to listen to whatever may be concerning you, be they "religious" matters or not. Whatever is discussed with a Chaplain will always be treated as confidential.

The Chapel of Saint Francis

Services are held every Sunday in The Chapel of Saint Francis at Hickey's and on other major Christian festivals. The Chapel is warm and

comfortable and everyone is welcome to the services; it is not exclusively for Anglicans. The Chapel is also used for many other activities such as coffee mornings, film club, discussion groups, workshops, parties, yoga, concerts, celebrations and for staff meetings and staff training. The Chapel is a beautiful place and worth a visit on its own merits.

Making Contact with the Chaplains

If you would like to make contact with the Chaplains, please ask your Scheme Manager to pass on a message or contact them on the numbers below:

Stuart Lee	07780 997528 (<i>from September 2016</i>)
David Thomas	07557 107014

CHAPTER 7

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you have a complaint or a problem has arisen which cannot be readily solved by a discussion with the other party or your Scheme Manager, the following Complaints Procedure should be adopted.

Under the Housing Act 1996 all almshouse charities that are, or were, Registered Social Landlords (now called Registered Providers) with the Housing Corporation (now called the Homes & Communities Agency), have a regulatory obligation to maintain a Complaints Procedure. The Richmond Charities is not and has never been a Registered Provider; however, it is recommended good practice for all almshouse charities to have a Complaints Procedure available for residents.

Many people are reluctant to complain. The Trustees can only resolve problems and improve the service they offer if you speak up when things go wrong. Set out below is a procedure to be followed if any resident wishes to raise a complaint in connection with the occupation of his or her almshouse or about services provided by the Charity relating to the almshouses.

- Minor matters, such as small maintenance items, should be referred to your Scheme Manager when they arise. They should be attended to as quickly as their urgency demands.
- If the Scheme Manager is unable to resolve minor matters, or, if there is a persistent problem with pets, loud noise or matters affecting health and safety, the resident should refer this to the Director. In the absence of the Director, please contact the Administrator. You should be prepared to put your complaint in writing at this stage. The

Trustees wish to emphasise that all communications about complaints will be treated as confidential.

- If the Director is unable to deal with your complaint satisfactorily, or, if you have a complaint about staff employed by the Charity, other residents or a serious breach of health and safety regulations for instance, you have the right to put your complaint in writing to the Chair, with the formal request for it to be considered by the Trustees at their next meeting. You will, if you wish to exercise that right, be entitled to attend when your complaint is being discussed, accompanied by a friend or professional advisor.
- Trustees must write to the resident to advise them of the action taken to resolve the complaint and to notify them of the decision made.
- The Charity is not obliged to take the matter further although it might, if deemed appropriate, engage an external organisation in the Complaints Procedure if internal procedures have been exhausted.

CHAPTER 8

FURTHER INFORMATION, POLICIES & FORMS

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Policy

The Trustees of The Richmond Charities will not tolerate anti-social behaviour that affects the quality of life of a resident, staff or the management of the Charity.

Residents are encouraged to report to the Trustees any behaviour considered by them to be anti-social *by any person*.

The Trustees will investigate such reports (in confidence when this is appropriate).

Should mediation be appropriate, the Trustees may involve an advice and mediation service to resolve the problem.

If the matter cannot be resolved by mediation, the Trustees will not hesitate to act on behalf of a resident affected by anti-social behaviour. If this is caused by another resident in contravention of their Letter of Appointment, the Charity will follow its internal procedures. After a due process of verbal and written warnings the resident's appointment to the almshouse may be set aside. In case of anti-social behaviour by visitors or neighbours, the Trustees may seek an Anti-Social Behaviour Order on behalf of one or all the residents.

Procedure

Residents should report any behaviour considered by them to be anti-social to the Director in writing (marked personal for the Director).

The Director will bring the report to the notice of the Trustees at the earliest opportunity.

The Trustees will then decide to:

- a. Resolve the matter within the Charity
- or
- b. Refer the matter for external mediation
- or
- c. Seek an Anti-Social Behaviour Order

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

1. Every almshouse has smoke and heat detectors that, when triggered, automatically dial through to a Careline monitoring centre. Calls can be given priority.

The detectors should enable the Fire Service to be called at an early stage in the development of a fire.

2. If a fire starts in a resident's almshouse, the resident should leave the property immediately. It is the resident's responsibility to call the Fire Service. The call may have to be made from a neighbour's house or through Careline.
3. Never re-enter a burning building.
4. Anyone discovering a fire should immediately call the Fire Service and then the Scheme Manager.
5. The Richmond Charities will undertake a Fire Safety Risk Assessment at properties where it provides services and people are employed.
6. Portable appliances and fixed wiring will be subject to periodic testing in communal areas as a means of managing the risks associated with fires.
7. All fire related incidents, tests and checks will be accurately recorded.
8. The Fire Safety Policy will be reviewed periodically or when there are changes to fire practices.

Fire Safety Policy – revised January 2016
Reviewed annually

FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURE

1. Fire Safety Procedure

After seeking advice from the local Fire Prevention Officer, a Fire Safety Procedure has been implemented to cover any action to be taken in the event of fire or similar emergency. The procedure is designed to meet the requirements of the Almshouses on the different estates run by The Richmond Charities.

2. Principles

The general policy in the event of a fire is to leave the property immediately, closing doors behind you. Evacuation of a larger area will only take place on the instruction of the Fire Officer in charge at the scene or staff on duty.

Type and layout of estate

What were the views of the local Fire Officer?

- a) In the event of a house fire, an assembly point is not required.
- b) A “stay put” policy has been agreed with the Fire Service. Residents can be reasonably sure of safety during a fire in another building if they remain in their own almshouse. Evacuation of surrounding areas may be required.
- c) In the event of a fire in Hickey’s Chapel, evacuation of the building would take place. The assembly point is the first bench on the front lawn to the left of the Chapel doors – there is a sign on the tree next to the bench.

3. Staff Training

Staff will have training annually in Fire Safety, in the use of fire extinguishers and refresh and update their knowledge on emergency procedures.

4. Reporting Incidents

All fires and fire related incidents must be reported either to a Scheme Manager or direct to the Hickey's Office or the Michel's Office.

5. Testing Equipment

All heat and smoke detectors test automatically on a weekly basis and are checked quarterly by the Health, Safety & Security Officer or other member of staff. Fire extinguishers in communal areas are checked annually by an external company, Morgan Fire Protection.

6. Occupancy and Absence from Almshouses

It is essential that residents inform a Scheme Manager if they are going to be away from their almshouse overnight, if they are going on holiday (and specify the exact dates) or if they have a visitor staying over (and residents must ask permission for this). It is vital that, at all times, staff on duty have an accurate list of which residents are at home and which are away, so that, in the event of a fire, the Fire Brigade know whether and where there are residents who need to be evacuated.

7. Review

The Fire Safety Procedure will be reviewed periodically or when there are changes to fire practices.

*Fire Safety Procedure - revised January 2016
Reviewed annually*



LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

Dear Resident,

These are the terms under which you occupy your almshouse and are subject to change.

The Weekly Maintenance Contribution (WMC) is £; this is £ per calendar month and is collected in arrears via direct debit on the 28th of each month. WMC is charged for the upkeep of the almshouse. This figure may be increased with one month's notice. (Rent is not applicable as residents are not tenants and do not have security of tenure.) The Rent Service has agreed to provide informal guidance concerning the maximum level of Maintenance Contribution which will qualify for the payment of Housing Benefit. A proportion of water charges and any service and support costs may be added to this figure.

It is a condition of occupancy that the full amount of Weekly Maintenance Contribution is paid whether or not the services or support elements are used by the resident.

If you are entitled to Housing Benefit you may wish to make an application to the Council.

Residents are responsible for the payment of their utility bills and Council Tax.

The following regulations for the residents are to ensure the smooth running of the almshouses:

1. The Trustees undertake to carry out all repairs and external decoration. Residents are not allowed to make any structural alteration to the almshouses, nor alter the plumbing or electrical installation, without the prior consent of the Trustees. No shelves, cupboards, locks or fittings shall be fixed or removed, nor shall any alteration be made to any room or its fittings without the prior consent from the Director via the resident's Scheme Manager.
2. The Trustees may take such steps as they think proper in the administration of the Charity for the residents' welfare, and any alteration to the rules will be notified in writing to each resident. These rules are set out in this Letter of Appointment and in the Residents' Handbook, which forms part of this Letter of Appointment.
3. The Trustees reserve the right to ask a resident or residents to vacate their almshouse and move, either temporarily or permanently, to another almshouse belonging to the Charity.
4. The Trustees retain the power to set aside a resident's appointment with good cause, e.g. in the case of serious misconduct or if there is a breach of the regulations, or if he or she is no longer a qualified beneficiary or is a risk to other residents or staff or to the Charity's property, as outlined in the Charity Commission Scheme dated 17 December 2008, a copy of which is held at the Administrative Office. Failure to make timely payment of Weekly Maintenance Contributions will be regarded as a breach of the charity's regulations.
5. The Scheme Managers act as good neighbours and facilitators to each of the residents. Scheme Managers are required to make a minimum of once a week contact with every resident. Residents must comply with this requirement.

6. The Scheme Managers hold master keys for each almshouse on the estates to allow access in emergency situations.
7. Scheme Manager cover is: on-duty weekday mornings, on-call weekday afternoons and on an emergency only basis outside of these times. An emergency is considered to be where an ambulance or GP is required and the Scheme Manager's presence is necessary to allow access. In an emergency the Scheme Manager will also summon relatives or next of kin if appropriate.
8. Neither the resident nor any relation or guest of theirs will be a tenant of the Charity or have any legal interest in the almshouse.
9. The name, address, email, phone number and mobile phone number of resident's first and second next of kin or personal representative must be supplied to the Trustees, together with information as to whether a Will has been made and, if so, where it is deposited. Residents are strongly encouraged to make a Will. Residents are required to inform their first and second next of kin of the responsibilities of being next of kin.
10. The name, address and phone number of the resident's GP must be supplied to the Scheme Manager.
11. Residents must permit reasonable access for inspection of their almshouses and for repairs and maintenance to be carried out. All defects which become apparent in the almshouse should be reported without delay to the Scheme Manager.
12. Residents are not permitted to change the front door lock, put the snip on the lock or bolt the front door. Residents are encouraged to use the lockable door chain at all times.

13. Residents are requested to use EDF as their electrical supplier but if they wish to change, the Director must be advised via the resident's Scheme Manager of the new supplier along with the customer services telephone number.
14. Residents must have a telephone landline and one that is compatible with Careline – BT is recommended.
15. Residents must permit access for periodic testing of the Careline emergency alarm and detectors.
16. Residents are required to allow staff (usually the Caretaker or Health, Safety & Security Officer) to test any of their portable electrical appliances, if staff think it necessary, to ensure the appliances are safe and are not likely to cause an electrical fire. This is normally done within a few weeks of a resident moving into an almshouse.
17. The use of paraffin oil and portable gas heaters is strictly prohibited. Please consult the Scheme Manager or Caretaker before you use additional heaters.
18. Residents should not be absent from their almshouse for more than a total of twenty- eight days in any one calendar year without the prior approval of the Trustees. Residents should inform the Trustees (via the Director) if they will be away for more than two weeks at a time. For reasons of safety, residents must also inform their Scheme Manager if they are going to be away overnight.
19. Residents are required to occupy the property quietly and with thought and consideration for other residents, neighbours, staff and contractors. No radio, TV, music system or musical instrument should be used by residents or their guests in such a manner as to cause a disturbance, nor shall anything be done by residents or their guests in, upon or around the almshouses and estates which shall be a

nuisance, annoyance or disturbance to the occupants of other almshouses, adjoining property or to the general public.

20. Pets may only be kept with the consent of the Trustees. Dogs (with the exception of guide dogs for the blind) are not allowed. Residents must ensure that proper toilet facilities are provided indoors for any pet. Cat flaps are not permitted.

21. Residents are required to keep their homes clean and tidy and avoid storage of excess or unnecessary items. Porches, front doors, back doors and staircases must remain clear to allow for emergency access. Residents are responsible for cleaning the inside of the windows in their almshouse.

22. Residents may expect to continue in occupation in their almshouse for as long as they need the accommodation, provided, in the opinion of the Trustees, that they continue to qualify as a beneficiary and are able to look after themselves. If the health of a resident deteriorates, the resident must be willing to accept advice and guidance from time to time, either from their own doctor or a medical consultant appointed by the Trustees. If a resident needs extra help from Social Services, carers or other agencies, it is the responsibility of their next of kin to arrange the extra care necessary, with support from Scheme Managers. In the event that a resident is no longer able to live independently and needs more care, it is the responsibility of the next of kin to find a nursing or care home and arrange for the resident's transfer.

23. Residents agree that any property not taken away from the almshouse within two weeks of moving away may be removed from the almshouse by order of the Director and if not taken away within four weeks shall become the property of the Charity.

24. In the event of the death of a resident, or a move to alternative accommodation, it is the duty of the resident's next of kin to clear the almshouse (including cellars) of all personal possessions, usually within two weeks of the death of the resident or their move to alternative accommodation, but an extension can be arranged with the Charity. WMC must be paid in full to the Charity by the next of kin or by the resident's estate up until the date on which the almshouse is completely cleared and the keys have been returned to the Charity. Utility bills and Council Tax must also be paid up to the date on which the almshouse is completely cleared.

25. Residents must inform their Scheme Manager if they are having a visitor to stay overnight in their almshouse. It is essential that the Charity knows who is in the almshouses for the safety and security of the whole community and for fire safety reasons. If residents wish to have an overnight guest to stay for more than two nights, they must book one of the Guest Rooms. The Charity prefers residents to book the Guest Room for their visitors, even for one or two nights, rather than having them stay in the almshouses. The Charity has two Guest Rooms. Visitors may stay in the Guest Rooms for £25 per night (reviewed periodically) for up to three nights and thereafter at £75 per night. Visitors are subject to the rules contained in this Letter of Appointment and in the Residents' Handbook and may not occupy the Guest Room for more than 21 nights in any calendar year.

26. Residents and their visitors are not permitted to park a vehicle on the almshouse estates, except in exceptional circumstances (further details are in the Handbook).

27. Trustees reserve the right to review a resident's financial circumstances from time to time. It is the resident's responsibility to notify the Charity if their circumstances change. Should a resident's economic circumstances substantially improve or if it is found that an

appointment would not have awarded had all the relevant facts been declared, then he or she may be asked to move to other accommodation. However, unless a resident's financial circumstances (income or savings) were to substantially increase to the extent that the resident no longer qualified as a beneficiary, the likelihood is that the Trustees would allow the resident to remain in the almshouse.

28. Neither the almshouse nor its garden may be used as a place of business, either from where to conduct business or to store items connected with running a business.

29. Residents' attention is drawn to the Complaints Procedure set out in the Residents' Handbook.

30. It is a condition of occupancy that a new resident signs a copy of this Letter of Appointment signifying their willingness to abide by the above rules, before taking up occupation. In the event of an appointment being made to two persons, both should sign the Letter of Appointment. A second copy, which should also be signed, is enclosed for the resident's retention. A copy of the Letter of Appointment and Residents' Handbook will also be sent to the resident's next of kin.

31. I acknowledge receipt of the Charity's Residents' Handbook, which provides information on the Trustees' policies and rules for harmonious living in the almshouse communities.

32. By signing this Letter of Appointment, you are agreeing to abide by its terms and conditions and to abide by the rules laid out in the Residents' Handbook.

Letter of Appointment, 2016

**PERMISSION FOR MY EFFECTS TO BE DISTRIBUTED
TO OTHER ALMSHOUSE RESIDENTS**

Resident's Name

.....

Resident's Address

.....

Date:

.....

To: 1. Next-of-kin
2. Director, The Richmond Charities

After the instructions in my Will have been met, and family have taken other items and mementos:

(Please tick the statements you agree to)

- I should like it made known that the remaining effects may be distributed to other residents. This will be done through one open-day for residents to select from the remaining effects before the remainder of my effects are disposed of by my next-of-kin or executor.

- I understand and I will make it known to my next-of-kin and executor that, following the one open day, they must dispose of the remainder of my effects including all furniture as soon as possible and within a week. I understand and I will make it known to my next-of-kin and executor that WMC continues to be paid up until the date on which the almshouse is completely cleared and the keys are returned.

- Furthermore, I should like to state that my effects are for the benefit of residents only and not their friends or family.

- I understand that my next-of-kin or executor must liaise with the Scheme Manager to find a suitable date for the open day and that my next-of-kin or executor must be present at my almshouse for the open day.

- I give permission for Friends & Neighbours to leave a collection box for cash donations and for the collection to be donated to:
 - Friends & Neighbours funds
 - WaterAid
 - It is in order for a resident NOT to leave a donation for items taken.

Your signature

.....

Please forward this letter to:

Director,

The Richmond Charities, 8 The Green, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 1PL

Or, hand this letter to your Scheme Manager for onward transmission.

A copy will be taken and placed on file; the original will be returned to you for safe keeping with your papers for your next-of-kin or executor.

