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| Chandos & Dent’s Almshouses | Independent Living |
| Owner | Appointments & Welfare |
| Created | October 2023 |
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**BACKGROUND**

It is a requirement that those accommodated in almshouses should be able to live independently which fortunately many residents are able to do into advanced age. However, circumstances sometimes arise which because of illness, infirmity, and frailty lead to it being inadvisable for residents to continue living in their almshouse.

As an aid to understanding ‘living independently’ the NHS has some guidelines used by healthcare professionals to refer to the basic self-care tasks an individual does on a day-to-day basis. These are referred to as **Activities of Daily Living ADL.** These activities are fundamental in caring for oneself and maintaining independence. An individual’s ability or inability to perform ADLs is often used by health professionals as a way of measuring an individual’s functional status, especially that of older adults or those with disabilities.

These could be used by the Trust as some objective measure of increasing physical and mental frailty. However, residents will have differing individual characteristics and needs and therefore these guidelines should be used sensitively and always in conjunction with the opinions of health and social care professionals.

**Basic ADLs** include - but are not limited to

* Functional mobility, which includes the ability to walk and transfer in and out of a chair or bed. Essentially, it’s the ability to move from one place to another as a person goes through their daily routines.
* Personal hygiene, oral care, and grooming, including skin and hair care.
* Showering and/or bathing
* Toileting, which includes getting on and off the toilet and cleaning oneself
* Dressing, which includes selecting appropriate attire and putting it on
* Self-feeding

**POLICY STATEMENT**

There are certain arrangements that the Trust will need to set in place or strongly recommend to residents.

* Residents are to nominate a next of kin or close friend whom the Trustees may contact in case of need. **This is included in the appointment of a resident and checked at Bi-Annual Visits.**
* The Trust needs to be advised of the name and address of the resident’s GP in a letter of authority enabling them to contact the GP in case of need. **This is included in the appointment of a resident.**
* Residents will be advised to arrange for a Power of Attorney to be put in place. There are two types of Lasting Powers of Attorney one deals with Health & Welfare, and the other with Property & Financial Affairs.

For guidance in this connection see <http://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney>

**This is included in the Residents’ Handbook.**

* Residents should be strongly encouraged to make a Will.

**This is included in the Residents’ Handbook.**

**INCREASED FRAILTY**

If the Trustees believe that the resident is reaching a stage where it is considered that they can no longer live independently two Trustees from Appointments & Welfare should meet with the resident and/or with the next of kin to explore a way forward. The position should be confirmed in writing to the resident and the next of kin suggesting a timetable when the next steps should be taken.

**The Trust must keep written and dated records of all actions, telephone calls, conversations, incidents that occur regarding any resident who they consider having increasing care needs.**

In the case of a resident experiencing increased frailty every effort should be made to find a way forward, which might involve Social Services.

**Trustees should be aware that a Social Services Assessment of Needs can be requested by the resident or their family or any concerned party including the Trust by contacting the Adult Social Needs Desk at Tewkesbury Borough Council.** Where appropriate the resident’s family should be encouraged to apply.

Trustees should speak to neighbours, when appropriate, about whether they have any concerns, what their concerns are and whether it is impacting unreasonably upon them. The Trustees should enquire if there are ways in which the Trust might help.

Where practical Trustees will endeavour to authorise adaptations to the almshouse to make life easier. However, Trustees should inform residents that permission must be sought on all occasions before any adaptations are made. If a Care Package is needed, again Trustees should be informed accordingly.

Trustees should not prevent a resident from returning home to their almshouse if, for example, they have been a patient in a hospital, even if they feel the resident can no longer cope. **They must follow the due process and take legal advice.**

If increased frailty or ill health makes it impossible for a resident to continue to live independently **i.e. when they are perceived to be in danger either to themselves and/or others,** Trustees may feel it necessary to request the resident to move to more appropriate accommodation where care is provided and in extreme circumstances to terminate the appointment. This should only be done after full consultation with the resident, their relatives and if applicable medical practitioners. This transition should be made as easy as possible for the resident. **Trustees should ensure that they make it clear to third parties that they are not responsible for the resident’s care and take care to only give appropriate help outlined here so as not to encourage residents to remain, when it is not in their best interest to do so.**

Setting aside a resident’s appointment should be regarded as being the absolute last resort when all efforts to remedy the situation have failed. **The Almshouse Association strongly advises that legal advice should be taken. They recommend that the Trust contact a solicitor who not only specialises in charity law but also has knowledge of almshouse charities.**

**The Trust must keep written and dated records of all actions, telephone calls, conversations, incidents that occur regarding any resident who they consider may have to leave their Almshouse.**

**THE FUTURE**

In terms of considering Increasing Care Needs the Trust needs to anticipate that safety and ease of access will be a key requirement for all residents regardless of care needs. **This will be of paramount importance in any future design changes and modernisation of almshouse accommodation**.