



## C J Gallard's Almshouses

# Independent Living Policy

C. J. Gallard's Almshouses (Gallard's) provides accommodation for residents of the Borough of Tunbridge Wells who are over the age of 55 and of limited means. As an Almshouse, Gallard's provides accommodation for residents capable of independent living. Gallard's does not provide assisted living accommodation and is not a care home. This policy sets out what is meant by independent living for the benefit of residents, staff, trustees and any outside agencies that come into contact with residents.

### **What is independent living.**

A resident must be capable of living independently in their flat and capable of managing all their own affairs on a day-to-day basis. This includes cooking and cleaning for themselves, managing their laundry and organising their own shopping, medical appointments, medications for example.

A resident may be able to maintain their independence with the assistance of a care package, but this assistance must be organised and managed by the resident.

### **What we need from residents.**

Gallard's requires the following from each resident.

- Nominating a next of kin or close friend whom the charity may contact in case of need.
- The charity should be advised of the name and address of the resident's GP and provide the charity with a letter of authority enabling them to contact him or her in case of need.

There are certain arrangements that Gallard's strongly recommend residents to make. These include:

- Arranging for a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) to be put in place. Details of both the Financial and Health and Welfare LPA should be provided to the charity in order that the Trustees may be aware of to whom they should refer in case of need.
- Residents are strongly encouraged to make a Will if they have not already done so and advise the charity where this is lodged. If they have furniture and other items they wish to go to specified people or places, these should be included
- The documents relating to the resident's financial and health and welfare affairs should be easily accessible to the person who has Lasting Power of Attorney.

### **Staff**

The on-site Manager cannot take the place of local relatives and friends of a resident. The resident cannot become dependent on the help of the Manager or any other member of staff to maintain their independence.

The Manager is not allowed to provide personal care, do laundry, fetch shopping or collect prescriptions, except briefly in emergencies if the Manager is on site and available. On no account is the Manager authorised to carry out any medical procedures. However, the Manager is available to advise on how help can be obtained from other sources.



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### **If a resident might not be able to live independently.**

A resident might not be able to live independently if they are perceived to be in danger either to themselves and/or others.

If a resident begins to cause Gallard's concern in terms of their ability to maintain their independence, the Manager will record a log of events in a "Notes of Significant Issues" document for that particular resident.

Some examples of issues of concern could be –

- A number of falls in quick succession
- Hoarding or uncleanliness within the home
- self-neglect in terms of not looking after themselves
- regularly setting smoke alarms off by misuse of kitchen appliances
- repeatedly locking themselves out of their flat

The Manager shares the "Notes of Significant Issues" document with the Clerk to the Trustees who will make the decision as to what further action is needed.

In cases of increased frailty, where practical Gallard's will organise the installation of additional grab rails within a flat/Almshouse if possible, but it must be remembered that the accommodation that Gallard's provides is already adapted with the older person in mind.

Once it becomes impossible for a resident to continue to live independently, the trustees will issue a "Letter of Concern" to the Resident following a full consultation with them and their relatives if appropriate.

All relevant medical practitioners will be copied into the correspondence.

The letter will state that the resident must move to more appropriate accommodation. In cases where residents do not have a next of kin, it is likely that a multidisciplinary meeting organised through the local authority will need to be arranged.

If progress is slow and the trustees considers Gallard's is not exercising its duty of care over the resident and other residents/members of staff, trustees may begin the legal process of "setting aside the appointment" of the resident.

This means revoking the licence to occupy the Almshouse.