

Henry, Duke of Cleveland Charity

***Registered charity No. 221407
Member of the Almshouse Association (No. 1360)***

Weekly Maintenance Contributions Policy and Procedures

Policy

- 1 A condition of residency is that Weekly Maintenance Contributions (WMC) are paid in full and at the agreed frequency and on the agreed payment date. Residents agree to this by signing their Letter of Appointment.
- 2 WMC payments are required to be paid a calendar month in advance by standing order or direct debit on the 1st of each month. New residents will be required to pay WMC by direct debit.
- 3 WMC will be reviewed annually at the first meeting of the Trustees in each year. Factors which will be taken into account when reviewing the level of WMC will be:
 - 3.1 The cost of maintenance, improvement work and the running costs for the charity and to maintain the Charity's ongoing financial viability
 - 3.2 Valuation Office Agency Equivalent Fair Rent
 - 3.3 Comparable rents for affordable Social Housing in the region and if possible other Almshouse charities
 - 3.4 Rent increase caps for Social Housing
 - 3.5 Local Housing Allowance (Housing Benefit) rates
 - 3.6 The State Pension level and increase
- 4 The Trustees reserve the right to charge interest on arrears at 4% above the Bank of England Base rate and with reference to relevant legislation e.g. The Tenants Fees Act 2019.
- 5 If a resident accrues WMC arrears and receives Housing Benefit they will be asked to agree to direct payment of Housing Benefit to the Charity. This is permitted by Durham County Council in the case of rent arrears and the tenant has difficulty managing their finances.
- 6 The non-payment of weekly maintenance contributions or arrears repayments could lead to an appointment being set aside.

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Procedures

- 1 Residents are required to contact the Clerk to the Trustees at the first opportunity if they are experiencing difficulties paying WMC.
- 2 Residents are encouraged to seek advice and help from appropriate bodies such as the Citizens Advice Bureau or other debt advice bodies if they are experiencing problems paying WMC.
- 3 The Charity will discuss with residents possible ways of maintaining their residency if they are experiencing problems paying WMC. This could include considering affordable arrears repayment plans if a resident commits to meeting future WMC payments in full and on agreed dates and frequency and demonstrates that they have taken steps to manage any financial difficulties.
- 4 As a last resort the Trustees retain the power to set aside a resident's appointment with good cause, e.g. in the case of serious misconduct, non-payment of WMC, a serious breach of regulations, in any of the circumstances described in the Charity's Scheme, or if the resident is no longer a qualified beneficiary or is no longer able to live independently. This is included in the Letter of Appointment Paragraph 6. The procedure is shown on page 3.

Signed by the Trustees:

Chairperson (Ex-officio Trustee) _____

Ex-officio Trustee _____

Ex-officio Trustee _____

Co-optive Trustee _____

Co-optive Trustee _____

4th June 2024. Review by June 2025.

Process to set aside an appointment

