



The Hospital of St Mary the Virgin (Rye Hill and Benwell) Almshouses Charity

Probity and Conduct Policy

Approved by Trustees: 7 March 2023

Next Review: not later than June 2026

This Policy sets out the standards of conduct expected from the three key parties involved in activities of The Hospital of St Mary the Virgin (Rye Hill and Benwell) Almshouses Charity (the Charity) – the Trustees and their Clerk, the staff and the residents.

Trustees

All trustees are expected to observe at all times the seven key principles of governance set down by the Charity Commission together with other good practice, as set out below:

- **Organisational Purpose** – having a clear understanding of the Charity’s objectives and ensuring that they are delivered effectively and sustainably, giving appropriate support and guidance to the Charity’s staff
- **Leadership** – taking the lead in ensuring that the Charity meets its objectives, maintaining effective communication with its staff and the Residents
- **Integrity** – observing the highest standards of commitment, honesty and trustworthiness in conducting all business relating to the Charity and protecting the good reputation of the Charity
- **Decision making, risk and control** – ensuring that all decisions are well-informed and made in the best interests of the Charity; identifying, assessing and seeking to mitigate all risks which the Charity faces; ensuring at all times effective control of staff, financial resources and facilities and ensuring that the Charity manages its affairs in accordance with any Government guidance, legislation and regulations issued from time to time to address exceptional circumstances, when appropriate seeking external expert advice
- **Board effectiveness** – appointing as Trustees well-informed and committed individuals who bring a range of relevant skills to the Board, attend meetings of the Board and its sub-committees and accept corporate responsibility for making and abiding by decisions, acting under the leadership and guidance of a Chair appointed by Trustees from among their number
- **Diversity** – recognising the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation), as well as the value of appointing trustees from different backgrounds, careers and life experiences
- **Openness and Accountability** – taking the lead in ensuring real accountability and effective communication, demonstrating a willingness to listen to others, admit mistakes and build on good practice.

Staff

At all times, staff should:

- have a clear understanding of the Charity’s objectives and respect the standards and policies set down by Trustees
- conduct themselves in a manner which will gain the respect of all those associated with the Charity and with the wider community, helping to maintain the Charity’s good reputation



- exercise appropriate diligence and control in their work for the Charity, while also being aware of potential risks and the need to mitigate them
- ensure that the Charity functions in accordance with any Government guidance, legislation and regulations issued from time to time to address exceptional circumstances
- respect the residents, affording them privacy and independence, balanced by a duty of care and an understanding of when intervention is needed in their best interests
- maintain high standards of honesty, integrity and trustworthiness, recognising the confidentiality of personal information relating to colleagues and residents
- not use or tolerate aggressive behaviour or language, which should be reported immediately
- have a good understanding of all the Charity's Policies, in particular those relating to the safeguarding and the health, safety and welfare of staff and residents and do not put themselves or anyone else at risk of harm
- understand when it is necessary to seek advice and assistance in dealing with a particular situation.

Residents

At all times residents should:

- conduct themselves in a manner which will gain the respect of all those associated with the Charity and with the wider community, maintaining the good reputation of the Charity
- take good care of their own health and welfare
- ensure that the Charity is provided with all the information it needs to ensure each resident's well-being, in particular regarding their doctor, any special health issues and next of kin details
- respect and support staff in their running of the Charity's facilities, including affording access to each flat as and when reasonably required
- conduct themselves in accordance with any Government guidance, legislation and regulations issued from time to time to address exceptional circumstances
- respect and observe measures which protect the safety and well-being of all residents and staff, in particular with regard to fire safety
- enjoy life in the Charity's accommodation in a manner which ensures that other residents can do the same, respecting the privacy and independence of other residents
- not use or tolerate aggressive behaviour or language
- keep their own flat in a clean and tidy condition
- respect shared facilities, leaving them in a clean and tidy condition
- understand when it is necessary to seek advice and assistance in dealing with a particular situation.

Gifts

From time to time some residents and their families show their gratitude to the Charity's staff by giving them gifts. While this generosity is much appreciated by the staff, for the Charity to maintain probity, there are a few simple rules which must be observed:

- no single gift should exceed £20 in value;
- gifts must be by way of expressing gratitude and not in expectation of being treated any more favourably; and
- the member of staff receiving any gift must record it in the register held by the Manager.