



WOKINGHAM
UNITED CHARITIES

WESTENDE

RESIDENTS' HANDBOOK

November 2017

**London Road, Wokingham,
Berkshire, RG40 1YA
www.wokinghamunitedcharities.org.uk**

FOREWORD

This handbook provides you with information about occupying your flat at Westende and about Wokingham United Charities which has responsibility for its management.

It also sets out the terms referred to in the Letter of Appointment that each Resident is asked to sign when allocated a flat.

The Trustees hope you will find the information helpful and that you will be happy in your flat and within the community of Westende.

Some names and contact details that you may find helpful:-

Chair of the Trustees	Mr Dennis Eyriey dennis@eyriey.co.uk	01189 780099
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Clerk to the Trustees	Mr Peter Robinson 66 Upper Broadmoor Road, Crowthorne, Berkshire, RG45 7DF peter.westende@btinternet.com	01344 762637
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Warden	Mrs Lynda Rowe warden@wokinghamunitedcharities.org.uk	01189 788757
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Out of hours and emergencies Monitoring Service Forest Care		01344 786500
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Useful phone numbers

Housing Benefit Office	01189 746000
Age UK (Bracknell)	01344 422048
Citizens Advice Bureau	08444 994126
WADE: Littlecourt	01189 787025

NB A full list of the charity's Trustees is available from the Clerk.

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1. THE CHARITY AND ITS MANAGEMENT

History

The Almshouse Charity known as Wokingham United Charities, of which Westende forms the main part, was founded in 1451 by John Westende, Clerk to the Town, when he gave two cottages and the farmland adjoining as well as eight cottages that were situated at the end of Le Peche Street (now Peach Street). These cottages were demolished in 1972 and 27 modern flats were built on the adjacent land. These are known as “Westende”.

Trustee body

Wokingham United Charities is a Company limited by guarantee (Company No. 5278018) and a registered charity No 1107171 and is the trustee for the “Westende” Almshouse Charity.

Westende flats

The flats at Westende are unfurnished and specifically designed for independent living. The aim is to provide convenient and comfortable accommodation in a setting near to the town centre which allows Residents to come and go as they please. The flats at Westende provide security and Residents are encouraged to make friends and share a wider social life through the use of the communal lounge.

There is a resident Warden and an emergency call system in every flat so that in an emergency, such as sudden illness or after a fall, a Resident can get help quickly.

Warden

Except when on holiday or on public holidays the Warden is normally on duty from 7am until 5pm on Monday to Friday (with a break for lunch). ***Please respect the Warden’s off-duty time and privacy in the Warden’s home.***

The Warden watches over the health and welfare of Residents without interfering in their lives or intruding on their privacy. The Warden will usually speak to each Resident every morning through the Emergency Call System to see that all is well. The Emergency Call system is

switched through to Forest Care – a central monitoring service – when, for whatever reason, the Warden is unavailable.

Where Residents do not wish to receive a visit or call every day they may be asked to sign a form of disclaimer. Where Trustees feel there would be a risk to the health and welfare of the Resident, they may have to insist that such calls are made.

In an emergency the Warden will call for help on behalf of the Resident and notify their family and friends.

The Warden does not provide personal care. However, on occasions the Warden may fetch shopping or prescriptions.

The Warden may not administer medications.

The Warden also looks after the building. Residents should let the Warden know immediately should they notice anything amiss or likely to prove a danger.

Please bear in mind that there may well be occasions when the Warden is unavailable either because of holiday, illness, gaps between a Warden leaving and another being appointed, or otherwise.

Furthermore no gratuity, gift or payment of any description may be offered to the Warden; and the Warden cannot advise on, or become involved in, your financial affairs in any way.

You must in all respects observe and perform the reasonable requests and instructions of the Warden.

2. TERMS OF OCCUPANCY

Letter of Appointment

You will have a copy of the Letter of Appointment, appointing you as a Resident. This sets out your terms of occupancy and it is important that you observe its provisions. You are a beneficiary of Wokingham United Charities and you are not a tenant.

Relatives and visitors

The Warden cannot take the place of your relatives or friends. We hope they will give you just the same support as they would if you were living in ordinary housing.

With their help and co-operation, and support from Social Services if necessary, we hope you will be independent for as long as you wish.

Your flat has been specially designed to meet the needs of older people – it is not really suitable to accommodate extra people and therefore visitors are not permitted to stay in a flat. There is a guest room provided (see Guest Room in Chapter 4) and applications should be made to the Clerk if residents would like to use this for visitors. A small charge may be made.

Absence from your flat

If you go away for any period, even overnight, please inform the Warden (or the Monitoring Service – Forest Care – if the Warden is off-duty).

You must not be absent from the flat for more than twenty-eight days in any consecutive period of twelve calendar months without the prior consent of the Trustees.

Consulting Residents

The Trustees will attend meetings from time to time to discuss the running of Westende with you and your neighbours. You can also talk to a Trustee in private by asking the Clerk to arrange this. Consultation and involving the Residents in the day to day running of Westende is a form of participation which will benefit all concerned. Residents cannot, under charity law, become trustees and do not, therefore, take part in decision making but Trustees welcome their views on matters affecting the quality of life at Westende.

Weekly Maintenance Contribution (WMC):

You have to pay a Weekly Maintenance Contribution which includes an amount for the hot water and heating services provided.

WMC is due to be paid monthly by standing order on the 15th of each month. You will be given one month's notice of any increase.

The amount you pay covers part of the cost of running Westende and includes:-

- Water and sewerage charges
- Repairs and maintenance of your flat and the communal areas
- Warden's salary
- Insurance of the building (NOT your contents and belongings)
- Upkeep of the garden
- Cleaning of communal areas
- Emergency call system
- Television licence (but not Sky subscriptions)
- Hot water and heating

BUT Council Tax on your flat and the cost of electricity used in your flat is not included and is your responsibility.

Housing Benefit

If your income consists of the basic retirement pension and you have little or no capital you will almost certainly be entitled to Housing Benefit to help you with your housing costs. To claim Housing Benefit you should ask for a form at the Housing Department at Wokingham Borough Council. If you have any income in addition to your basic retirement pension you may still be entitled to some help with housing costs. Again, forms to claim this are available as above.

You may also be entitled to some reduction in Council Tax – in addition to the reduction that is given if you are the sole Resident in your flat.

The Clerk to the Trustees will help if you are unsure of your entitlement or need assistance in completing the form.

Attitude

You are asked to occupy the flat and use the communal areas reasonably quietly and with consideration for the other Residents and in a manner that is compatible with the effective and harmonious running of Westende

Moving out

If you wish to move from Westende you must give the Clerk (his address is shown at the start of this booklet) written notice of at least one calendar month. During this notice period (and any longer period during which your furniture and effects remain in the flat) you will be liable for your weekly maintenance contribution (WMC) payments even if you

have already moved out. You or, in the event of death, your personal representatives, are responsible for WMC until the premises are cleared of personal possessions and the keys are returned. You or they are also responsible for ensuring that when you leave Westende the flat is completely cleared (including all soft furnishings and carpets) and thoroughly cleaned. Failure to do this may leave you or your personal representatives liable for the cost of cleaning and removal.

If you become unwell, or unable to maintain an independent life, the Trustees may suggest after giving you reasonable prior notice that you move to more suitable accommodation.

Moving flat

Residents who wish to change their accommodation within the complex may apply to the Clerk for the matter to be considered by the Trustees.

The Trustees may require you to move to another of the Westende flats when major work is being carried out. You will be given as much warning as is reasonably possible.

Pets

The policy is that no pets are allowed. No exception to this policy can be made without the prior written permission of the Trustees.

Social media

If you use social media such as Facebook or Twitter, please respect the fact that no views should be expressed via social media, about the charity, trustees, or other residents or staff and no pictures posted without the permission of the person shown in the photo.

3. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Emergency call system

You will be shown how to use this when you move into your flat. When on duty, the Warden will take all emergency calls. When the Warden is off-duty your call will be connected to a Monitoring Service and help will be with you as quickly as possible.

Please DO use the call system by day or night to seek help for sudden illness or accident

Please DO NOT tie up or hide pull-cords: they may be out of reach when you need them. If you have been supplied with an alarm button KEEP IT WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES, especially at night and on visits to the bathroom and please do not misuse the emergency call system

Safety reminders

NEVER wedge fire doors or your flat door open; when shut, they prevent fire and smoke spreading.

DO NOT leave cooking pans, especially chip pans, unattended.

Be careful of loose rugs or floor coverings: if you put a floor covering down on a hard floor ensure that it has a nonslip back.

To keep the premises clean, hygienic and safe, residents may NOT put out any food for birds, or other animals, other than nuts and fat balls which may be hung from bird feeders.

Doctor

The name of your doctor must be given to the Warden so that help may be obtained in an emergency.

If your doctor is nearby you will not need to change. If you do not have a doctor, or you are moving from another area, the Warden will be able to give you the names of doctors working in the neighbourhood who are interested in the care of older people.

You have every right to see your doctor, nurse or other carer alone, and to keep your medical affairs entirely to yourself if you wish. If you have chronic health problems, however, you may feel safer if the Warden knows about it so that sensible action may be taken in an emergency. Anything you tell the Warden will be kept confidential. It would be helpful if you could provide a letter authorising the Warden or Trustees to speak to the doctor in case of emergencies or medical difficulties.

Fire alarm

A fire alarm system has been installed at Westende to comply with current regulations. The system may be amended or updated from time to time.

If you see fire or smoke and you are near to a call point – then activate the fire control button. If this is not practicable then use the Call System to tell the Warden or the Monitoring Service.

Fire – action

a) If a fire breaks out within your flat, do not attempt to deal with it yourself. Take a warm coat and leave immediately. Close your front door securely and activate the nearest fire alarm.

b) If you hear the fire alarm stay in your flat until you are told to leave by the Warden or Rescue Authority. Have warm clothing ready. Do not open your front door – it is fireproof.

c) If you hear the fire alarm and are in any part of the building away from your flat, such as the lounge or laundry room, you should leave the building immediately and go to the fire assembly point, in the courtyard, outside Flats 21-25 (the laundry block).

Evacuation – if necessary

Put on warm clothing. Do not stop to collect personal belongings. Leave your flat and close the front door securely. Do not use the lifts. Leave the building by the nearest safe exit and go to the assembly point.

In the event of a power failure, emergency lighting will indicate the exits.

Emergencies and sickness:

If you are ill or in difficulties, the Warden will try and get in touch with your relatives, friends, the doctor, ambulance or Social Services on your behalf.

To make it possible to act quickly, the Warden will need a note of the names and contact details of your nearest relatives or friends. Please let the Warden know about any changes of address and/or telephone numbers of your relatives or friends or of your doctor.

Please make sure the Warden 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 at Westende, it may be possible to obtain equipment or to make alterations to your home to help you to live an independent life; ask the Warden or Clerk about this, but you must not make any structural alterations to your flat without approval by the Trustees (see page 15).

Security, keys and access

You will have a security fob for access key to communal areas including hallways and a key to your own flat, the locks to each flat being different.

The use of chains or bolts on doors is not permitted, and you may not change locks or fit any other lock or bolt which would prevent access in case of need. The Warden holds a pass key to the flat for emergency access or for access that may be needed when you are not present.

Please do not get extra keys made without first asking the Warden as this endangers security.

You must permit reasonable access for inspection of the flat and for repairs, improvements and redecoration to be carried out.

For your own security, be careful to close ground floor windows if you are not around. Use the spy hole to identify callers.

4. SERVICES

Communal facilities

The Residents' lounge is for the use of all Residents and their visitors. It is for you and your neighbours to decide what sort of activities you wish to arrange and to form a Residents' committee, if appropriate, to promote them.

The Warden will give help and advice if asked and should be kept informed of future plans as the Warden is responsible for the room.

A laundry is available to all Residents and carers. The Warden will show you how to use the machines and will if necessary arrange times at which they will be available to each Resident. Use of the laundry may be restricted so that you and your neighbours are not disturbed by noise. The machines are intended for Residents' laundry only. Tumble driers and outside washing lines are provided; please consult the Warden about their use.

Please do not smoke in the lounge, hallways, landings or other communal areas.

Electrical apparatus

You should not interfere with any electrical apparatus. If the supply fails for any reason, please tell the Warden.

Please make sure that all the electrical appliances in your flat are safe and in good condition.

Plumbing

In the event of a toilet becoming blocked through neglect or misuse any expense to which the Trustees may be put thereby will be charged to or payable by you.

Central heating

Each flat has its own thermostat set at a temperature to suit you and the central heating system should be adequate for your needs. Thermostats have also been fitted to each radiator so adjustments can be made where necessary within the flat. If there is a problem please advise the Warden.

Repairs and decorations

The Trustees are responsible for both external and internal repairs and decoration to your home and the communal parts. Please report all necessary work to the Warden or the Clerk, who will arrange for it to be carried out.

You will be consulted in advance about arrangements for redecoration of your flat, normally available every 7 years.

Workmen will not be allowed to enter your flat for any purpose whilst you are out, unless satisfactory prior arrangements have been made. An exception will have to be made if an emergency arises or access is required to rectify an urgent problem. Please do not let anyone into your flat unless you know who they are. When in doubt, call the Warden.

Alterations or improvements to your flat

You may not carry out or make any alteration or redecoration to the flat nor alter the plumbing or electrical installation without the prior consent of the Trustees. You will be liable for the cost of making good any damage caused to the Flat by you (fair wear and tear and damage by insured risks excepted). You should bring to the attention of the Warden any defect or potential danger in the flat or in the communal areas as soon as possible.

Any such work that the Trustees consent to must be undertaken by a contractor approved by the Trustees. No compensation for such work will be paid when you leave. If you wish to use your own contractor, friend or family members, you must obtain prior written permission from the Trustees.

Insurance

The Charity insures the buildings but you are strongly advised to take out contents insurance to include your furniture and personal effects and accidental damage as neither the Trustees nor the Warden can accept any responsibility for any loss or damage to your personal belongings or effects (or those of any visitor) at Westende howsoever arising.

Please do not keep more cash in your home than you need for your day to day expenses. Please put the rest in a bank or building society. Do not ask the Warden to take care of money or valuables for you as she is not allowed to do so.

Television

A communal television licence has been taken out by the Trustees. There is therefore no need for you to obtain a television licence of your own.

There is a communal television aerial which is suitable to receive digital signals.

Satellite channels are available but any subscription charge incurred is the responsibility of the Resident.

Please be considerate of your neighbours in the use of TVs, or any other equipment.

Telephone

There is a landline telephone connection in every flat but any rental or other charge incurred is the responsibility of the Resident.

Broadband

Residents may install a broadband connection in their flat and any rental or other charge incurred is the responsibility of the Resident. There is a wireless router in the office which gives a good signal in the lounge. The Warden will supply the password on request.

Cleaning

You are responsible for keeping your flat clean. If this becomes difficult please tell the Warden.

Cleaning the communal lounge, kitchen and communal toilet, general areas and external windows is arranged by the Trustees. The cost of this is included in your weekly maintenance contribution. Please play your part and keep the communal areas clean and tidy.

Rubbish and recycling

Rubbish bins are provided for household rubbish. Please make sure that the rubbish area is kept clean and tidy. No liquid should be deposited in the dustbins and all kitchen refuse should be wrapped before putting it in the bin.

Our policy for recycling follows the Local Authority's recommendations and will be explained to incoming residents.

Nothing should be left for collection other than in the designated bins, or bags, and all legislation must be adhered to. For example, electrical appliances cannot be disposed of in household rubbish. You must make your own arrangement for the safe disposal of such items.

Gardens

The garden has been laid out for the use and benefit of all Residents. Most downstairs flats have adjacent areas which Residents are encouraged to maintain themselves. The major work of grass cutting is the Trustees' responsibility. If you would like to help with the gardens, please ask the Warden how to arrange this.

Lifts

The first floor flats can be accessed by lift. The lifts are for both residents and visitors to use.

To call the lift, press the call button, and keep it pressed. When the lift is at your floor, open the door and go in. When inside, to operate the lift, press the appropriate button and keep it pressed. When you arrive at the floor, release the button, open the door and shut the door behind you, making sure it is firmly shut (if it has not clicked shut, the lift cannot be called from the other floor).

In an emergency or if the lift stops while you are using it, press the emergency call button which will connect you to the Warden. If the Warden is not on duty you will be asked to press the button again and you will be connected to the Monitoring Service.

Do not use the lift if there is a fire.

Large furniture and inherently dangerous items or substances

These are small flats and the amount and size of any furniture in the flat must be appropriate. Trustees may request the removal within forty-eight hours of any furniture or other items which, in their absolute discretion, is considered to be a fire risk or other hazard. In particular do not leave items on the landings, which are areas of higher than normal fire risk.

Electric heaters and paraffin or portable gas heaters are not allowed as they can be dangerous. The Warden must be consulted and the Trustees' consent obtained before using any additional form of heating.

Parking of vehicles

Car parking at the back of the Westende flats is limited and unless the Trustees have given you a parking permit neither you, your friends, family nor other visitors may park a vehicle in the car park at the rear of Westende for longer than 60 minutes in any 24 hour period. There are conditions attached to the issue of a car parking permit and the Trustees reserve the right to withdraw the car parking permit at any time.

In cases of need, the trustees may alternatively provide you with a six monthly season ticket for the Easthampstead Road East car park, adjacent to the flats.

Please park with consideration for both residents and visitors and ensure the no parking areas are kept clear of vehicles. Access may be needed by ambulances or fire engines in an emergency. A charge may be made for a residents' parking permit.

Mobility scooters

You should not park mobility scooters (also known as mobility assistance buggies, or just buggies) at Westende without the Trustees' prior written permission. The Trustees will endeavour to co-operate with any such request if they are able but the mobility scooter must be stored and charged in the designated area. The Trustees accept no responsibility for the loss of, or damage to, mobility scooters and residents are advised to arrange their own insurance for the scooter, covering loss, damage and third party liability.

5. GENERAL INFORMATION

Complaints procedure

Many people are reluctant to complain, but the Trustees can only resolve problems, and improve the service they offer, if you speak up when things go wrong.

If you have a complaint or a problem has arisen which cannot be readily solved by a discussion with the other party or the Warden, the following complaints procedure should be adopted. This procedure should be followed if any Resident wishes to raise a complaint in connection with the occupation of his or her flat or about services provided by the charity relating to Westende.

- Minor matters such as small maintenance items, should be referred to the Warden when they arise. They should be attended to promptly. If not, please contact the Clerk.
- If the Warden is unable to resolve minor matters; or, if there is a persistent problem or a matter affecting health and safety, the Resident should refer this to the Clerk. 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 Clerk is unable to deal with your complaint satisfactorily or if you have a complaint about staff employed by the charity, or

another resident, you should put your complaint in writing to the Chair of the Trustees, with a 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 will write to you to advise of the action taken to resolve the complaint and to notify you of the decision made.

Wills

You are strongly advised to make a Will and Lasting Power of Attorney and let the Warden know where those may be found. If you wish to leave personal property to a relative or friend a Will is essential.

The Trustees would be most appreciative if you left a legacy to Wokingham United Charities to enable others to enjoy the facilities, and quality of life in the future. The suggested wording so to do would be as follows:-

“I give, free of tax, the sum of £..... to Wokingham United Charities (Charity No 1107171) for their general purposes and I declare that the receipt of the Clerk should be a good and valid discharge to my Trustees”.

A solicitor is the best person to help you make a Will, and Lasting Power of Attorney, and if you require assistance in finding one, we suggest you contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau. Ask the Warden for help, if you find this difficult.

6. REVISIONS TO THE RESIDENTS' HANDBOOK

In the interests of recognising and effecting desirable or operational changes the Trustees reserve the right to make reasonable changes or additions to the provisions in this Handbook. If they do so then a revised copy of the Handbook will be given to each Resident – who should then comply with such provisions that will supersede those of any earlier Handbook.