# Disaster Policy & Escalation Procedure

## Municipal and Carter Owen Almshouse

Bree Norton-Smith - 13th June 2025

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Municipal and Owen Carter Almshouse Charity recognises its responsibility to take all possible steps to reduce risks to:

- People
- Property
- The Charity's financial stability and business continuity
- Prepare appropriate policies, procedures and contingency plans.

**2. Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the board to review this policy regularly. The Chairwoman **Carol Evans**, in liaison with the Board of Trustees where possible, has the authority to take decisions on behalf of the Trustees in an emergency situation, to make decisions on site, and to ensure decisions are implemented immediately.

2.1 The main purpose of the Escalation Policy is to enable the almshouses to:

- Continue to operate as normally as possible.
- Return to normal operation with as short a delay as possible.
- Cause the least possible inconvenience to employees and residents.
- Minimise the risks of accident, injury or ill health to all.

**3. Risks To People**

3.1. Health and Safety Policy
The Charity will maintain health and safety policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed by the Board and meet any current legislation.

3.2. Other Policies and Procedures. The Charity will maintain policies and procedures to reduce risks to people as appropriate to almshouses. Municipal and Owen Carter Almshouse Charity follows best practice guidance from the Almshouse Association.

3.3. Influenza and other Pandemics. The Charity has a linked emergency plan for influenza or other pandemics.

**4. Procedure Major incidents and Emergencies.**

4.1 In the case of a major incident, such as a fire or flood, staff and/or residents should:

1) Call the appropriate emergency services on **999**
2) Proceed to the assembly point: **The Car Park by the Garages.** If appropriate, a member of staff will open the hall for assembly if it is safe to do so.
3) Contact BCP Council's Lifeline service for help through pressing the pendant or ringing them on **0330 123 3293**, who will contact a member of staff, the chairperson or Clerk.
4) If a resident contacts BCP Lifeline/Appello directly, and Emergency services are contacted or assistance is required, they will contact the warden during AND out of office hours to inform them of the situation. If it is out of hours, assistance is provided at the discretion of the warden.
5) A 'grab bag' should be stored in the office which is regularly updated, with details of residents, key phone numbers and provisions.

4.2. Contacts

If necessary, contact the following for emergencies:

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|---|---|---|
| Warden: | **Pat Anderson** | **07970956459** |
| Clerk: | **Bree Norton-Smith** | **07480643426** |
| Chair: | **Carol Evans** | **07734907093** |
| Vice Chair: | **Rev. Lucy Holt** | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Bournemouth Water** | **08005 878 979** |
| **Wessex Water (sewerage)** | **0345 600 4 600** |
| **Southern Electric (SSE Power Distribution)** | **0800 072 7282** |
| **Environment Agency** | **0800 80 70 60.** |

At the earliest possible time:
○ The warden should contact the Chairman of the Municipal and Owen Carter Almshouse Charity (or, in their absence, the Vice Chairman) and the Clerk if required.

○ A member of staff or Trustee will contact our insurers **Grout Insurance Brokers**:
Policy Number: **DR0043A**
Telephone: **020 8686 1708**

○ Next of Kin of residents, if appropriate

○ The Welfare Trustee Team, if appropriate.

4.3 In the event of residents needing emergency shelter, the following areas can be used:

○ The Communal Lounge (if it has been declared safe to do so)
○ Local Authorities have a statutory duty to assist in the re-housing of residents in the event of a disaster.
○ In the event of temporary accommodation being required, assistance should be sought from BCP Council, and local hotels.

## 5. Risks To Property

5.1. Maintenance: Policies and procedures are maintained to ensure that properties are maintained effectively to a high standard. Emphasis is placed on increasing planned and preventative maintenance and servicing to minimise the need for responsive or emergency maintenance.

In the event of a maintenance issue:

Maintenance: Guy from “Handy Guys” on **07557407583**
Electrical: Jason Bridges **07795803729**
Emergency Plumber: Ace Plumbers **01202 398665**

5.2. Misuse: Residents and staff must be properly instructed in the use and care of the Charity’s property.
5.3. Vandalism and Criminal Damage. Staff and residents should report the presence of any unauthorised persons on site to the office, and the details of any such reports, from staff or residents, should be recorded. The police should be contacted if they find any person committing vandalism or behaving aggressively.

5.4. Risks to the Charity’s Financial Stability and Business Continuity:
Financial policies and procedures. Policies and procedures will be maintained to ensure that the opportunity for fraud is minimised, and that the charity’s financial affairs are properly planned, conducted, recorded, and audited.

5.5. Insurances: Adequate insurances will be maintained and reviewed annually. Insurance details are accessible to all Trustees via the shared electronic files.

**Grout Insurance Brokers**:
Policy Number: **DR0043A**
Telephone: **020 8686 1708**

5.3. Alternative Office Premises and Data Security. In the event of the loss of the general office, office work can be conducted remotely. Copies of digital data is stored safely and staff can work remotely.

## 6. Risks to Losing Key Personnel

6.1. Mitigation:

- Consistent document systems, plans, policies and projects are in place and updated regularly.
- Annual objectives are linked to the Business Plan.
- Agreed notice periods.
- An Internal Audit process undertaken to ensure that Staff & Trustees are aware of the relevant skills required.
- Accessible digital data shared safely amongst Staff & Trustees.
- All digital data is available and stored and backed up by our IT Support
- Key safes are located outside of the office and hall with access available via BCP Lifeline are aware of (Tel: 0330 123 3293).

6.2. Temporary arrangements with Deputy Warden (yet to be confirmed) in the event of a loss of key staff. BCP Council's Lifeline service also have live data concerning residents under a GDPR compliant data sharing agreement.

6.2.1. Phase one - 1st week of Absence

• Chairman (or, in their absence, Vice Chairman) to make contact with Eventide or Almshouse Association to request assistance.
• BCP Lifeline would be the conduit for any resident enquiries
• Lettings, Void works and any programmed planned works to be put on hold by Trustees.
• A Finance Trustee should be trained in key finance tasks. In the event of staff being absent, the Finance Committee will be responsible for core finance tasks to be completed in the short term. Signatories of the Charity are able to access bank accounts remotely.
• Welfare Trustee Team may assist with Residents e.g. safeguarding, ASB, welfare.

6.2.2. Phase two – 2nd week of Absence

• Trustees of Eventide Homes will have had time to consider short-term measures ahead of 'normal business' resuming. The Chairperson, in their absence, the Vice Chairman, will evaluate the allocation of core tasks amongst the Trustees and identifying any gaps to be filled externally.

• Consider employing temporary staff via agency

**7. This policy has been approved for issue by the board of trustees of the Municipal and Owen Carter Almshouse**

Signature……………………………………………………………………………………

Name…………………………………………………………………………………………

Date.....................................................................................................................

**Review date:**