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# Decoration Policy

## Municipal and Owen Carter Almshouse Reg. 232200

Bree Norton-Smith - 9 October 2023

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### 1. Statement of Policy

The charity has recently undertaken a refurbishment of almost all properties - including new wet rooms and kitchens to bring all properties up to a good standard. There are just three properties left to complete as of August 2025.

This policy clarifies the residents obligations to upkeep the standard of their homes and where necessary the circumstances where the charity may issue decoration allowances. This policy applies to all residents and beneficiaries of The Municipal and Owen Carter Almshouse.

### 2. Obligations

Residents are responsible for decorating their homes every **seven years**. Annual extensions may be granted if the Charity determines that decoration is not required, subject to an inspection.

This includes;

- Repainting of all rooms, inclusive of woodwork and skirting boards
- Re-carpet or replacement of flooring (wood/lino or otherwise)
- Bathrooms re-grouted or tiled / panelled where appropriate.
- Kitchens re-grouted or tiled / panelled where appropriate
- New bathroom / kitchen units and fittings must be agreed with the warden in writing.
- Wallpaper is not permitted under any circumstances.

All refurbishments and decoration must be agreed by the warden in writing prior to any works being completed. This is to ensure the maintenance and standards of the Almshouses are upheld.

### 3. Decoration Assistance Policy

The Decoration Assistance Policy is to assist residents who are unable to meet their obligations in decorating their home and, in doing so, assist in the efficient and effective maintenance of the Charity's homes.

Decoration allowances are intended as a contribution towards the cost of materials and equipment needed to carry out internal redecoration work. The allowances are not intended to meet the full costs involved.

The award of a decoration allowance does not remove the need for residents to adequately insure the contents of their homes from damage nor ensure that their home is maintained in a clean and responsible manner.

#### **4. Decoration Allowance**

4.1. A decoration allowance may be awarded in the following circumstances:

- When decoration has not taken place within the home for at least 7 years as per the Residents' Handbook, where a resident has been unable to meet their obligation.
- To qualify for this service the resident(s) must be able to demonstrate that they do not have the full means to pay
- When a resident moves into a property where the standard of decoration is below a reasonable standard.

4.2. A resident request for a transfer to another property may be suspended from offers if the current decoration of his/her home is not of a reasonable standard until this action has been taken to address this breach of their occupancy agreement.

4.3. A decoration allowance will not be awarded:

- Where a resident has caused damage or has neglected the interior decoration of the property over and above fair wear and tear, in the Charity's opinion, which shall be final. This includes any properties that have evidence of smoke damage.  
**Smoking is not permitted inside any Almshouse since October 2023.**
- To change the interior decoration of a property because it is not to the incoming resident's personal taste (unless the decoration is a strong colour that would prove costly to change, for example black);
- To act as payment after an incident a resident should have been insured for.
- No allowance for redecoration will be awarded for a room where the Charity, or its contractor, has completed decoration which the Charity deem acceptable.
- Residents being awarded decoration allowances will meet, as per clause 5.2, at a local supplier where the agreed materials will be purchased

#### **5. Assistance To Decorate**

The cost of assistance will be far greater than offering a decorating allowance. Where a resident indicates that they will have difficulty carrying out decoration works themselves because of a disability, or physical or mental impairment, the Charity will however, offer a decoration service.

The Charity's decoration service will take the form of application of emulsion paint from a choice of colours to walls, and white gloss paint to skirtings and internal doors.

To qualify for this service the resident(s) must qualify under each of the four conditions:

1. Have a disability, or physical or mental impairment.
2. Be able to demonstrate that they do not have the means to pay for the decoration themselves following a financial assessment
3. Be in receipt of benefits, or registered blind, which identifies a disability, or physical or mental impairment, or have a special social or medical reason to have the decoration work undertaken by The Charity. Most residents should be eligible for an attendance allowance which can be used towards employing someone to assist in decoration.
4. Have no member of the household who could reasonably be expected to carry out the work. The Charity will use its discretion to establish eligibility on this ground.

Residents will be expected to allow the Charity's contractor access to the property to carry out the decoration works.

## **6. Decoration Allowance Rates**

The amount of allowance a qualifying resident is eligible for will depend on the size/ number of rooms that need to be decorated after repair and will be calculated on a room-by-room basis. The table below shows rates per room and will be used as guidance when identifying the amount of decoration allowance:

- Lounge – up to £80
- Bedroom - up to £80
- Kitchen - up to £80
- Bathroom - up to £60
- Hall, Stairs, Landing - up to £60

A member of staff will order the paint/materials at a specified local retailer from a selection provided to the resident. A Trustee will inspect the property to confirm that the decoration allowance has been spent appropriately and that the decorating material supplied has been used at the property.

An annual review of all decoration allowance rates and this Policy will be carried out by Trustees.

The Charity agree an annual budget for Decorating Allowance & Assistance approved by Trustees. Applications will be considered once a year in October so applications must be received by the **31<sup>st</sup> September**. Awards will be presented the following January.