**Governance Checklist**

**Almshouse Association Model Template**

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| 1. **Constitution, Trustee Body and Trusteeship** | Met | Partly  met | Not  met |
| The trustees have a complete up-to-date copy of the governing document. |  |  |  |
| The trustee body is constituted as set out in the governing document, all trustees have been properly appointed in accordance with the governing document and their terms of office have not expired. |  |  |  |
| The trustee body is in regular contact with any organisations that have the rights to nominate trustees. |  |  |  |
| The trustee body is fit for purpose; members have the right blend of knowledge, skills and experience necessary to take the charity forward effectively. |  |  |  |
| Prospective trustees are vetted to ensure that they are not disqualified from acting as trustees of the charity. |  |  |  |
| All trustees have received an induction and have a copy of the charity’s current governing document, latest accounts and all relevant induction information. [SEE: TRUSTEE INDUCTION POLICY](https://www.almshouses.org/model-policies-and-templates/?doing_wp_cron=1619427788.6463871002197265625000) |  |  |  |
| All trustees have a clear understanding of their legal duties, responsibilities and the legal framework in which the charity operates and take professional advice when necessary. |  |  |  |
| The charity is independent from the influence of any external third party and is not carrying out the policies or directions of others. |  |  |  |
| Learning and development needs of the trustee body or individual trustees have been identified and plans are in place to provide all necessary training. |  |  |  |
| A succession plan is in place to replace current trustees upon retirement. |  |  |  |
| The constitution has been reviewed to ensure that it is up to date and appropriate for the governance of the charity (e.g., the provisions for meetings reflect the trustee body’s actual practice). |  |  |  |
| The charity’s entry on the register of charities is up to date and complete. |  |  |  |

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| 1. **Purpose and direction** | Met | Partly  met | Not  met |
| The trustees ensure that our charity's mission and planned activities are within the purposes set out in its governing document (rules), including:   * the provision of almshouse accommodation as specified by the objects of the charity * residents are only appointed if they meet the qualifying criteria and are appointed per the procedures set out in the charity’s governing document and * the services provided (or planned) by the charity are consistent with the purposes stated in the charity’s governing document. |  |  |  |
| We regularly review our charity's purposes to ensure that the charity can effectively meet its objects/purposes as set down in the governing document, including:   * the area of benefit defined in the charity’s governing document; * the qualification criteria for residents defined in the governing document * the nature of the services that can be provided in furtherance of the charity’s purposes. |  |  |  |
| 1. **Management and control** | Met | Partly  met | Not  met |
| We have effective written policies and procedures in place (as necessary) to cover:   * Appointment of beneficiaries/residents * Financial control of funds and bank accounts * Conflicts of interest * Health & Safety * Data Protection * Safeguarding * Complaints procedure * Staff management and performance procedure * Investment policy * Reserves policy (including cyclical and emergency repair funds) * Data Protection and Privacy * All other necessary policies and procedures |  |  |  |
| Title to all of the charity’s assets is registered in either the name of the current trustees or, if appropriate, the Official Custodian for Charities |  |  |  |

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| 1. **Long-term planning** | Met | Partly  met | Not  met |
| We undertake regular research into factors including:   * the number of potential beneficiaries in the area of benefit * the number of residential units available for accommodation in the area * the nature and suitability of the accommodation (for example flats, bedsits or homes) * the use of any of the charity’s surplus land or redundant buildings * the potential for collaboration or merger with other almshouse charities. |  |  |  |
| We have a long-term strategy to maintain or replace the charity’s almshouse accommodation property, including a reserves policy that will enable the charity to pay for future building works (for example replacement roof or heating system). |  |  |  |
| We have plans in place to overcome any of the issues or concerns identified by our research. |  |  |  |
| We have carried out our quinquennial survey |  |  |  |

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| 1. **Risk management** | Met | Partly  met | Not  met |
| We regularly review and assess the risks faced by the charity, including those arising from the charity’s accommodation, such as:   * the structural soundness of its buildings * any income and expenditure shortfall – short-term and long-term risk * financial security – risk of fraud * its compliance with health and safety legislation * the security of the residents * its ability to carry out the objects and purpose * storage of data |  |  |  |
| We are aware of the need to identify and guard against unmanaged conflicts of interest, including:   * Any relationship between trustees (and the trustees’ families) and the residents * Any conflict of loyalty arising from the trustees’ relationship with another body, their employer, or with the local community. |  |  |  |
| We regularly review our financial circumstances and plan accordingly, including setting sufficient levels of weekly maintenance contribution to cover:   * the recommended payments to ERF, CMF and routine maintenance * ensuring a strong financial situation including the ability to service loans * any potential to re-develop or maximize the number of almshouses. |  |  |  |

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| 1. **Accountability & transparency** | Met | Partly  met | Not  met |
| We prepare our charity's annual report and accounts following the SORP and file them on time. |  |  |  |
| All residents have been issued with a letter of appointment (which is consistent with the terms prescribed by the charity’s governing document) and a residents handbook which give clear guidance about:   * the terms on which they occupy their accommodation * the rules they must observe * the circumstances in which they can be required to leave their accommodation.   Records of this documentation have been kept. |  |  |  |
| We follow a written policy, consistent with the charity’s governing document, for determining eligibility to reside in the almshouse, including:   * guidance on assessing prospective applicants’ eligibility * reviews of the eligibility of existing residents. |  |  |  |
| We maintain links with our community, beneficiaries and their families. |  |  |  |
| We are transparent in our decision-making and record all decisions. |  |  |  |
| We have a record of all Serious Incident Reports made to the Charity Commission |  |  |  |