

Angel Yard Policy for Neighbourliness in Times of Need.



This policy derives from a Members' meeting in February 2024.

This policy could be understood as equivalent to neighbourliness in a suburban street, or small village, where people might *'look out'* for each other but not specifically *'look after'* one another.

As with any social situation, there can be no presumption of any resident or neighbour assisting any other. However, in a cohousing community over time, mutual friendships, neighbourliness and trust develop between people. Then a spoken agreement may develop between specific people where help and support that is needed may be mutually asked for or offered.

This policy looks specifically at Angel Yard neighbours. Friendships may of course also develop with neighbours in local streets.

Neighbourliness has a working definition here of:

- being friendly to your neighbours;
- available to your neighbours for mutually agreed help and support;
- being involved in aspects of the Angel Yard cohousing community.

In times of Need

The wording 'in times of need' is suggested, avoiding the term 'care' (used by some other cohousing) which may be associated in people's minds with especially elderly care situations.

Situations

This policy relates to any situation in which a resident may,

- ask for / receive an offer of / need help or support;
- with their day to day living;
- which is non-medical and non-nursing;
- for a short temporary or longer and ongoing time.

For example, this might be due to: accident (e.g. broken leg), short term illness (e.g. flu, Covid), mental health (e.g. stress, grieving, depression), longer-term ongoing incapacity (e.g. terminal illness, dementia, learning disabilities), childbirth/childcare, and etc.

Supportive activities might include:

- shopping
- lift to hospital appointment
- some hot meals for specific reasons
- childminding
- companionship

Greater needs: Legal considerations

Situations of greater need may arise for a resident. While such situations would be of significant personal consequence, within a cohousing community they could also affect:

- the social relationship of both the resident in need and other Angel Yard residents (e.g. the absence of health directives by a person with terminal illness, being regularly visited by an Angel Yard friend, who knows they have said they don't want further treatment, but there is nothing written down or discussed with distant family and medical services);
- and may affect the financial functioning of Angel Yard.

For these reasons when considering purchasing a property and becoming a resident member of the Angel Yard community, we encourage purchasers to put in place the following legal documents as appropriate:

- Will
- Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA), health and welfare, property and financial affairs

<https://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney>

- Advance decisions, Living wills, Advance statements

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/end-of-life-planning/>

<https://www.compassionatecommunitieseast.com/home>

Angel Yard community also suggests and encourages the importance of residents having Next of Kin (NOK) and/ or 'In case of Emergency' (ICE) contact details carried on their person in their day to day life, that others could access if they had to. This might be a card in a purse, wallet or information in the front of a small handbag diary, or on a phone or smartphone. There are ways to add this information to smartphones (including brief medical details if wished) so that first responders and similar can see the contact details even if the screen is

locked. For example, of many websites, see:

<https://sgwaac.com.au/resources/checklists-links-and-handly-documents/how-to-add-emergency-information-to-your-phone-s-lock-screen>

Residents may *in addition* choose to provide a trusted AY neighbour/s with this information or add their NOK / ICE details to the Angel Yard safe storage (yet to be defined).

Greater needs: support

Angel Yard cohousing does not provide medical and nursing services.

For greater needs and involving medical and nursing services, whoever would normally act in the situation *would still need to do* so for this person living within cohousing. This would, for example, be *family, Next of Kin (NOK), GP and hospital services, social services, etc for the individual situation*. A few agreed neighbours may also choose/offer to respond as extra help at an appropriate level by agreement with the main care person.

Similarly, for a resident who the family/main carers decide the cohousing situation is no longer suitable/sufficient, then that *decision rests e.g. with the resident/family/NOK/legal power of attorney*.

A further situation may arise where a resident develops greater needs and their non-resident family or next of kin are not aware of this. The needs may become beyond the capacity of the agreed neighbour/s in Angel Yard and or affect the financial functioning of Angel Yard. In this instance for the safety and well-being of that resident and all concerned, at the request of the resident or in an emergency, a small “Extra needs/neighbourliness” team could be formed to liaise with the resident, the next of kin/emergency contact person and the wider Angel Yard community.

Approved by Angel Yard Members’ meeting 15 February 2024 as “good enough for now, safe enough to try”.

Review date: March 2026