



**THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ALMSHOUSES  
(THE ALMSHOUSE ASSOCIATION)**

Registered Charity Number 245668 Company Number 04678214  
**Minutes of the Sixty Ninth Annual General Meeting held via Zoom  
Conferencing Platform on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020**

**Due to the Covid pandemic this meeting was held online in accordance with the  
Charity Commission's guidelines**

**1. Introduction: Chair of the Board – Mrs Elizabeth Fathi.**

The Chair welcomed all members and outlined the procedures:

Votes have already been cast and each decision will be recorded in turn with a proposer and seconder and the number of votes for and against provided.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held at The Worshipful Company of Haberdashers', Haberdashers' Hall, 18 West Smithfield, London EC1A 9QH on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2019, were voted upon and agreed to be correct and accurate.

**Proposed:** Richard Knipe  
**Seconded:** Andrew Barnes  
**Carried and adopted**

**2. Election of Board Members**

The change of Articles made in 2018 restricts re-appointments to 3 terms of 3 years. The nominations are within that context and overseen by the Nominations Committee.

Each member for re-election has over 95% of votes in favour.

Elizabeth Fathi  
Willie Hartley-Russell  
John Broughton

**Proposed:** Debbie Beck  
**Seconded:** Margaret Stewart  
**Carried and Adopted**

The Chair thanked and congratulated the re-appointees.

**3. Presentation and Adoption of the 2019 Annual Report and Accounts**

Mr S J Ling – Honorary Treasurer

Simon Ling outlined the key issues on income and expenditure, commenting that the expenditure was in line with the previous year. Fundraising income had been impacted and is reduced from last year. The Association has reviewed its fundraising strategy. Grants to members have shown a notable increase when compared to 2018. There has been a reduction in pension related payments where a one-off pension payment made in 2018 was not repeated in 2019. The reduction in income resulted in a deficit before the net gains on investments.

The markets rallied in 2019 compared to those witnessed in 2018 and the Association reported a net gain on investments.

Loans to members resulted in a decrease in cash balances at the end of 2019 when compared to the figure recorded in 2018.

Covid 19 has affected the financial position of the Association, however the Honorary Treasurer concluded that the Association continues to be financially strong and well positioned to continue supporting member needs by implementing the approved strategy.

No questions were asked and the motion was proposed to adopt.

**Proposed:** Richard Knipe

**Seconded:** Andrew Barnes

**Carried and Adopted:**

**4. Re-appointment of Auditors recommended: Buzzacott LLP**

**Proposed:** Richard Knipe

**Seconded:** David Healey

**Carried and Adopted:**

**5. The Change of name from the National Association of Almshouses to The Almshouse Association is proposed.**

**Proposed:** Margaret Stewart

**Seconded:** David Healey

**Carried and Adopted:**

**6. CEO Update: Nick Phillips**

Nick Phillips spoke of the true sense of community within the Almshouse movement and thanks were extended to our members for the difference they make to the residents they support.

Nick thanked the Board and staff for their indefatigable hard work and flexibility during recent months. The whole team have shown commitment and resilience.

Throughout the Covid 19 pandemic, the team at Head Office have worked calmly and positively to ensure sound, credible information has and is available to all of our members. The recent member survey revealed 95% of our members feel positive and proud to be part of the Almshouse movement.

2019 was a positive and productive year and the start of the five year strategy. The three main pillars of the strategy are:

- Service provision to our members.
- Raising awareness of Almshouses and the excellent value they provide to the community.
- Influence and Engagement in Government.

National media coverage has been excellent with 5 positive articles. Website traffic increased by over 20%. The team providing support to our members are dedicated to ensuring the highest levels of service are attained.

Standard of Almshouse Management workshops held in 2019 proved very helpful in the formation of the new document, work is well underway and will complete in 2021.

The Customer Relationship Management system was introduced in 2019, this will mean we are less reliant on paper files and the information contained therein. The new system will improve turnaround times for our member enquiries and will allow for greater recording mechanisms.

Loans and Grants are increasing year on year with a substantial uptake this year. As applications are reviewed, case studies are formulated.

The new branding sponsored by CCLA has ensured we have a good strong brand to take us forward.

We remain an active voice in government. Many of our members have been affected by selective licencing and we have galvanised support from MPs, Lords and other interested parties and after review, Almshouses are now exempt from a large part of selected licencing. This was a major achievement.

Interest in Almshouses is growing both in the history and impact that they have on local communities. We are seeing many new Almshouses being built up and down the country and we continue to raise the profile of Almshouses as an exemplar form of housing.

The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will provide an excellent platform to relaunch the message of Almshouses and the greater value they add to community housing. Our new Campaign Manager, Gerry Harmon is keen to connect with member charities to discuss how we can engage with you and your wider communities, to help build your Boards with the recruitment of new trustees and to help with fundraising.

Work with both national and local government is underway. The recent white paper which came out from national government could have big implications for Almshouses and will be met with a robust response. A team is being built around this so that there can be a clear and consistent message to government. Local government have been approached and a new APPG (all party parliamentary group) will start in November.

## **7. Chairman Update: Elizabeth Fathi**

Elizabeth Fathi presented a clear view of where the Almshouse movement sits in the wider affordable homes landscape and offered a strong message for a positive future. The Almshouse model nurtures communities and speaks of belonging. Alongside those Almshouses dating back to the 1100s, still in existence today, are the new innovative

developments being built right now to house more residents and spread the word. Furthermore, our collective vision extends beyond new 21<sup>st</sup> century builds to new benefactors who are much-needed to add further stability to the enduring Almshouse model, of which we can all be proud.

Patrick Vernon has joined us as a new Ambassador to champion that very special purpose that unites us.

We are in the process of talking to potential benefactors and urge you all to look for benefactors within your locality communities.

The meeting closed and thanks were given to members for the care given to 35,000 Almshouses across England and Wales.

Notification of the sad passing of Sue Turner, Associate Director was received this morning. Sue was a long standing member of the team and her passion and professionalism was outstanding. Sue will be greatly missed.