



the almshouses Gazette

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Report shows benefits of almshouse movement

A report commissioned by The Almshouse Association and carried out by Housing LIN has shown that the almshouse movement "generates financial benefits to the social care and health economy of c.£1,340 per almshouse resident, per annum". In total, this equates to £43.2m every year!

In addition, the report highlighted added benefits of:

- freeing up approx. 4,000 homes
- c.£56m per annum of value in employed staff and voluntary work
- lower likelihood of residential care admission
- lower likelihood of loneliness
- reduction in the number of GP and A&E visits.



The Almshouse Association and the wider movement has always known the value that almshouses provide but with this report we now have some firm data which can strengthen our argument for greater support and recognition. We are very proud of this report and

would like to thank Housing LIN for their work and to members for their contributions.

The full report can be found on The Almshouse Association website at www.almshouses.org/news/association-releases-new-research-on-financial-benefits-of-almshouses/

Busy month for Royal Patron HRH The Duke of Gloucester

The Almshouse Association is always very grateful to our Royal Patrons for their commitment to the Association, our members and the almshouse movement. In the Association's 75th year, in particular, despite all the restrictions and numerous changes to plans as a result of the pandemic, they pulled out all the stops to take part in almshouse celebrations.

As well as personal letters and a video recording, HRH The Prince of Wales visited the Bond's Hospital Almshouses in Coventry in May and HRH The Duke of Gloucester had a busy September, making special visits to three almshouse charities!



photo (foreground, right): HRH The Duke of Gloucester with (from left, foreground) The Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Mrs Jennifer Tolhurst; Nick Phillips, CEO The Almshouse Association; and Michael Siggs, Clerk to Winnocks and Kendalls Almshouse Charity; with trustees and residents.

Colchester Almshouses were delighted to host the Association's Royal Vice Patron on September 9. Together with the Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Mrs Jennifer Tolhurst, HRH was welcomed by Nick Phillips, CEO of The Almshouse Association, before being introduced to many of the supporters, trustees and residents of St Mary Magdalen almshouses, who were celebrating their 900 year anniversary. Supporters included the Mayor of Colchester, Cllr Robert Davidson and his wife, Elizabeth, the

Mayoress; the Bishop of Colchester, Rt Revd Roger Morris; and the High Steward of Colchester, Sir Bob Russell (a former MP and Mayor of Colchester).

The Duke said how astonishing it was to find an almshouse established during the time of the Crusades still providing a home to those in housing need.

One resident, who moved into St Mary Magdalen House in January, said he was hugely grateful for the feeling of security that living in the

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The Almshouse Association's 75th Anniversary celebrations continued during the summer and autumn with a host of events organised by members throughout the country. Turn to the centre pages for a taste of some of the parties which have brightened up our year.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S COMMENT

Firstly, Happy New Year to you all!

Let's hope that 2022 gives us all an easier time of it than 2020 and 2021.

At the time of writing my comment for our winter Gazette, Christmas and the New Year are still ahead of us and it is Trustees Week!

On social media there is much being said about the role of trustee and volunteer but, and forgive me for taking a very personal view, there is a rather twee sense of "jolly well done!" associated with volunteering roles. I am often frustrated by the lack of value that goes along with being a volunteer and a trustee. Somehow, the fact of not being paid for the role rather than raising its status in some eyes diminishes it. The only difference between a volunteer and an employee is often the money. In fact, in many organisations the trustee and volunteer roles carry equal or sometimes more responsibility than that of the employee, ie. governors in schools, special police and even in the health service.

The role of a trustee carries responsibility and requires real commitment; sometimes a level of commitment that a salary alone could not motivate people to do. For the trustee of an almshouse, not only is there the responsibilities of today but, in the centuries old game of pass the parcel, it is now your turn to protect and improve the charity that was started many years ago and ensure it is handed over to the next generation of trustees with the same passion and commitment.

We know that being an almshouse charity trustee is not easy and certainly not for everyone but, for those that are giving up their time and taking responsibility, year in, year out, it makes such a difference to the resi-

dents - today and for generations to come.

I am sure the only thanks many trustees want is to know that their residents are happy in homes that are well run. They will also gain satisfaction from knowing that they will hand them over to the next generation of trustees as good or even better than how they found them. So, want it or not, "Thank you!". Without your commitment, the thousand year old movement stops and dies, so allow us to add our thanks to the thanks we hear from residents all the time.

As to the future, how do we ensure that the next generation of trustees are there to take over from you? What does your succession plan look like?

Let's make 2022 a year to build the boards of the future with your inspiration and a bit of help from us. We will continue to raise the profile and value of almshouses and work to attract



Elizabeth Fathi, Chair and Nick Phillips, CEO of the Almshouse Association at the Association's 75th Anniversary Day.

trustees to the movement. Please do let us know if you need help with planning for and attracting the next generation of trustees. Let us hope 2022 is a great year for all of us. Happy New Year everyone!

Nick Phillips, Chief Executive

The 70th Annual General Meeting

Our 70th Annual General Meeting took place virtually at 10.00am on 29 September 2021. All members were invited to attend the webinar. The nominated representative for each member charity was invited to cast their vote, with one vote per member charity.

The main business of the AGM was:

- Address by the Chair of The Almshouse Association, Elizabeth Fathi.
- Approval of the minutes of 69th AGM held on 1st September 2020 via webinar.
 - The Chair reminded everybody that a change was made at

the 2019 AGM to restrict reappointments to three terms of three years. Reappointments are now made within that context and overseen by a Nominations Sub-Committee.

- Reappointment of five members of the Board: Meryl Aldridge, Paul Mullis, Tricia Scouller, Adam Sedgwick, Richard Waite and the appointment of one new member of the Board: Clive Cook.
 - Votes had already been taken by proxy. The Chair confirmed that each member

Royal Vice Patron visits Colchester and Caterham

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almshouse gave him. He said: "People have welcomed me with open arms; I couldn't have asked for more help". The Duke also met resident, Jordan Smith, who is an ambassador for the Prince's Trust and has won 17 caps playing for the England cerebral palsy football team.

HRH The Duke of Gloucester's busy September schedule continued with a visit to see nine new almshouses built in Winnocks Road, Colchester, next to the original 17th century homes. They now form part of the community of Winnocks and Kendalls Almshouse Charity in the heart of the town. During his visit the Duke met residents, Irene and Douglas Brownsdon and unveiled a



top: HRH The Duke of Gloucester with guests, supporters, trustees and residents celebrating the 900th anniversary of St Mary Magdalen almshouses, Colchester.

above: Irene and Douglas Brownsdon, residents at Winnocks and Kendalls Almshouse Charity.

above left: HRH The Duke of Gloucester with Nick Phillips, CEO of The Almshouse Association and trustees at Le Personne Homes, Caterham.



right: Jordan Smith, resident of Colchester Almshouses and an ambassador for the Prince's Trust, is a member of the England cerebral palsy football team.

plaque celebrating his visit to Colchester. John Bradley, Vice Chairman of trustees at Winnocks and Kendalls, said: "We are really grateful to Charity Bank and Colchester Council for funding this wonderful project. Without them, it simply would not have gone ahead". Later in the month, on September 22, HRH The Duke of Gloucester visited Caterham to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Henrietta le Personne Benevolent Trust.

The Duke met staff and trustees and residents in their homes. He learned of the Trust's history and the achievements of Henrietta le Personne and unveiled a plaque to commemorate his special visit. To read about the visit in full, go to: www.almshouses.org/news/hrh-joins-le-personne-homes-80th-celebrations/

of The Almshouse Association

for re-election received over 78% in favour.

The reelection has therefore been taken en bloc. The voting confirmed that the re-election of all five Board members was approved.

Liz congratulated Meryl, Paul, Tricia, Adam and Richard on their reappointment, and Clive on his appointment, and thanked them for their valuable contributions to the work of the Association. There were no retirements from the Board.

- Presentation and Approval of 2020 annual report and accounts by Simon Ling, Honorary Treasurer of The Almshouse Association.

- Chris Jones from Wygggestons proposed the adoption of the accounts and Chris Wilson at Southwark Charities seconded. The votes taken were 27 in favour, none against and one abstention.

- The appointment of the Auditor.

- Chris Jones from Wygggestons proposed approval of the recommendation and David Healey at the Sir Josiah Mason Trust seconded. The voting was 25 in favour, two against and one abstention.

- Buzzacot LLP was appointed.

- Questions from members. There was one question, raised by Alan Martin.

Q: Does The Almshouse Association have plans to balance expenditure and running costs?

A: We have a strategic goal that our running costs will be covered by subscriptions. The Board have identified unrestricted income to be used for strategic development.

- Chair Elizabeth Fathi presented a reflection of The Almshouse Association for 2020 and thoughts for the future direction.

- Update, reflection and thanks from Chief Executive of The Almshouse Association, Nick Phillips.

To view a recording of The Almshouse Association 70th AGM held on 29 September 2021 and to read the addresses from The Association's Chair Elizabeth Fathi and CEO Nick Phillips, visit: www.almshouses.org/news/associations-2021-agm-2/

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The products/services and claims made in the Almshouses Gazette have not been evaluated by The Almshouse Association. Articles that recommend products/services are for information purposes only and are not endorsed by the Association.

At the time of publication, the content of this newsletter is correct to the best knowledge of The Almshouse Association's officers. Information is provided for the general guidance of trustees and clerks, who should take their own professional advice where necessary.

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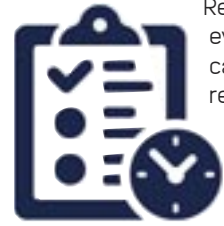
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Are you carrying out all essential building checks?

A There is a lot of confusion around what building checks need to be carried out (and when) and it can sometimes feel overwhelming for trustees to keep on top of them. There are checks that are legally required and others that are strongly recommended to ensure that potential problems are identified and addressed at an early stage. The safety requirements may differ depending on the types of building you look after (ie. high-rise blocks of flats require safety checks not needed for single storey bungalows) and whether or not you are a Registered Provider. The key thing for trustees to keep in mind is that all checks, whether legally required or recommended, are there to ensure the security, safety and upkeep of the building and the safety of the residents who live there. Some essential checks that charities should carry out include:

- **Gas safety** - to be carried out on an annual basis by a qualified Gas Safe Registered Engineer on all appliances (not just the boiler) and fit CO (carbon monoxide) alarms and smoke alarms in each property.
- **Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)** - to be undertaken every five years and a certificate issued. PAT testing is advised for all portable appliances supplied by the charity.



- **Legionella risk assessment** - this is a requirement for any provider of accommodation. The HSE website has a good sample risk assessment www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/faqs.htm#Landlord

Regular legionella checks (eg. every six months) should be carried out thereafter and records kept of these. Special consideration should be taken for empty properties as there is an increased risk here. Many charities are not aware of this regulation but as older people are most at risk of contracting the disease, it is an important area to consider.

- **Fire risk assessment** - this is a requirement for any accommodation which shares an exit with others (eg. flats) but not for houses with their own door directly outside. It should be carried out every three years and reviewed annually. A good fire risk assessor will take time to understand the building and the occupants and assess the risk accordingly.

- **Asbestos survey** - it is a legal duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises, including the common areas of residential rented properties, including halls, stairwells, lift shafts and roof spaces. In domestic properties, charities may need to carry out an asbestos survey before any work is carried

out on the almshouses. If asbestos is found, regular checks should be carried out and records kept. The asbestos register should be kept on-site and available to any contractor working there.

- **Health & Safety Policy** - this is a legal requirement for charities with five or more employees and recommended for those with fewer members of staff.
- **Health & Safety Risk Assessment** - even if the charity has no staff, the premises you manage are subject to health and safety legislation. The risk assessment should be carried out annually or after any accidents/incidents. This risk assessment covers all internal shared areas and all outside space owned by the charity.

In addition to the checks listed above, we strongly recommend that a building survey or Quinquennial inspection is carried out every five years. These inspections will identify any issues with the building and enable trustees to plan for future repairs and maintenance.

For full details on what checks your charity should be carrying out, please refer to The Almshouse Association Standards of Almshouse Management manual, which is available on our website at <https://www.almshouses.org/standards-of-almshouse-management-manual/>

An intergenerational journey

Four years ago Bob Durie, Almshouse Association ambassador and trustee of the Anchor Society CIO, suggested to CEO Richard Pendlebury that he should visit the Plaza de America intergenerational housing complex in Alicante. Bob had seen an article about it and was deeply inspired by the concept. Richard came back full of enthusiasm to build one in Bristol. A key feature of the Alicante model is that young people live alongside their older neighbours and provide support for four hours a week. The ratio is four older people to one younger person and the support is social (befriending, running errands, doing things together) and not medical care.



Last year, just before lockdown, a second visit to the Alicante scheme was made with representatives from two other charities interested in the project. As a result of this, Anchor and one of the other charities decided to work together to create an intergenerational housing complex in Bristol. A pre-planning application was made and on the basis of recommendations

received, the overall shape of the project has been agreed. Bob writes: "Work is now taking place to develop the project and discussions with The Almshouse Association have proved very helpful. Our hope is to create a 30-36 unit complex in the heart of Bristol, close to all amenities." The next steps are the creation of the legal structure, obtaining planning and seeking funding.



In parallel to this, Anchor has been working on a pilot with another housing provider to test the model in the UK. Anchor is close to agreeing the start of the pilot which will see students live in an existing older persons' housing complex. This will provide valuable data as Anchor and its partner charity seek to create the intergenerational unit in Bristol. Bob Durie has called this venture: "A 21st Century Almshouse as we seek to ensure older and indeed younger people gain from being in a community together".

Calling for participants in almshouse research

The Almshouse Association has recently commissioned research looking into how our members have coped during the pandemic. We hope to learn lessons of best practice as well as what didn't work out so well.

As part of this project we are looking to speak to 20 member charities about their experiences. If you would like to take part, please get in touch with Jack Baldan via

jackbaldan@almshouses.org

Alternatively, if you would prefer to participate anonymously then you can contact Paul Hunter via paul.hunter@smith-institute.org.uk

Protect from fraud and cyber crime

A The Almshouse Association is reminding members of the importance of protecting their charities against fraud and cyber crime. Trustees can take measures such as appointing a suitable person to champion counter-fraud work throughout the charity, performing stringent checks and due diligence, and assessing each year how well fraud controls are working, what new risks there may be and what improvements are needed.

Further Information on how to prevent, detect and respond to fraud and cyber crime can be found at:

preventcharityfraud.org.uk/about/ Additional resources are provided by the Charity Commission:

www.gov.uk/guidance/protect-your-charity-from-fraud

And the National Cyber Security Centre also has a small charity guide:

www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/charity



Tree grant given for carbon capture

Great Shelford Parochial Charities have received a £4,610 grant to plant native trees on their land at More's Meadow in the village. The money has been awarded by South Cambs County Council under its Zero Carbon Communities Scheme and will be used to buy and plant 22 mature trees, including field maple, hornbeam, hazel, hawthorn, beech, crab apple, oak, wild service and rowan. Thanking South Cambs for their generosity, Parochial Charities trustee, Keith Sugden, said: "The charity has a number of initiatives underway to enhance the village environment and combat climate change. Already, we have laid out new allotments, planted some 80 trees (including a community orchard), established a community garden and laid wheelchair accessible paths alongside our raised planting beds."

The charity's land, which covers approximately seven acres between Cambridge Road and the railway, is open to all. There are three entrances - at the end of Bridge Close/More's Meadow; from the railway footbridge; and from the end of The Hectare entrance, the latter designed for easy wheelchair access. Further information about the Parochial Charities can be found at gspc.org.uk



MEMBERS DAY 2022

Wednesday 15 June

Grand Station ● Sun Street ● Wolverhampton WV10 0BF



The day will involve:

- Special Guest Speakers
- Workshops
- The Almshouse Association Awards
- Networking
- Q & A with Panel of Experts
- Exhibition Stands

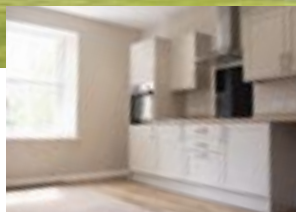
Tickets now on sale – see flyer for details

The Almshouse Association looks forward to welcoming you!

NOTE: Our 71st AGM will be held at the same venue on 15 June 2022. It will take place before the Members Day 2022 event starts. Details for attending and voting will be communicated to all members when finalised.

Renovation scheme transforms Grade II listed homes

Thornley House, situated on the site of Sherburn House Charity in Durham, has been transformed during a £1.7 million renovation scheme. Thornley House was originally used as accommodation for the Brethren who worked within Sherburn Hospital, which was founded in 1181. The Grade II listed property now provides 12 homes for people aged over 55. The homes suffered from poor layouts, shared kitchen facilities and utility charges, which meant some apartments were unlettable and fell short of the charity's aim of supporting independent living and reducing social isolation. Due to the heritage of the site, the scheme required a sensitive renovation sourcing Welsh slate and stone slabs for roof coverings; cast iron rainwater goods and carefully preserving timber doors and sliding sash windows. The refurbishment was completed in May 2021, with all luxury apartments



now boasting an open plan living/kitchen area, shower room and bedroom. It also features a communal dining/lounge area with ancient fireplace and exposed beams and an external courtyard for the sole use of the residents and their visitors.

The new residents of Thornley House organise their own activities and coffee mornings. Recently, they came together to hold a party in the communal area, with champagne and cake, to celebrate the 91st birthday of fellow resident Margaret Munroe (photo above).

Loans and donations to extend and modernise

The Berrow Cottage Homes in Knowle, West Midlands, recently celebrated the completion of the refurbishment and extension of 22 of its almshouses.

The Rt Revd Anne Hollinghurst, Bishop of Aston, unveiled a plaque at a ceremony in September attended by many of the residents, trustees and staff of the charity, together with individuals and representatives of local organisations who had given generously towards the building work.

The project was first planned a number of years ago when it was realised that the 22 properties built



in the 1970s were simply too small. Even prospective residents in great need of suitable housing were rejecting the offer of accommodation for this reason, so the trustees decided to extend and refurbish the properties. Local architects were appointed and funds amounting to nearly £2 million were sourced, including a grant from Homes England and loans from a major high street bank and The Almshouse Association, as well as generous donations from a number of local organisations and individuals. The balance of the cost was made up out of the charity's own funds. Builders were selected and the

work commenced in early 2018. The project was completed in three phases with the residents affected in each phase being, in most cases, moved into another vacant property. Delayed slightly due to Covid, the building work was completed and those residents displaced by the final phase moved back into their properties in August 2020. Residents enjoy 70% extra living space in homes which are now suitable for occupation by couples and a number of properties

have been adapted for those with reduced mobility.

In her opening ceremony remarks, Bishop Anne was delighted to note that her Episcopal ring, given to her by the family of The Rt Revd Hugh Montefiore, would have been

on his finger in November 1978 when he came to Berrows to celebrate the building of these same 22 properties. She also made reference to the recent Archbishops' Commission on Housing, Church & Community which states that a good home should be 'Sustainable, Safe, Stable, Sociable and Satisfying'. The Berrow Cottage Homes, positioned in the centre of the community, can claim to meet all these recommendations.



Bronze sculpture for Bond's Lodge



from left: Matthew White, Victor Keene, Pauline Warner, George Wagstaffe, Lord Mayor and Mayoress of Coventry, Cllr John McNicholas and his wife, June.

Coventry Church (Municipal) Charities has commissioned an impressive sculpture by renowned Coventry artist George Wagstaffe for the courtyard garden of the charity's £6.8 million almshouse development at Bond's Lodge. Residents were joined by local dignitaries and friends of the charity at a ceremony to celebrate the unveiling of the artwork, which features two bronze figures linked with a water installation.

Victor Keene MBE, Chairman of Coventry Church (Municipal) Charities, said: "It's a magnificent sculpture and the perfect centrepiece to the courtyard garden at Bond's Lodge. We have an artwork at each of our almshouses in Coventry, which together accommodate over 150 residents. We're not only looking after the comfort of our residents, there is a spiritual dimension too and this work of art helps to fill that need."

More details at www.almshouses.org/news/new-sculpture-for-bonds-lodge-almshouses/

Conversion project secures Almshouse Association loan

Almost two years after the original event was planned, the easing of Covid restrictions finally meant that King's Lynn General Charities could mark the completion of their almshouse conversion.

Chairman David Whitmore has been a trustee for over 40 years and during that time all the homes in the charity's five almshouses have been converted from basic bedsits to either one or two-bedroom homes, all with modernised facilities.

David Whitmore said: "This was achieved through utilising some of our permanent endowment (now repaid), generous loans from The Almshouse Association and internally generated cash. The first renovations were on the north wing of Framingham's almshouse and, for reasons of finance and logistics, the final phase was on the other wing after the other four sets of almshouses administered by the trustees had been converted."

The first phase of renovations in 1999 were marked with a plaque carrying the name of the then chairman, Leonard Barrett, so it was appropriate to mark the final phase with a plaque on the opposite wing recognising David Whitmore.

Andrew Cave, King's Lynn General Charities

Almshouses, offices, charity workspace and a new pub

Southwark Charities has been successful in gaining planning permission for development on its existing site on Nicholson Street, London SE1. Following an extensive consultation event last summer involving residents, neighbours and local businesses, the charity will build 62 new almshouses to replace the existing properties which were built in 1973 and have reached the end of their useful life.

Supporting jobs and generating income

There will be around 220,000 sq. ft. of high-quality office space, 10% of which will be affordable workspace for other Southwark-based charities and local initiatives to use. This will not only support jobs in the area but also generate income and capital to pay for the almshouses.

There will also be a charitable hub with accessible community facilities for residents and others in the locality, plus a new, enlarged, on-site Prince William Henry public house. Landscaped gardens, roof terraces and public footpaths will further enhance the scheme, along with a new pedestrian link named "Edwards' Walk", in recognition of



Edward Edwards, the philanthropist who originally established the almshouses.

Caroline Croft, Chair of Southwark Charities' Trustees, said:

"We are delighted to have achieved planning permission for this stunning, multi-use scheme which will benefit almshouse residents and the local community. This is the culmination of a huge amount of dedication by all of our project partners which means that our elderly residents can

continue to live independently; we're attracting new business to the area with the commercial element; and contributing to the regeneration of the borough."

Neil Coyle, MP for Bermondsey and Old Southwark, added: "I am excited to witness another key milestone in creating much-needed, high-quality and truly affordable housing for older people in our community, increasing green space with new gardens and public realm, and creating a safe and healthier environment for residents and the local community to enjoy."

Completion is planned for 2025. Full details: www.southwarkcharities.co.uk/future-plans/

Photo: Secchi Smith



Reflections on our 75th Anniversary celebration year



Our members made 2021 a very special and heart-warming year for us all at The Almshouse Association. With the difficult challenges we have all been through, your enthusiasm for celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Association has been incredibly inspiring.

Our thanks and gratitude to all who joined us in celebrating this milestone, together with your own personal and individual milestones. We have been overwhelmed by your generosity of spirit, planning and organising parties and sharing these events with us, and thoroughly enjoyed hearing about the special occasions you have commemorated. 2021 was a year of community spirit and collaboration – the very essence of the almshouse movement. Our goal at the beginning of 2021 was to gain more local awareness for the almshouse movement. We believe we have made headway and will continue to work with the media throughout 2022 to ensure we continue to raise the profile of the movement. We also look forward to hearing all your stories. Please keep sending in any articles, photos or anecdotes you would like to share and we will continue to post these on our social media platforms, our website and/or in our quarterly Almshouses Gazette. Thank you for a wonderful year of inspiration. We look forward to sharing many more anniversaries and celebrations.

A brief summary of your celebrations ...

King Edward VI & The Revd Joseph Prime Almshouse Charity

To support the UK-wide celebrations of The Almshouse Association 75th Anniversary, Saffron Walden Almshouses welcomed the public to a garden party in their grounds. During the unexpectedly glorious sunny afternoon over 550 people enjoyed live music, children's entertainment and face painting from Youth Create.

Ashtead United Charity Garden Party

A fabulous day had by all as the sun shined. The marquee and chairs were borrowed from the church, and the tea, including a magnificent cake, was provided by the lady who runs the church cafe.

Tibberton Almshouses

Quadruple celebrations with the 153rd birthday of the almshouses; the handing over of the keys to the most recent resident by Alison Evans (4th generation descendant of benefactor William Philip Price); the 75th Anniversary of The Almshouse Association; and a grant from the Forest of Dean District Council to replace 14 windows and three doors.



King Edward VI & The Revd Joseph Prime Almshouse Charity, Saffron Walden



Ashtead United Charity Garden Party



Tibberton Almshouses

Tiverton Almshouse Trust

After such a difficult 18 months with the pandemic, it was good to have a great reason to celebrate with events held at each of its two main almshouse community sites in Tiverton to lift everyone's spirits.

Wivenhoe Housing Trust

Celebrating completion of the courtyard at Jonathan Feedham Court with its raised flower beds, new paved surface and residents' seating. A 1940s themed party was led by the Wivenhoe Hoolies, a local sea shanty group who had written a special verse (see website).

Walpole Almshouse Charity

Celebrating 150 years with a rededication of the almshouses plaque, followed by afternoon tea and cake.

Sir Josiah Mason Trust

Residents from Mason Cottages, Mason House and Mason Court joined in the celebrations at three events, with afternoon tea and live entertainment.



Wivenhoe Housing Trust



Tiverton Almshouse Trust



Walpole Almshouse Charity



Sir Josiah Mason Trust

The Charity of Elizabeth Wadsworth

The Mayor and Mayoress of Calderdale as residents were joined by their families, friends, neighbours, local school children and councillors, for a buffet and entertainment from The Landlubbers.



The Charity of Elizabeth Wadsworth

Thomas Christie Almshouse Charity

Residents, trustees and staff unpacked their party clothes and joined in the 75th Anniversary celebrations to blow away the cobwebs of the last 18 months!



The Thomas Christie Almshouse Charity



The Foord Almshouses



The Almshouse of Robert Stiles



The Davenport Homes



Linton Park Almshouses

The Foord Almshouses

The sunshine shone as 70 residents and guests enjoyed being together again and celebrated with the Deputy Mayor of Medway, Cllr Kirstine Carr.

The Almshouse of Robert Stiles

Three locations in Wantage celebrated with a tea party for residents, trustees and guests, including the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Brigadier Dennis Blease, Wantage and Didcot MP, David Johnston and the Mayor of Wantage (also a trustee) Jim Sibbald.

The Davenport Homes

Local MP Saqib Bhatti joined residents to celebrate the refurbishment and opening of their communal lounge after lockdown and the 75th Anniversary of The Almshouse Association.

Linton Park Almshouses

It was a gloriously sunny day when residents in the five almshouses invited family, friends and neighbours to the 75th Anniversary garden party. Everyone helped out. Margaret and Shirley love baking and Rosie made the bunting.

Bakewell Almshouses

It was a double celebration in the garden as trustees were presented with a donation of £8,000 during a party for the 75th Anniversary of the Association.

The Perry Almshouse Charity

A Hawthorn tree was planted and a birthday cake cut to mark 170 years of the Grade II almshouses in Winterbourne and the Association's 75th Anniversary.

The Andros Almshouse Charity

Trustees and residents enjoyed a celebratory cake with coffee made by 95-year-old resident Pat Stepney, who has lived at Grantham Close for 37 years.

The Robert Smith Trust

A garden party was held for residents, trustees and local tradesmen who had tirelessly completed a building project. The chairman's grandchildren were also on hand to help with serving tea.

Charity of Marjorie Hurst

A tea party attended by 20 residents and friends, along with trustees, was one of the first events organised for The Association's 75th Anniversary, with homemade scones and cakes.



Bakewell Almshouses



The Perry Almshouse Charity



The Robert Smith Trust



Drayton Parochial Charities

Drayton Parochial Charities

There was lots of news to catch up on at the party in Abingdon.



The Andros Almshouse Charity (left) and The Charity of Marjorie Hurst (right)



We are sorry if we have missed anyone's party. We've been completely bowled over with the number of almshouses that have shared their celebrations with us. More wonderful photos and celebration stories from our members can be found on our website at www.almshouses.org/member-stories-news-and-events/ and on our social media accounts. If you have not seen your story and would like to share it, please do send it in to us!

Charities partnering together

The Trinity Hospital was founded by the Duke of Lancaster in 1331 in the Newarke area of the city and Wyggestons and Trinity Hospital Almshouses are amongst the oldest charities in the city of Leicester. Trinity Hospital received many endowments and bequests from local dignitaries and gentry in its early years, including from a wealthy local wool merchant, William Wyggeston, who was Mayor of Leicester and twice the local MP. In 1513 Wyggeston decided to create his own almshouse, close to Newarke, by Letters Patent from Henry VIII. Following the dissolution of the monasteries, the Crown



Ian Betteridge of Trinity Hospital handing over to Sandra Powell, Chairman of Wyggestons. photo: Dave Sinclair

instructed the Duchy of Lancaster to take on the oversight of the almshouses - the charities retain unique links with the Duchy to this day. Though times have changed and both charities have relocated to the western side of the city centre, they have always remained close neighbours. In late 2020 the Board of Trustees of Trinity approached Wyggestons Board to discuss possible mutual working arrangements. The pandemic highlighted the need to modernise the governance structure and safeguard its future. The regulatory and governance requirements of operating a charity were beginning to concern the small

team of board members and part-time staff. Wyggestons operates on a larger scale than Trinity and operationally comprises almshouses and a residential care home service on one site. This meant it could call on full-time staffing teams to operate all services without any significant disruption, even during the pandemic, and were also able to begin expansion of almshouse housing and the new administration building. Trinity's board identified not only benefits for the charity in minimising risk to the trustees and safeguarding the charity for the

future but also expanding the service for current beneficiaries.

After a series of senior management meetings, it was agreed that Trinity operations could be best supported within the existing operational management structure of Wyggestons, in the form of a partnership of the two charities led by one CEO and two boards of trustees.

The key aspect of the process was ensuring beneficiaries were aware of the discussions and to provide them with the assurance that there would be no change in service delivery or in the staff team that support them. Trinity residents had the opportunity to meet informally with the new board and senior staff to talk through any

Dedicated service in combined homes

In 1986 Robert Evans took over the role of Clerk to the Trustees of the Christopher and Sarah Aldam Bowly Almshouse charities in Cirencester.

At the time, the 16 houses were split between three trusts which also meant revenue was divided, making it difficult to fund maintenance and improvements. Robert's solution was to ask the Charity Commission to combine the three charities under a single scheme. This was approved and set the new Christopher and Sarah A. Bowly's Almshouse Charity on a much more secure path for the future. As a result, the trustees were able to embark on a programme of updating kitchens and bathrooms.

In 1989, Jane Gunner became Chair of Trustees and she and Robert have now



worked together for the benefit of the charity for more than 30 years. There have been many highlights, including the residents' annual luncheon given by the trustees, the 100th birthday of a long-term resident, and the nerve-racking time when a storm blew in while half the houses were being re-roofed and covered in scaffolding. Besides this, Robert's calm professionalism has moved the charity forward with innovations which are now considered best practice. Regular meetings between the town's four almshouse

charities have developed into annual gatherings, with talks and invitations to almshouse charities in the surrounding area. Robert also instigated monthly visits to residents so they could voice any concerns. His kindness and understanding has made him beloved by everyone and when (now an octogenarian) he decided it was time to retire after 35 years, there was universal dismay. Once again, though, Robert took the sting out of the tail by preparing a

comprehensive induction package for his successor, Clare Hawke, allowing the Chair to concentrate on Robert's retirement 'almost-surprise' party with trustees, residents and cake! The Christopher and Sarah A. Bowly's Almshouse charity owe Robert Evans a huge debt of gratitude for his 35 years of dedicated service and wish him all the very best for a long and happy retirement.

Clare Hawke, Clerk at Christopher and Sarah A. Bowly's Almshouse Charity

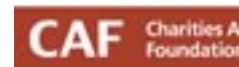
concerns. The enhanced social activities and opportunities at the larger almshouse half a mile away are already becoming popular.

On 9 September 2021 Wyggestons and Trinity Hospital Almshouses became a partnership. The new board of Trinity CIO, predominately drawing on the experience of the current Wyggestons board, took on the management of the charity and the new operational structure commenced.

Sandra Powell, Chairman of the Wyggeston board of Governors, said: "With a combined 1,200 years of caring between the two charities, we look forward to carrying on the successes already achieved".

Preparing finances for development projects

The decision to develop or refurbish property is never one to be taken lightly. This is true with your own house and money but even more challenging as trustee for an organisation with a history of supporting those in housing need. You have to be certain what you plan secures a legacy for future generations. CAF Bank has worked with many organisations, including almshouse charities, on a range of successful projects. We asked them to share some of their knowledge with us:



1. Be clear about your aims.

Does the project aim to increase impact, increase income or both? Is it about maintenance or development? Clarity at Board and Executive level helps prevent the project moving away from the original ambition and subsequent problems.

2. Choose your professionals.

Very few of our clients have all the skills in-house to drive a development. Take time in choosing your professional team. As with many areas of charitable life, neither the cheapest nor most expensive is a guarantee of the right fit.

3. Check everything you know.

Many organisations have "corporate memories" which can be incredibly useful, especially if you are developing on your own land but it is equally important to check everything. You don't want to find out after submitting a planning application that the charity doesn't actually own the land.

4. Check your governance.

During the development you will need to make sure that you can enter into significant contracts. Making sure that the board meets the requirement of the governing documents, that you are quorate and that conflicts of interest are dealt with are just three areas of governance you should consider.

5. Think about your finance mix.

Will you be funding this from reserves, from a grant or from borrowing? Think about certainty, flexibility and conditions. Think about what happens in the future or if things don't work out. Short-term supporters' loans can help projects but they need to be repaid and you should understand what happens if things don't go as well as planned.

6. How much do you need?

There is usually a multi-phased approach to any major project and as well as contingencies it is important to consider changes in costs since the original estimates and the level of certainty in those figures. Build cost inflation is a significant factor.

7. Plan your future finances.

Make sure that you think through and document your assumptions on income and costs. Whether or not you are looking for repayable funding, you should think about what may change and the impact it will have.

8. If you need funding, engage early.

Early conversations with potential funders helps understand the parameters and conditions which affect your project; eg. will your architect need to provide a Funder Collateral Warranty? Have they been appointed on this basis?

9. If you need funding, think about your history.

Many grant and loan funders will review your published history using information from the Charity Commission and other regulators. Are there any comments or questions, such as whether accounts are marked as "qualified" (which means the auditor or examiner has expressed a concern). If your financial history shows losses or challenges, provide explanations, eg. if you've made discretionary grants or had unusual expenditure.

10. If you need funding, think clearly.

We never get a second chance to make a first impression, so make sure when you engage with funders that you are clear on your project, the support needed, and the certainties and uncertainties in the project.

11. With construction, it's (partly) all about the paperwork.

We are all focussed on the actual development but it is very important to make sure paperwork is comprehensive. The construction contracts underpin what must be built and how the development team works. Agreeing these at the start helps massively in any challenges that may occur.

Finally, it is all about the beneficiaries. There will be challenges during any project but it is worth making sure you focus on the original aims and the impact on the beneficiaries. They will provide you with the motivation to overcome the obstacles.

Article provided by The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) Bank. Their services include funding and finance solutions, including banking, investments, fundraising tools and social investment. For more information about CAF and to find out about discounted arrangement fee they are offering to members of The Almshouse Association, please visit www.almshouses.org/news/charities-aid-foundation/

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE - NATIONAL NEWS INSIGHT

The Almshouse Association regularly publishes Policy and Governance updates on our website. Text in blue below denotes a web link to a specific document or report, which can be accessed via our Policy and Governance web articles at www.almshouses.org/latest-news/

The Budget 2021

The Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, has announced this year's budget with a number of housing announcements. These include:

- £1.8bn for 180,000 new homes through land regeneration
- £640m per year to be spent on the Government's commitment to end rough sleeping
- £5bn for remediation of the highest risk buildings with unsafe cladding
- taper rate for Universal Credit to be reduced from 63% to 55% meaning claimants keep more of their money earned through work
- the 'freeze' in local housing allowance will remain in place for another 12 months at least.

Heat and Building Strategy

The Government announced its long-awaited [Heat and Building Strategy](#). The strategy outlines the Government's plans to reach net zero by 2050. This includes:

- funding from April 2022 for heat pumps through the Boiler Upgrade Scheme
- phasing out new natural gas boilers from 2035
- investment into projects on the potential use of hydrogen in the heat network.

Residential Notices Periods

Under the [Coronavirus Act 2020 \(Residential Tenancies and Notices\) \(Amendment and Suspension\) \(England\) Regulations 2021](#), which came into effect from 1st October 2021, all the extended Notice periods brought in by the emergency regulations are removed, and the pre-pandemic Notice periods restored. However, the Government has reserved the right for the Secretary of State to re-impose extended Notice periods until **25 March 2022**.

The Almshouse Association has advised members to follow this guidance throughout the pandemic when considering setting aside an appointment. Members in England can now return to pre-pandemic procedures.

Working to achieve a harmonious almshouse family

Letter contributed by Edward, who describes himself as a 'serial almshouse trustee'

“Jenny Kartupelis’ article in the Spring Gazette struck a chord with me. Yes indeed: ‘family-type relationships’ - the X Factor of successful almshouse charities. How to achieve them; manage the squabbles; maintain a family atmosphere? What makes a family is surely the knowledge that every member shares an intimate relationship. So it is with almshouse residents but without the blood relationship. So what does bind them? They are neighbours - maybe too close for permanent comfort - but the pride in belonging to the almshouse charity is key. That pride can (and should) be fostered, critically, by the trustees and the clerk. Trustees who know their almspeople, will instil the pride. Some almshouses will have a steward, a warden or even deputy warden[s] as well. All should keep an eye and ear keenly attuned to discordant ‘noise’.

What makes a family? Celebrations. Holidays. Triumphs. Tragedies. Births. Deaths. All these, a family marks and so, appropriately, should almshouses. But you cannot mark

an event of which you have no knowledge. So, ask yourself, not how much, but how little your charity knows about its residents. Would it help to know more, or would that be an intrusion? Who makes the community? Trustees, residents, their families, all staff - and regular tradesmen too. All contribute and all can be cherished, even trustees! What makes a happy community? Reciprocity. Steady two-way traffic in every human encounter, even if only a cheery exchange of greetings. How about squabbles and sadnesses? We know there will be some. Where have they arisen? How to defuse them? An unrecognised problem cannot be solved. We return to the ‘eyes and ears’. And not all problems are soluble. Some need containment. Cliques will arise - no point in denying it - but, if destructive, they must be reminded of their community responsibilities. Am I the only trustee to arrange a careful seating plan, only to find that canny residents equally carefully rearrange the names? Consider the resident who should leave, but won’t. They have broken their licence terms; been very rude to trustees, residents, passers-by,

and tradesmen alike; may have been reclusive, living in near squalor, refused all offers of help and mediation. Such situations are exceedingly difficult to deal with and immensely frustrating. Recourse to the law can be expensive and not always helpful. Huge patience and close and lengthy liaison with the statutory authorities may eventually produce an answer. That answer is unlikely to please everyone: it may not please you. So how to minimise difficult almshouse issues? You have one clear opportunity: when you initially select the resident. Each almshouse charity will have its own selection criteria but I suggest this question for the panel: ‘Even if this applicant is wholly qualified in all other respects, will they be so disruptive to the community as a whole that they should not be appointed?’ Even new almshouse charities have a history. Even modern ones will know the motivation of their founder. That history should act as a powerful bond for the residents. The diversity is endless - but the sense of community can be the same. It is down to us to make it so.”

Looking after residents is not always easy ...

“Some eight or nine years ago Diane (not her real name) came to live at our almshouses. She was suffering with increasing mobility problems and the almshouses were within close proximity to her family and, for a while, life went on very peacefully. After some time, our scheme managers reported that invitations to socialise were never accepted and that Diane’s mood was often quite low - but scheme managers’ visits were always welcomed. Time saw Diane’s decline in mobility and towards the start of this year we saw an increasing pattern of callouts to scheme managers, paramedics and family. Sometimes we only became aware of these when neighbours or Diane’s regular carers passed on the information. Our weekly management meetings now regularly included discussion of our concerns about Diane’s well-being. Our clerk, scheme managers, neighbours and carers increasingly expressed concerns and it was suggested informally the family may want to consider whether staffed residential

accommodation might better meet Diane’s ever increasing physical and social needs. By now calls to paramedics and scheme managers had increased, sometimes happening twice a day on top of four daily carer visits. Diane’s mental capacity was not in doubt but depression and withdrawal increased. Our clerk, scheme managers and paid carers all tried to engage Diane to talk about future needs but sadly the response which came back often amounted to “just bring me a pistol and let me put an end to this whole sad story”. At the same time we found Diane’s family was slow in responding to our phone calls and that letters and emails seemed to be avoided. After a very difficult week, with multiple call outs, visitors found Diane distressed, confused and angry, claiming that any attempt to call family was frustrated as “someone” had disconnected the phone line. We understand that confused and disorientated residents in the middle of the night can struggle even with very

basic technology. However, this followed the third callout within 24 hours and again communication with the family seemed difficult. As Chairman of an ancient foundation my duties are often very pleasant - a press call for a 100th birthday, a toast at the annual founder’s feast or a cheerful message with the Christmas hamper. And as an organisation we often celebrate the peace and security that our residents enjoy, supported by our willing staff in comfortable surroundings. The conclusion to Diane’s story cannot be the subject of further public discussion but involved more liaison with the family and statutory authorities. We should record that it’s not always easy for our staff, who draw on reserves of professionalism and good temper, sometimes after sleepless nights and continue to present a serene and unruffled face to the outside world. As trustees our responsibilities are serious and we owe it to all to carry them out with integrity and care.”

Name and address supplied

Providing a home in own bungalow

“Reading some of the stories on the Association’s website, I thought you may find this of interest. We recently had a vacancy in one of our units for a couple. There were two applications which were just as appropriate and in desperate need of rehousing but the time frame for one was more immediate so they were offered, and accepted, the vacancy. The other couple were owner occupiers with an interest-only mortgage which was due for repayment within a year. The property had been on the market for over a year with no interest. The mortgage was about 85% of the asking price and the couple had no savings. In addition, the wife had a serious health issue. The trustees decided to use cash reserves to make an offer to purchase the property and allow the owners to stay there and avoid the hassle of moving, saving both costs and upheaval. A deal was done and slowly the property is being brought up to our standards which the owners could not afford to do. A win for all - the residents had their financial worries removed, they could stay in their own property and with reduced outgoings. The trustees were also able to better use their charitable funds and increase the number of people they could look after. We are also pleased to say that although the health issue has not gone away, the problem has been stabilised.”

Name and address supplied

The spiritual lives of residents



‘Still Love Left - faith and hope in later life’ draws inspiration from poets, writers and theologians to embrace old age, strengthen faith and build hope in later life.

Written by Rev Michael Jackson, for 26 years director of St John’s Winchester Charity and also on the Executive Committee of The Almshouse Association, it aims to encourage fulfilment and a positive approach to old age. Available from YouCaxton Publishers at £9.99 www.youcaxton.co.uk/still-love-leftmichael-jackson/ Details: www.almshouses.org/news/the-spiritual-lives-of-residents/

Mediation scheme helps resolve conflicts for member charities

Almshouse Association members can take advantage of a mediation scheme set up in conjunction with the Society of Mediators to help resolve issues and conflicts that might arise within their charities.

What is mediation?

Mediation is a process where a completely neutral mediator assists or facilitates either two or more parties in resolving a dispute, disagreement or grievance. Mediation is ultimately about self-determination. It allows for a strong, lasting and workable solution to either a dispute or an unsatisfactory scenario that has arisen. Unlike court, the participants remain in control of their outcome, and any solutions or agreements for their onward journey are made jointly.

The mediator deploys facilitation skills, in order to create an atmosphere suitable for resolution and/or reconciliation. They must not make judgements or recommendations but instead help the participants, with careful questioning, to arrive at a satisfactory outcome. The process is completely confidential which allows for greater exploration, honesty and opportunity to discuss matters in depth, without fear of the details of what has been discussed being shared with anyone outside the room.

What is the mediator’s role?

Whilst not prescriptive, a mediator’s role will include exploring issues or problems and focusing on the future rather than the past. A mediator will also help people to clarify issues and explore situations which could ultimately lead to an agreement. A mediator needs to be impartial, maintain confidentiality and be flexible when the situation requires it. The role requires certain skills, such as active listening, the ability to communicate well and solve problems. To be able to do this effectively, a mediator’s role will include managing the mediation process from the start by helping individuals to remain focused on issues and facilitate dialogue between parties.

It is important for the mediator to be non-judgemental with a genuine commitment to equality. Setting the boundaries or guidelines during the process (necessary if one side is less able to speak) will help to balance the negotiating power so that all can have a fair say.

How does mediation work?

- The two (or more) parties agree to mediation.
- A date and time are set and a number of hours allocated.
- Parties may come and speak for themselves, or in some cases may wish to bring a friend or family member.
- The mediator will work with the parties together or separately, or a mixture of both, whichever is appropriate to the participants.
- The mediator will listen, create a comfortable environment and assist by asking questions, helping to evaluate what the priorities are and aiming to steer both sets of participants to a mutually acceptable agreement or onward plan.

What are the benefits?

- It’s confidential.
- It’s an opportunity to get concerns off your chest and let off steam in a safe environment with a neutral listener and try to plan a way forward.
- It’s non-judgemental.
- You remain in control of the outcome.
- It is especially helpful for scenarios where ongoing relationships are important.
- It often allows for a detailed understanding of a problem, which can help reduce the likelihood of a similar issue recurring in the future.
- It’s empowering for people to find their own solutions.

How much does it cost?

Prices start from £325 + VAT for a 1-2 hour mediation session by telephone or Zoom. In-person mediation sessions are also available from £425 + VAT, with the charity to provide a venue for the mediation.

How to access the scheme

If your charity is interested in using the mediation scheme, please complete the referral form that can be accessed from our website at:

www.almshouses.org/mediation-scheme/ and return it to the team at: admin@almshouses.org

Note: You do not need to complete the mediation agreement on the second side of the form at this stage.

If you have any questions about the scheme, contact The Society Of Mediators on 01823 217 733 or email help@propertymediation.org

spotlight on: The Hospital of St John the Evangelist and of St Anne almshouses

The Hospital of St John the Evangelist and of St Anne in Okeham is believed to be the oldest charity in the county of Rutland, having been established for the provision of almshouse accommodation in 1399.

The story of the charity begins with its foundation by William Dalby in 1399, by virtue of a Licence granted by King Richard II. The original intention was that the hospital should have two chaplains and should provide accommodation for 'twelve poor men'.

David Wheatley

1944-2021



Fr David Wheatley, Master of Archbishop Holgate Hospital in Hemsworth, passed away on 25th July 2021. Born and brought up in

Castleford, Fr David became a lay reader at the age of 30 and served faithfully in the Parish of Castleford. He trained for the ministry whilst running a bakery in Knottingley and was ordained Deacon in 2002 and priest in 2003. At his funeral Mass the preacher said: "How poignant that hands which have baked bread for some 50 years were to be used by God as hands to consecrate bread to be the body of Christ, the bread of life given to us in Holy Communion". Fr David became the Hospital's 23rd Master in 2009 and was hugely influential in the day-to-day running of the almshouses, including providing daily services in Chapel, pastoral care and always working for the benefit of the residents. He loved the hospital and its brothers and sisters. His dedication and passionate service to everyone connected to the almshouses was second to none and an inspiration to us all. Fr David was a keen fundraiser, holding regular coffee mornings and events, raising over £60,000 since 2009 for various local, national and international charities. We will remember his faith, loyalty, kindness, love, good friendships, and his ability to always have time to listen, advise and be a helping hand. He will be missed greatly by many. We send our sincere condolences to Fr David's family and friends.

Ann Ullgott, Clerk to the trustees

The property was confiscated during the Abolition of Chantries actions of the 16th century, before being rescued by Archdeacon Robert Johnson, who bought back the land and then obtained a Royal Charter from Queen Elizabeth I. This 1597 Royal Charter extended the purpose of the charity to helping both men and women, with a single Hospital able to accommodate up to 20 individuals.

Office converted into new flat

During the late 18th/early 19th century the properties fell into disrepair, so that most buildings (with the exception of the original Chapel) disappeared when the Midland Railway was constructed across the charity's land in the 1840s. Today, there are over 100 properties. One of the newest is a conversion of the charity's office space into a flat,



photo right: The charity's CEO, Paul Martin, handing over the keys of a newly converted flat to Terence Gaythorpe (far right).

which was supported by a loan from The Almshouse Association and Homes England. It has now become the home of Terence and Mary Gaythorpe. The charity stepped in to help the couple, who have lived in Rutland for over 50 years, after they were given notice to quit their previous home by their landlord. CEO Paul Martin said: "it is so pleasing that this new property will ensure that

Fire safety awareness with mobility scooters

Our Fire Safety Panel Consultant, Harry Paviour warns about the risks to be aware of with battery powered bikes and mobility scooters and the importance of ensuring that almshouse charities include them in their fire safety policies.

With any technology, there is always the risk that if we introduce it into our homes it will have the potential to cause a fire. Whilst a lot of research and development will have gone into the design to incorporate safety features and instructions for the customer's safe use, battery powered mobility scooters and bikes can present the same risk of fire as any technology.

Battery powered mobility scooters are a great way for people with mobility issues to get about independently within their community, however, if the arrangements and facilities for battery charging are not in place or not strictly adhered to, they become a risk. Firefighters up and down the country are now attending electric bike and scooter fires where the cause of the fire is originating in either the battery



or the charger and when left unattended to charge during the day or overnight. One large UK Fire & Rescue Service has recorded that in the first six months of 2021, it attended over 120 fires which involved battery powered bikes or scooters. Many were located in a property's communal areas, hallways and corridors, as well as some inside a resident's home. Recommendations for battery charged mobility scooters and bikes:

- Scooters and bikes should not be kept or stored within the residents private accommodation.
- Scooters and bikes should be provided with suitable storage and charging facilities. They should not be located on internal staircases, corridors or hallways and, ideally, they should be kept outside in purpose-built, well ventilated sheds, etc.
- Never leave your mobility scooter on charge when you are not present, or during the night or at other times when you are asleep.

If trustees or clerks require additional information, help or guidance in preparing a mobility scooter/ebike policy, Harry Paviour is pleased to help and can be contacted at Harry.paviour@btinternet.com



photo left: Community Heroes Mrs Ann Newton (left) and Mrs Annie Tappenden (right) after receiving their awards presented by the Lord Lieutenant of Rutland, Dr Sarah Furness, in the presence of the High Sheriff of Rutland, David Wood.

"This excellent set of results was a ringing endorsement that the structural and staffing changes, introduced at the time of the last survey, have had a positive impact on the wellbeing of the beneficiaries".

Community heroes

In September, two residents of the charity received community hero awards from the Lord Lieutenant of Rutland, Dr Sarah Furness at a special presentation ceremony at Oakham Castle.

Ann Newton from Oakham and Annie Tappenden from Uppingham were recognised for their efforts to support their neighbours during the lockdown, carrying out acts of kindness which have continued and became a catalyst for other residents to help one another. Dr Furness said how appropriate it was that they were both called Ann. Not only was 'Anne' the name of one of the patrons of the charity but also, as mother of the Virgin Mary, she symbolised care, compassion and attention to the needs of others. These were qualities being recognised in the two recipients.

Dr Furness added: "The St John and St Anne management were also outstanding during the pandemic and went to great lengths to ensure residents were supported. On behalf of the governors and as Lord Lieutenant, I would also like to thank the CEO, Paul Martin, for his work and their support worker, Vanetia Porter, who went the extra mile."



a local couple can now continue to enjoy their retirement years without having to repeatedly navigate the private rental market." Paul Martin has been with The Hospital of St John the Evangelist and of St Anne in Okeham (SJSA) since 2014, having previously been employed in a senior management role within two other large almshouse charities. He manages the residents' satisfaction survey, which is distributed bi-annually in March and provides a measure for the running of small charitable organisations, managing staff, repairs and location. Their 2021 survey had a tremendous response from residents with 97% of responders indicating satisfaction with the service and 99% highlighting that they found the service provided by SJSA helpful. This incredible response is remarkable in the face of the pandemic. Paul said:

Long service of 48 years

After serving as a trustee of The Hospital of Sir Thomas Middlecott Algarkirk and Fosdyke since 1973, and as Chairman from 1984 until 2015, Pete Ulyatt (pictured with one of his much loved vintage tractors) has finally called time as he approaches his 90th birthday.

Although the charity has been in existence since the 1600s, Pete has probably seen and overseen more changes in his 48 year tenure than any other trustee in the charity's history, other than the founding members. In the 1970s the charity's Old Bede Row properties were sold as they were in need of considerable restoration and were not conveniently located. Instead, two new bungalows were built in the heart of the village of Fosdyke, followed in the 1980s with two more bungalows, this time in the village of Algarkirk. Pete was also instrumental in securing the charity's future income by securing some excellent long term investments. The family tradition of serving the community continues with his son John, who is currently Vice Chair.

Susan Wilson, Clerk to the Trustees



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Jump on board! - special Hornby competition launched

Jump on board and enter our new competition to win a Hornby almshouse model, a Hornby train set, a centenary mug and pen, gifted by our special partner, Hornby!

To enter this competition, please send us a short article about your hobby, in 500 words. Include what inspired you to take it up, how it has supported your mental health and if it has encouraged family and friends to get involved and helped engagement with your local community.

We would love to see some photos too!



The Winner will receive a beautiful Hornby almshouse model and train set and a lovely Hornby centenary mug and pen! The Runner Up will receive a Hornby almshouse model and a Hornby centenary mug and pen! The Winner and Runner Up will be announced on our website and through our social media channels.

So, climb on board and send us your entries by 30 April 2022! The Winner and Runner Up will be chosen in the week commencing 16 May 2022 and be featured on our website and social media channels.

Please read the competition terms and conditions on our website at www.almshouses.org/news/jump-on-board/

New Regional Champions to help members

In 2020 The Almshouse Association launched a new and exciting project to help with member engagement across the country with a plan to enlist 20 regional representatives that would provide a good listening ear for local charities and give focused signposting to The Almshouse Association services that are available to all members.

In phase one, seven regional representatives were signed up and we are pleased to announce that two more regional representatives have been appointed. Margaret Stewart is the regional representative for Lancashire and Antony Cullup for Cambridgeshire.

Antony Cullup

Antony is CEO of Cambridge Pringle Group. His background includes working for large Housing Associations in various support and management roles. Antony started his career as a quantity surveyor for a local company in Haverhill, Suffolk which had a contract for maintenance inspections on social housing stock in Islington (the most densely populated borough in the UK according to the 2011 census). Visits took place three days a week, inspecting about 20 houses a day! He still recalls some of the appalling living conditions people endured and how it affected them. He is delighted to be a Regional Champion for The Almshouse Association. Living with OCD, Antony has an understanding of invisible pain and aims to use the knowledge and experiences of his personal and working life to shape the service he provides and is happy to pass on his knowledge.



The full list of Regional Champions:

- Richard Knipe, The Spalding Almshouse Charity – Lincolnshire
- Anya Mathewson, Mulberry Property Management – Yorkshire
- Paul Mullis, Durham Aged Mineworkers' Homes Association – County Durham, Tyne and Wear, Northumberland and Scotland
- David Healey, Sir Josiah Mason Trust – Birmingham, West Midlands and Warwickshire
- Joe Waters, Eventide Homes – Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight
- Karen Percival, Okehampton United Charity – Devon and Cornwall
- Susie Coen, Salisbury City Almshouse & Welfare Charities – Wiltshire
- Margaret Stewart, Frances Darlington Charity – Lancashire
- Antony Cullup, Cambridge Pringle Group – Cambridgeshire

If you would like to talk to us about becoming a Regional Champion for your area, please do get in touch by emailing gerryharmon@almshouses.org

Margaret Stewart

Margaret is a director in two family businesses; a road haulage business supplying local authorities, the agricultural, horticultural, construction and leisure industries, and an architectural glazing company supplying local authorities, commercial and domestic customers. Margaret has been a trustee and clerk to Frances Darlington Charity since 1990 and is on the Board of Trustees for The Almshouse Association.



2022 CALENDAR

23 March	Induction Seminar for Trustees and Clerks	London
4 May	Seminar: Looking after your residents	Salisbury
15 June	AGM	Wolverhampton
15 June	Members Day	Wolverhampton
2 Nov	Trustees and Clerks Seminar	Saffron Walden

Being a PCC secretary and parish administrator, Margaret is associated with her local church and community, supporting families at times of baptisms, weddings and funerals. She is also a member of the Diocesan Synod. She enjoys supporting charities and is looking forward to her role as a Regional Champion.

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