



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

Registered Charity Number 245668 Company Number 04678214
**Minutes of the Seventy-Second Annual General Meeting held @
One Great George Street, Westminster, London, SW1P 3AA
on Thursday 15 June 2023 at 9:30 – 9:45am**

1. Chairman Update: Elizabeth Fathi

EF reflected on the past year. The following is an extract of her comments:

EF commented on how it had been an honour and a privilege to serve as Chairman to the TAA. During the course of the last 6 years, the Board has welcomed a new Chief Executive, Nick Phillips, who along with new and existing members of staff, is committed to delivering the Association's strategy. On behalf of Members and the Board, EF expressed their sincere thanks to NP and the team.

The Almshouse Association (TAA) has begun a new era, providing a more accessible, approachable, interactive, and responsive service in a rapidly changing and challenging regulatory and legislative environment. The TAA second strategic plan focuses on actions in four key areas: buildings, engagement, raising profile and encouraging new almshouses. Last year saw the start of implementation.

This Members Day is a celebration of compassion, companionship, and community, all of which are found in abundance in the almshouses. Charitable spirit lies at the heart of almshouses. It is the keystone on which they are built and sustained. It is why residents find more than just a roof and why trustees continue to volunteer their time, skills, and energy. Almshouses need to continue to be high quality, easily identifiable, groups of visual belonging.

EF urged the members to keep their identifiable and historic groups of buildings going and to build more, which will go a long way to encourage existing and future trustees, residents, and members of the public to continue to support and be interested in almshouses.

EF reminded everyone that almshouses are believed to be the oldest model of charity. Summing up EF stated:

“We must always remember our deep roots and always remember we are different, and proud of it”.

EF finished by giving her thanks to everyone at TAA for their commitment and dedication, with special thanks to NP, the Board members and advisory members for their support, companionship, and friendship during her time as Trustee and Chairman.

2. Introduction: Chairman of the Board: Elizabeth Fathi

The Chairman welcomed all members and outlined the procedures for the meeting:

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held at The Grand Station, Wolverhampton on Wednesday 15th June, 2022, were voted upon and agreed to be correct.

Proposed: Diana Hoy – The Legacy East Almshouse Partnership

Seconded: Mike Seaman – Day’s and Atkinson’s Almshouse Charity

Carried and adopted.

3. Election of Board Members: Elizabeth Fathi

The change of Articles made in 2019 restricts re-appointments to three terms of three years. The nominations are within that context and overseen by the Nominations Committee.

The following four trustees are due to retire and resubmit themselves for re-election.

Willie Hartley Russell – New Chairman of TAA

Elizabeth Fathi – Trustee

John Boughton – Trustee

Tricia Scouller - Trustee

Proposed: Martin Smith – The Poland Trust

Seconded: Juliet Aimes-Lewis – Richmond Charities

Each member for re-election received unanimous votes in favour with no objections.

The re-election was taken en bloc.

The Chairman thanked and congratulated the re-appointees.

4. Confirmation of the New Chair: Willie Hartley-Russell

Subject to re-election last November, TAA started the process of electing a new chairman and three candidates put their names forward.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, EF congratulated Willie Hartley Russell as the newly appointed Chairman of TAA with immediate effect. EF handed over chairmanship of the meeting to WHR.

WHR, who is currently the vice-Chairman, has been a member of the board for a number of years and has a lifelong association with the almshouse movement. Donnington Hospital Trust has been under the patronage of the Hartley Russell family since 1632. More recently WHR and the trustees of the charity came to the assistance of 18 almshouses that were with the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers, and they are now managed by the trustees of Donnington Hospital Trust.

5. Presentation and Adoption of the 2022 Annual Report and Accounts: Mr S J Ling – Honorary Treasurer

SL summarised the outcome of last year as a net deficit of £131,399 with a reduction in the value of our investments of £704,445.

In 2022 the total income amounted to £822,535 which came from a number of sources. Restricted income came to about 15% of the total. Of the total income, 25% came from investments, 21% fundraising, 12% paid services (seminars, etc.) and 42% member subscriptions.

Expenditure came to £953,934. 17% from restricted funds. Overall staff costs were 53%, office expenses 33% with part coming from restricted funds, and strategic spending was 13%.

In respect of income available for general purposes, excluding restricted income and expenditure, our income has not matched our expenditure since 2017. We have been fortunate to have substantial reserves and also sometimes our net gains on our investments have covered our annual deficits. In recent years, we have made a conscious decision to spend some of our reserves and also on improving and increasing the services and support available to members, which has at times stretched the Association financially.

We have also set aside part of our funds and called it our strategic reserve. In recent years, it has been expended on research, revision to the standards of almshouse management, increased staffing, and an enhanced IT offering, so this series of deficit was not unexpected and was budgeted throughout.

Our funds total £11.9m 57% is restricted which can only be used for specific purposes. 33% is held as investments, part is endowment and part fund designated by the trustees. A terminal reserve is held in the unlikely event that the Association has to cease which amounts to 3%, 4% strategic reserve which leave just under 3% of our resources for general purposes. The deficits in recent years and expected in the current have and will deplete this fund. 63% of funds invested in the stock market and 25% in loans to members. Just 3% is in bank balances, current assets, and liabilities.

The Association continues to be financially strong, and well positioned to continue to provide support to our members.

Our Auditors, Buzzacott LLP, have signed off the financial statements with a clean report.

The motion to adopt was proposed.

Proposed: David Healy – Sir Josiah Mason’s Trust

Seconded: Paul Budd OBE, Hospital of St John

The votes were unanimously recorded in favour and none against.

Carried and adopted.

6. Re-appointment of Auditors recommended: Buzzacott LLP

Buzzacott LLP have signed off The Associations financial statement with a clean report.

Proposed: Paul Budd OBE – Hospital of St John

Seconded: Juliet Aimes-Lewis – Richmond Charities

The votes were recorded unanimously in favour and none against.

Carried and adopted.

7. New Chair Update: Willie Hartley Russell

WHR gave thanks to the Board for placing their trust in him as the new Chairman. He thanked EF as the outgoing Chairman of the Association for her outstanding contribution and leadership.

The following is an extract of WHR's comments.

TAA is a membership organisation made up of 1600 charities providing 37,000 almshouses. As a movement TAA are the size of a medium size housing association and is here to serve almshouse charities. Almshouses are the oldest and best form of social housing. Almshouse charities provide some of the best accommodation in the social housing sector, providing warm, secure, and safe homes for residents as well as promoting independent living.

A recent report looking at Longevity from a Bayes Business School, concluded that those fortunate to move into one of the UK's 37,000 almshouses could extend their lifespan by as much as 2 1/2 years. "What a great endorsement for the movement".

During WHR's Chairmanship he would like to focus on the following five areas: legislation and regulation, financial stability and fundraising, Billingbear Lodge, research and 2023/2029 Strategy. There is a need to ensure that the Almshouse model that has flourished for the last 1000 years, remains as relevant today as it always has been.

Finally, WHR gave his thanks to the Board, particularly EF, NP and all the Executives for their tireless work to support the Almshouse movement.

On a personal note, WHR invited members to contact him via TAA should the need arise to speak with him.

8. CEO Update: Nick Phillips

The following is an extract of NP's comments.

NP gave his and the teams personal thanks to EF for her vision, ambition and encouragement to "challenge ourselves to think further and greater for the Association and the almshouse movement. We have found it hugely stimulating to have EF as our Chairman. EF also led the Association to think beyond the shores of Great Britain, engaging with our European partners."

NP presented EF with a painting of an almshouse she knew well on behalf of the team. NP noted that he received a letter of gratitude from the collective group of almshouses in Holland which expressed their thanks to EF for her passion in connecting to the European almshouses network and wished her the best for the future and hope that she will continue to grow international connections.

NP gave an overview of the achievements of the association under EF's term, the completion of the 2018 – 2023 Strategy, impactful government engagement, a complete review and redraft of SAM (Standards of Almshouse Management), increased engagement and PR, research, uniqueness of almshouses, loans, and grants.

NP closed by referring to the very real threats to the almshouse movement from increased regulation shaping centuries old objectives, the lack of succession of trustees and the challenge of maintaining historic buildings in the face of increasing costs.

9. Any Other Business

On behalf of all members, Juliet Aimes-Lewis of Richmond Charities gave thanks to EF for her hard work and dedication as Chairman over the years.

10 Q&A

There were no further questions.