



THE CITY OF WELLS ALMSHOUSES



Annual Report 2018/19

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Chairman of Trustees

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The City of Wells Almshouses (CWA) is an unincorporated trust administered by the City of Wells Almshouses Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Both are registered charities numbers: 1040554 and 1159162 respectively. The CIO is the corporate trustee of CWA and the CIO is governed by a Board of Trustees—see page 5 for details.

CWA is a registered housing provider, regulated by Homes England.

Our aim is to provide good quality, affordable social housing for older people who have a housing need and who have a connection with the City of Wells.

Foreword

By Nick Wilson, Chair of the Trustees

During 2018/19 the Trustees and staff have continued to progress the Charity's long term projects designed to meet the strategic aim of securing a thriving, viable long term future for the almshouses. Related to this it is important to ensure that we make best use of our land holdings and a Land Committee comprising Trustees and the CEO has been set up during the year to take this forward.

Work highlighted above has taken place in tandem with our day to day activities to maintain the fabric of the almshouses so that they meet the needs of our current and future residents. Our core objective remains to ensure the provision of homes that are warm, safe and comfortable and here we have continued with our programme of installing wet rooms to enhance bathroom accessibility. Heating systems that proved inefficient and costly have been replaced. To assist in access around the site for those with mobility issues, various paths have been levelled and improved. The refurbishment of our historic sedilia has also been completed and I would like to express my thanks to the four organisations who assisted us with grants for this work.

Of huge importance was the creation of an additional property in Llewellyn's so that we can now offer accommodation to a new resident. A 'Pavilion' with insulation and heating has been built which can be used as a communal facility throughout the year.

A resident satisfaction survey has been undertaken this year and I am pleased to report that satisfaction levels across CWA are high. The survey has also raised views from respondents, which if adopted, would involve changes to the Charity's terms and conditions of residency and the Trustees are considering these currently.

This year we have completed our fundraising strategy for the refurbishment of the chapel, an architect has been appointed to assist with this project and we are aiming to apply for listed building consent for the work by the end of the year. The other major project in hand is the plan to convert the old mortuary into a further almshouse and we are also aiming to apply for planning permission by the year end.

Raising the profile of the almshouses locally and among visitors to Wells remains an important objective for us and this year we have held three extremely successful open days. The donations received at the events have been allocated to the chapel refurbishment fund. These open days, although enjoyable, require planning, preparation and managing on the day and I would like to thank all those who contributed to make the occasions a success. We also held a WW1 Commemoration event in the chapel which was very well received and we are planning similar awareness-raising events in the future.

I would like to thank Michael Barnes, who resigned as a Trustee this year, for his contribution during his time on the Board. Also my thanks go to my fellow Trustees and our staff, residents and volunteers for their hard work and the support and encouragement they have offered me during a very busy year.

Best wishes

Nick Wilson

Accountants :

MHA Monahans
Fortescue House
Court Street
Trowbridge
BA14 8FA

Bankers:

NatWest
7 High Street
Wells
BA5 2AD

The Charity Bank

182 High Street
Tonbridge
TN9 1BE

Solicitors:

Tozers
Broadwalk House
Southernhay
West
Exeter
EX1 1UA

Land Agents:

Carter Jonas
Ground Floor
St James House
Lower Bristol
Road
Bath
BA52 3BH

Another Busy Year...

16 / 17 Llewellyn's: The refurbishment of 16 Llewellyn's into two flats was completed at the end of December 2018. In refurbishing the properties the residents lost the use of their communal room. However, this has now been replaced by a pavilion situated at the far end of the terrace which is now being used by residents and we hope that it will continue to be a useful and popular resource.

On-going projects: During this year our Trustees have approved in principle the refurbishment of CWA's chapel. A fundraising strategy has been adopted and we plan to submit a listed building planning application before the end of 2019.

A group of residents and Trustees have been working on the upgrading of the Guild Room to make it more user friendly for residents. To date the heating has been replaced, new furnishings chosen and purchased. Currently we are awaiting the installation of a new kitchen and listed building consent for the secondary glazing of the windows.

The next stage of our project to redevelop the old mortuary into further Almshouse accommodation is underway. An architect has been appointed and an ecological survey has been completed. The next step will be for Trustees to agree the proposed design of the building, apply for planning permission and undertake consultation with interested parties. Finally, the sedilia has been restored this year and we wish to thank all those organisations who contributed grant aid to enable us to complete the much needed work to this historic feature at the almshouses.

Our Trustees: We extend a warm welcome to our new Trustees:

- **Celia Wride:** the former Mayor of Wells who has become a Trustee following her ex-officio role in 2018.
- **Richard Quarry:** a Chartered Quantity Surveyor.

Our ongoing capital and refurbishment programmes:

Planned work in the above area has continued throughout the year with the key aim of maintaining warm and comfortable homes for our residents in addition to any works identified in our decennial survey. Areas of progress included:

- ◇ Installing one new wet room, a form of improvement that enables residents to remain in their homes if their mobility is reduced
- ◇ Installing a new kitchen for a resident who was no longer able to use her cooker as it was at ground level
- ◇ Replacing inefficient heaters in three properties
- ◇ Re-laying paving stones in Willes and Stills to correct an uneven surfaces.
- ◇ The completion of secondary glazing at Llewellyn's almshouses and our programme of double / secondary glazing overall is virtually complete. In terms of the glazing improvement programme this leaves only the windows in the communal areas in Bubwith and the windows in the Guild Room to complete.

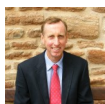
Our properties:

Currently all our properties are occupied and we have welcomed 3 new residents to the almshouses in the last year. We also have 7 potential residents on our waiting list.

Another
Busy
Year...

by
Althea
Howarth
CEO

Board of Trustees



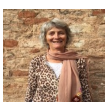
Nick Wilson - Chairman

Retired Headmaster and a member of the Board since 2012. A Chapter nominee.



Charles Cain

Retired Deputy Headmaster
Appointed October 2017.



Stella Ainsworth

Resident appointed in July 2018.



Simon Bruce

Chartered Accountant and a member of the Board since 2006. A Chapter nominee.



Carol Cox

City Council nomination since 2016.



The Very Reverend, Dr John Davies

The Dean of Wells, ex-officio Trustee since November 2016.



Andrew Fawcett

Retired International Trade Consultant.
Appointed March 2017.



John North

Director, JGN Consulting Ltd.
Appointed July 2018.



Richard Quarry

Chartered Quantity Surveyor
Appointed January 2019.



Chris Vigar

Marketing consultant
Appointed July 2018.



Shirley Watt

Retired Chartered Accountant,
Appointed to the Board in 2015.



Celia Wride

City Council nomination
Since July 2018.

Staff Team

Althea Howarth

Chief Executive



Joined CWA in September 2016. BA (Hons) housing & development, Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing has extensive experience as a social housing director and as a consultant.

Patrick McMahon

Finance Controller &
Charity Secretary



Chartered Accountant.
Joined CWA May 2019.

Caroline Tollworthy

Scheme Manager



Joined the Trust in January 2013. Had previously worked in residential lettings and voluntary sector housing posts.

Graham Perry

Handyman



Previously worked for BT.
Joined CWA in June 2010.



A Year In the life of...

ALMSHOUSE OPEN DAYS:

During the year we have continued to open our almshouses to the public to raise awareness of what is a 'hidden gem' within the city of Wells. To this end we increased our number of open days to three this year and they have been truly successful. We also benefitted from beautiful weather on all three occasions and welcomed more people than ever before to view our gardens and beautiful buildings. Also, this year, two of our residents kindly opened their homes to visitors all of whom remarked upon their high standards of décor and finish.

In the picture below the Grey Dogs Jazz Band can be seen entertaining visitors at our July open day; they proved to be very popular and we hope that they will return next year.



At the events there were excellent homemade cakes baked by our residents and Trustees on offer together with freshly prepared ploughman's lunches. Our thanks goes to the local businesses who once again contributed ingredients for our ploughman's lunches and to all those who worked so hard to make the days such a success.

ENERGY AWARD: During the year the Almshouses has been recognised for conserving energy in the South West Energy Efficiency Awards. Trustees and management were congratulated for committing to the project to upgrade its historic windows, some of which date from the mid-15th century. Pictured opposite, at the award ceremony, are Nick Wilson (right), Chair of Trustees together with Mukti Mitchell from Mitchell & Dickinson who installed the bespoke windows.



WW1 COMMEMORATION EVENT: Our chapel provided a splendid setting for commemorating the 100th anniversary of the First World War Armistice. Chris Vigar, one of our Trustees, arranged the event and recitals of WW1 songs and poems were performed to a packed audience. Proceeds from this event and the open days will contribute towards the planned restoration of the chapel. Following on from the success of this event others are being planned.



CONVERSION 16/17 LLEWELLYN'S: The completion of the conversion of 16 Llewellyn's into two properties has enabled CWA to provide one additional property for an older person. We were delighted that the Mayor of Wells, the Honourable Celia Wride, joined us and cut the ribbon. Guests were invited to look around the new properties which offer the residents secondary glazing, gas central heating, modern fitted kitchens and wet rooms.



The Finances for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2019

INCOME

Our total income for the year was approximately £310,000 comprising housing charges to residents, investment income and a gain on disposal of some agricultural land.

EXPENDITURE

Our total expenditure during the year was £225,000 mainly comprised of property upkeep costs, property improvements and staff remuneration.

OVERALL OUTCOME

Our net income of £85,000 together with gains on our investments and land value appreciation of approximately £90,000, meant that our total surplus for the year was £175,000 and this will be retained by the Charity in its reserves for the benefit of our current and future residents. In the last 10 years we have spent approximately £1,200,000 on improvements to our properties by way of upgrading facilities, installing double glazing, improving access and installing wet rooms. The Trustees are confident that they have the resources to cope with a number of potential adverse events as well as ensuring that our residents are housed in comfortable, secure and pleasant accommodation that meets current day standards and expectations.

About the City of Wells Almshouses

There are five Almshouse buildings in the City of Wells Almshouses and following the refurbishment of 16 Llewellyn's in 2018 there are now 33 individual flats and cottages within the complex. The earliest of the almshouses was founded in the 15th century through a legacy provided from the estate of the former Bishop of Bath & Wells and Treasurer to King Henry IV, Nicholas Bubwith. Bubwith's Almshouse is located next to St Cuthbert's Churchyard and includes a chapel and Guild Room.

Yet more accommodation was provided through legacies from Bishop Still and Bishop Willes and in 1637 the Bubwith site was

expanded again through a legacy from Walter Brick, a Burgess of the City. In the early 18th century an alderman of the city, Henry Llewellyn, left a legacy to build Almshouses on a separate site in Priest Row, to the north of St Cuthbert's Church. Originally separate charities, they are all now part of CWA. As well as their much admired architecture, the Almshouses also have beautiful gardens, which are tended by the residents and volunteers.

See our website for more about us, our organisation and our buildings:
www.wellsalmshouses.org.uk

Follow us:

