



# EXETER HOMES TRUST BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2023

## *Compassion, Companionship and Community*

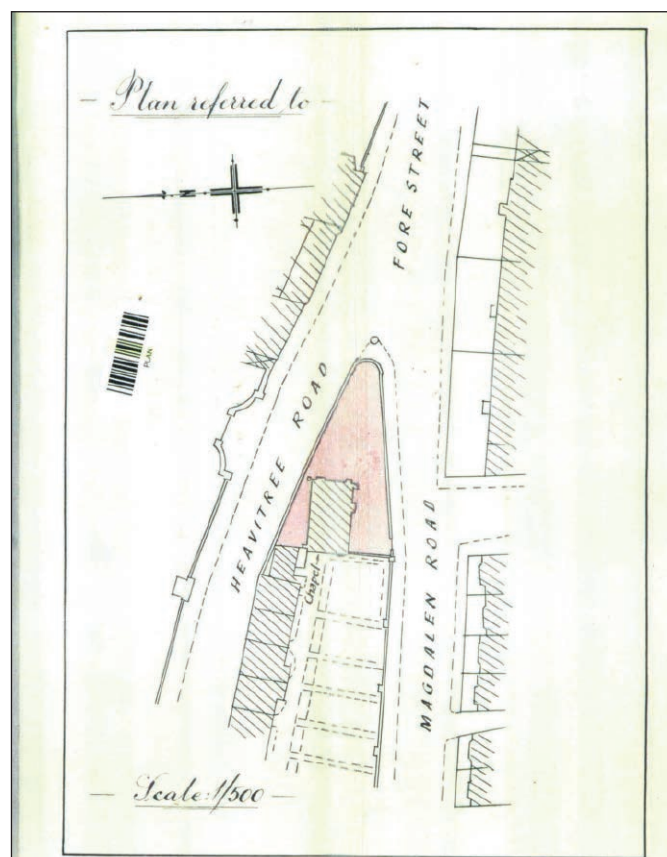
**Exeter Homes Trust manages 143 Almshouses on eight estates in the city of Exeter. Of these 143 Almshouses, Magdalen Cottages (13No.), Livery Dole Cottages (11No.), Atwill Palmer (24No.) and Grendon Road (24No. to be remodelled to 22No.), 72No. are Grade 2 listed built in the Victorian era, hence about half of Exeter Homes Trust's stock.**

Built from stone under pitched roofs these 72No. Victorian Almshouses are generally in good repair but, as with most similar buildings of that era, they function in a different manner to modern buildings. At the time of construction, (on average ~150 years ago) they would have been heated by open fires which would have drawn the air through the building and up through the chimneys resulting in many air changes per hour. Today buildings are much more sealed and so moisture generated in use has to be dealt with in a different way. The chimneys are no longer in use for open fires and the buildings heated with central heating or night storage heaters. Moisture is generated on a much greater scale by the use of showers and cooking.

Fairpark Almshouses (12No.), Hurst Trump Almshouses (8No.) and North Park Almshouses (12No.), totalling 32No. were built in the mid-war era and were heated by open fires served by chimneys and the buildings are now heated with central heating or night storage heaters. These Almshouses, too, would have drawn the air through the building and up through the chimneys resulting in many air changes per hour.

Exeter Homes Trust urges you to please ensure you comply with the Bulletin on obviating condensation (which is being redistributed).

The 11No. Almshouses at Livery Dole Cottages abut a main road from the east serving the centre of Exeter. When Livery Dole Cottages were built in Victorian times, the traffic along that thoroughfare would have been horse-drawn. Internal combustion has superseded horse-power, but we may yet be entering the net-zero era.





## Progress on Developments, Capital Expenditure

As you will be aware, in the last decade Exeter Homes Trust has developed 24No. Almshouses at Culverland Road. Remodelled 13No. Almshouses at Magdalen Cottages and remodelled 24No. Almshouses at Atwill Palmer.

Exeter Homes Trust is well-placed having remodelled or developed 61No. (42.6%) of its stock of 143No. Almshouses and is poised to commence 22No. (reduced from 24No.) Almshouses at Grendon Road in two Phases, with Phase One commencing on 27th February 2023.

The effect of some ~300,000 homeless people in England (Source: Crisis) automatically reverberates to the West Country. There are reportedly ~4,000 applicants for housing in the locality.

Planning consent for creating 31No. (an extra 19No.) new Almshouses at Fairpark Road was achieved in 2021.

There's a misconception that Exeter Homes Trust has an inexhaustible supply of money to be expended without regard to priority. For example we are committed to undertake works at Hurst Trumps arising from the five-year survey. Then attending to the ~43 year old heat network serving the 15No. one bedroom and studios at Livery Dole Flats. Both capital intensive commitments.

Investing in the future of Almshouses providing communities with compassion and companionship is essential to meet Exeter Homes Trust's public benefit and charitable purpose.

## Weekly Maintenance Charges (WMCs)

Exeter Homes Trust became Registered Provider A1921 in 1976 and is regulated by the Charity Commission (201530) and the Regulator for Social Housing.

As you will be aware, Exeter Homes Trust froze WMCs for the calendar year 2021.

At the meeting of Exeter Homes Trust Ltd on 19/01/2023, board members unanimously resolved to increase WMCs by 7% effective from 1st April 2023. This takes account of the Government imposing a 7% rent (WMCs) ceiling to social housing rent increases in the 2023-24 financial year as a temporary measure amid the cost of living crisis.

For the future, WMCs will be reviewed annually with a view to adjusting with effect from the 1st April in that year. In other words Exeter Homes Trust's WMC review cycle will harmonise with the Government's fiscal year.

For the current year, as a Beneficiary you will benefit from a WMC freeze for the months of January, February, March 2023.

You will, of course, receive a bespoke letter from Exeter Homes Trust detailing the revised amount of WMCs payable for your Almshouse, effective from 1st April 2023.