



EXETER HOMES TRUST BULLETIN

OCTOBER 2021

PLANNING SUCCESSFULLY APPROVED FOR FIFTH REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Exeter Homes Trust has been successful in having its planning application approved to redevelop the Fairpark Almshouses on Fairpark Road.

The Trust, is triple regulated by the Charity Commission, Homes England and the Regulator for Social Housing. A Housing Association since 1976, it owns and manages 143 Almshouses across eight estates in the city.

We are continually re-evaluating buildings to identify improvements that could be made to future proof the accommodation, making it as sustainable and comfortable as possible for our residents.

In the last eight years we have brought 43% of our housing stock up to a contemporary standard, and have planning and listed building consent to remodel Grendon Road Almshouses, taking the improved dwellings to nearly 60%.

The redevelopment of these almshouses relates to the three 2-storey residential blocks, built in 1928. The proposal is for the demolition of the almshouses and the erection of 31 affordable homes.

The site provides an opportunity to help meet local housing needs by utilising a previously developed site, not making the most efficient use of land. In total, an extra 19 affordable homes will be provided.

There are many planning and public merits of the proposed scheme.

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Exeter Homes Trust

Currently the buildings consist of 12 apartments well below the national space standards and local authority requirements. The 31 new larger homes will meet modern building regulations and will be considerably more energy efficient and low carbon.

The appearance of the proposed development, although contemporary, is influenced by the traditional characteristics of the conservation areas.

The scheme has also been carefully designed to be of a similar height and scale to the surrounding development.

Provision will be made for defined, proper and usable amenity space for residents, which is currently unavailable. Residents will benefit from private balconies and semi-private landscaped communal gardens.



The proposal will be a “car-free” development, with no on-site parking. Cycle and mobility scooter storage is to be provided in three accessible locations, with two integral waste/recycling areas.

Currently, access is steep and unsuitable for people with mobility issues. In the proposal, suitable and safe access will be provided by level access points, for all people including those with reduced mobility and in wheelchairs. This is a significant public benefit of the scheme.

The development will also increase household expenditure within the area and provide about 35 construction jobs per year, during the construction phase.

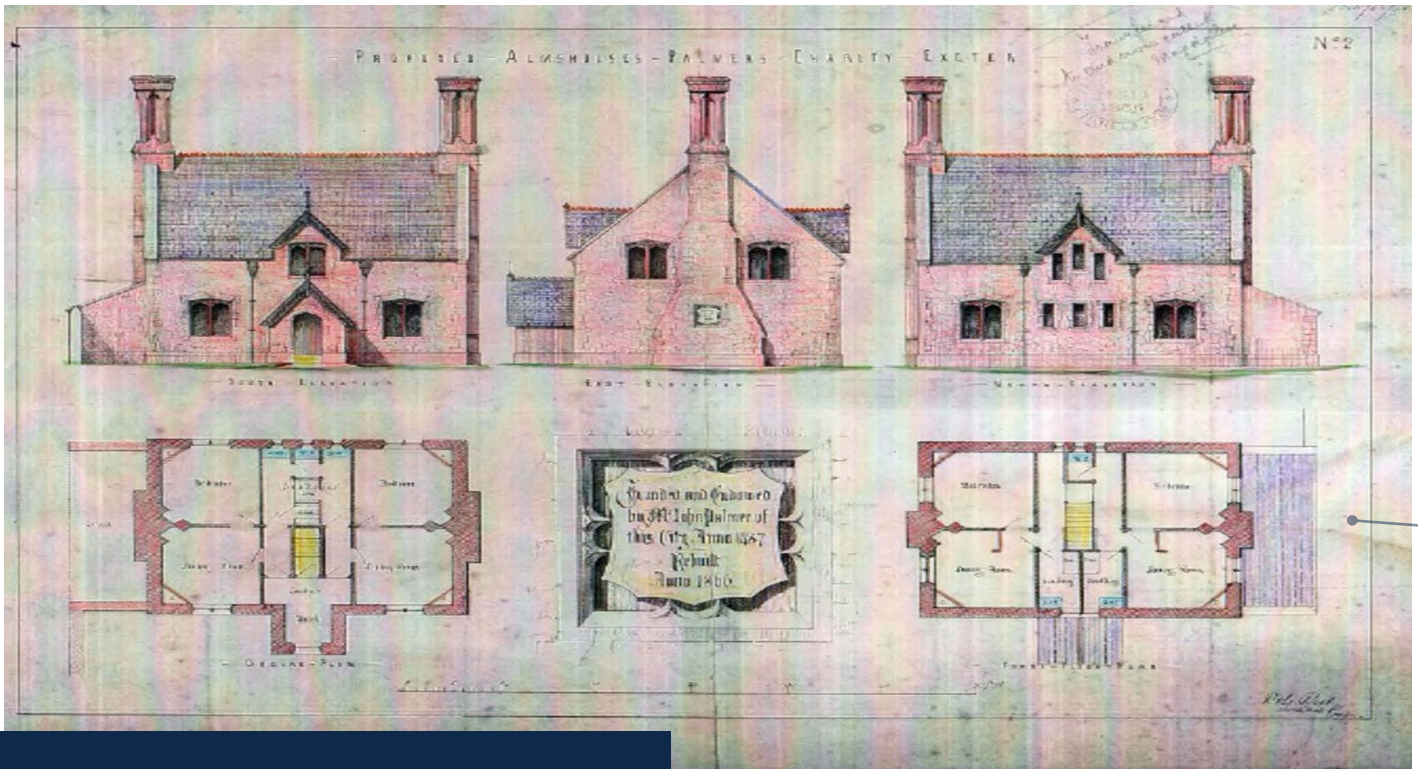
The result of the options appraisal found that the demolition of Fairpark Almshouses is unavoidable and necessary to meet the significant social housing shortfall.

Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework* states that “Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”.

A balancing exercise has been carried out and it is considered the public benefits of the scheme can outweigh this harm. The location of the application site, within the Exeter settlement boundary and on previously developed land, represents a sustainable form of development.

Furthermore, the development would secure the optimum viable use of the site and deliver 31 much-needed affordable homes against the backdrop of housing under-delivery in the city. This weighs heavily in favour of the scheme.





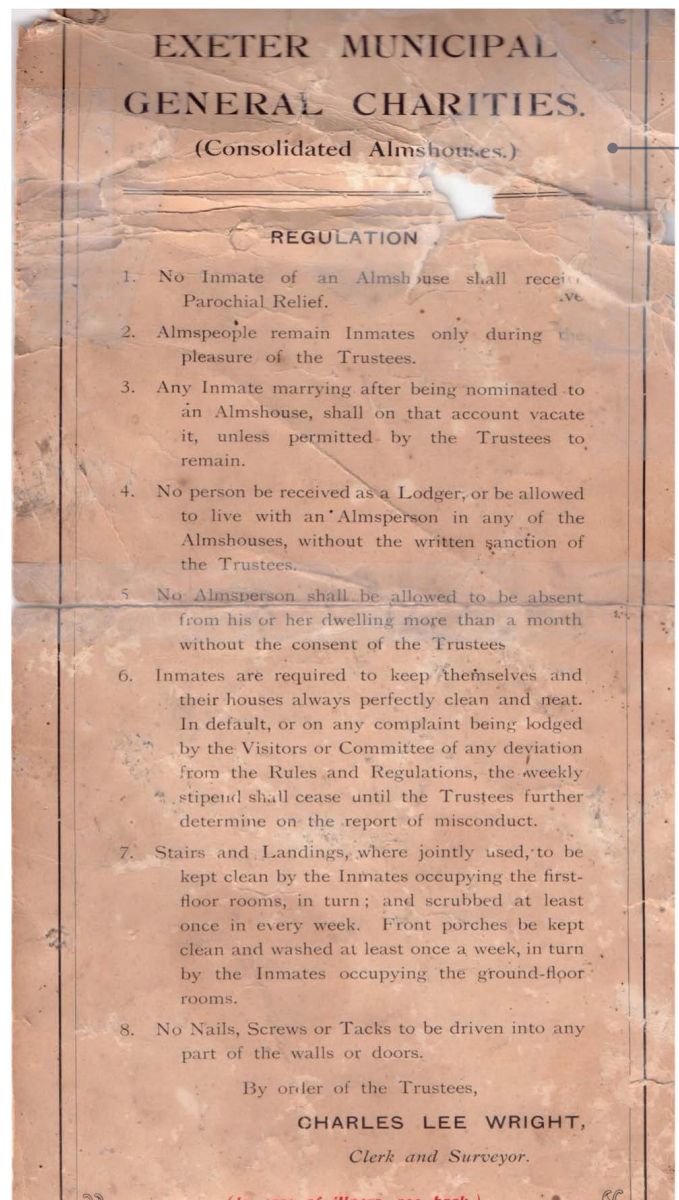
A BRIEF HISTORY OF ALMSHOUSES

Almshouses date from medieval times, embracing the giving of help to those in need. Benefactors built and bequeathed almshouses (sometimes known as hospitals or a place of hospitality). The benefactors also provided food, water, clothing and fuel to burn.

The Victorian era saw the advent of workhouses, where 'poor law guardians' were obligated to provide accommodation for paupers. The rudimentary accommodation was free but demanded a stint of manual labour, in return for very basic food and shelter. The alternative was sleeping rough.

In 1897, the social reformer Lord Rowton, founded his first Rowton House at Vauxhall in London. This establishment provided c.380 beds in dormitories which were let at 6d per night. In the first year, there were over 140,000 'lets', making the establishment a commercially profitable enterprise.

Currently, there are 36,000 almshouses spread across 1,600 Almshouse charities in the UK. These almshouses are a step-up from the Victorian workhouses because they are individual homes.



Almshouses are amongst the most affordable forms of housing, often charging less than the HMG guidance of affordability and, in some cases, less than the Local Housing Allowance.

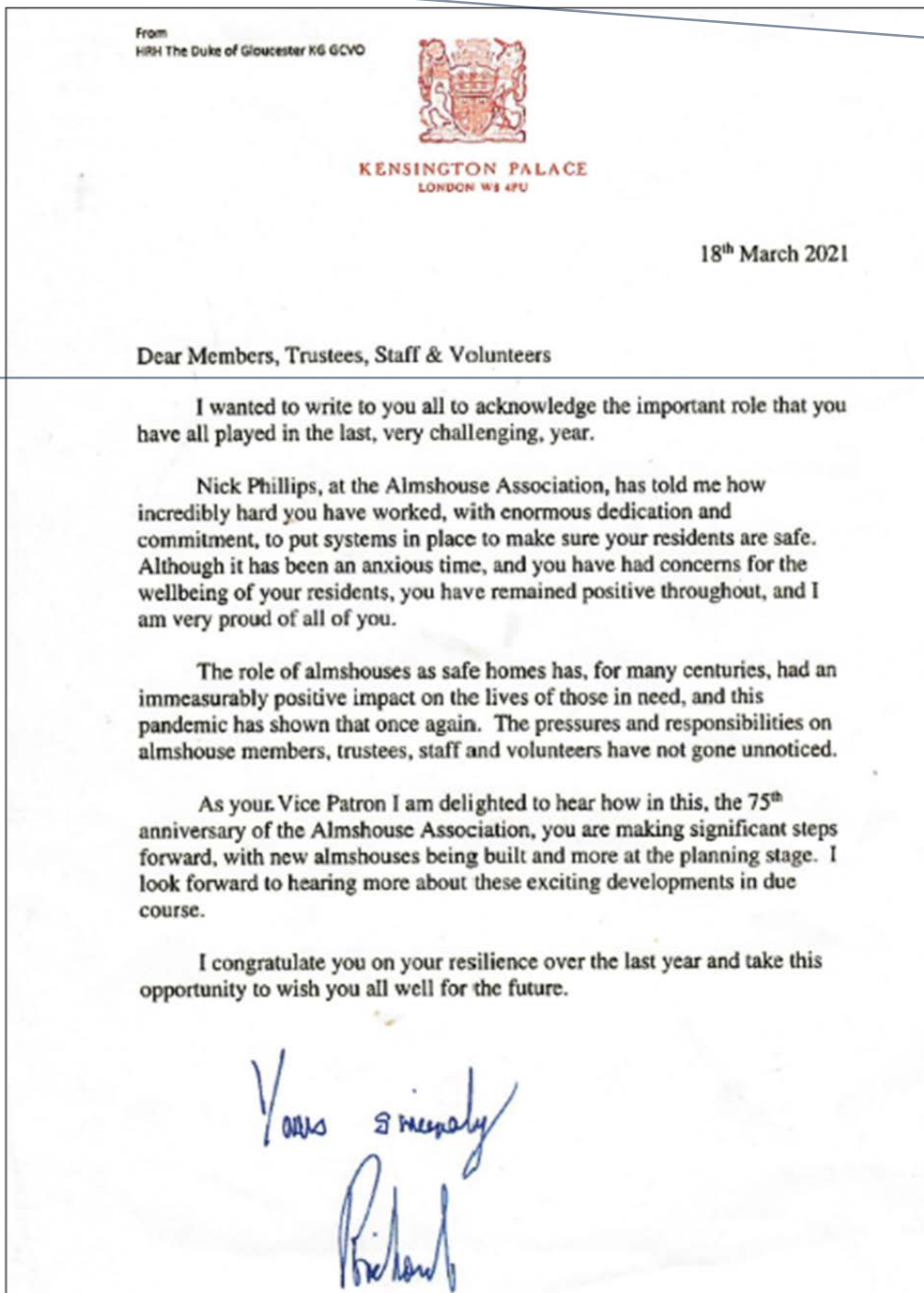
Therefore, almshouses should not create hardship for their residents, who will inevitably be eligible for housing benefit.

It is a fiduciary duty of a charity to build reserves for the future and to be prudent in finances. The Almshouse Association has often noted many of the charities which have drifted into financial jeopardy is because they have failed to increase weekly maintenance charges (WMCs) realistically.

Over the long-term, significant maintenance issues, or indeed remodelling of Almshouses to a contemporary standard, can only be dealt with by building reserves from WMC revenue.

Staffing and other essential costs will continue to rise. Post pandemic it is likely that inflation will rise, and costs will increase. Almshouse charities have an obligation to manage costs and income and review these annually to ensure the charity remains solvent in both the short and long-term.

What is certain, is that any Almshouse charity which does not progress, modernise or indeed stagnates, will inevitably fail its founding purpose.



Opposite top left:
Plan for Magdalen Cottages submitted to Charity Commission showing communal earth closet, sculleries, coal stores and no running water, dated ~February 14th 1866.

Opposite bottom left:
Inmate Regulations prevailing from ~1897 throughout the majority of the 20th Century.

Left:
Letter received from Almshouse Association Vice patron HRH the Duke of Gloucester.



IVOR HAYES, THREE DECADES EXETER HOMES TRUST'S GARDENER

Ivor Hayes joined Exeter Homes Trust (Exeter Municipal Charities) in August 1991 and has now completed 30 years of sterling service. Ivor tends to all of our eight estates in all seasons.

The communal gardens afford a complimentary setting for the 143 Almshouses and residents and visitors often remark on how well kept the lawns, shrubs, flowers and trees are. We respect and appreciate Ivor's hard work and commitment to keeping these gardens up to a professional standard, including encouraging plants & wildlife to thrive in these city gardens.




THE
QUEEN'S GREEN
CANOPY
—
THE PLATINUM JUBILEE 2022



Exeter Homes Trust's contribution to the Queen's Canopy The Platinum Jubilee 2022

EXETER HOMES TRUST LOCATIONS

Exeter Homes Trust owns 143 Almshouses across nine sites in Exeter, and buildings range from Victorian to mid-war, post-war and contemporary.



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| <p>1 Culverland Road EX4 6JJ
(24 x contemporary apartments)</p> | <p>6 North Park Almshouses, Magdalen Road EX2 4SU
(20th cent. buildings with 12 apartments)</p> |
| <p>2 Livery Dole Flats, Magdalen Road EX2 5DT
(15 x 1980s flats)</p> | <p>7 Fairpark Almshouses, Fairpark Road EX2 4HL
(12 x 20th cent. apartments)</p> |
| <p>3 Livery Dole Cottages, Magdalen Road EX2 5DT
(11 apartments in a 19th cent. building)</p> | <p>8 Hurst Trumps Almshouses, Fairpark Road EX2 4HL
(8 x 20th cent. apartments)</p> |
| <p>4 Grendon Road EX1 2NJ
(19th cent. building with 24 apartments)</p> | <p>9 Atwill Palmer, New North Road EX4 4JT
(24 apartments in 19th cent. buildings)</p> |
| <p>5 Magdalen Cottages, Magdalen Road EX2 4SX
(19th cent. buildings with 13 apartments)</p> | <p>10 Exeter Homes Trust Office
6 Southernhay West Exeter, EX1 1JG</p> |