

4. Methodist Homes (MHA)

Contact Name and Details	The Revd Dr Keith Albans Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality keith.albans@mha.org.uk
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1. General Report

- 1.1 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the opening of MHA’s first Home at Wallington in Surrey. From that first community of twelve women, MHA’s work has grown and developed to become one of the most well-respected care providers in the sector. We are the 22nd largest charity and named as the most trusted charity in the UK in 2014 by Third Sector’s Charity Brand Index – the highest out of all 150 charities named in the index. MHA now offers a range of high quality services to 16,000 individuals: 4,500 older people living in care homes, 2,500 older people living independently in a range of purpose-built apartments and 9,000 older people supported via Live at Home services in the community. Our services are delivered by 7,000 dedicated staff and enhanced by the commitment of 4,000 volunteers. In all of this, our mission remains as it has always been, to improve the quality of life for older people, inspired by Christian concern.
- 1.2 The past year has seen the advent of several management changes, stabilising the organisation around quality delivery and occupancy in our Care Homes and fully completing the post-acquisition integration of the Southern Cross homes. It has also seen us putting in place a number of enabling functions: marketing; policy; volunteering coordination; organisation development; internal communications; and an enhanced team to look at property development, sales and maintenance. These changes have enabled the Board to review the strategic direction of MHA and a new strategic plan for the next 10 years was due to be adopted in April 2015 (after this report went to print). In Southport, members of the Conference will receive a summary copy of the strategy and plans are in hand to share it with the wider Church in due course.
- 1.3 The environment within which MHA operates continues to be challenging. The combination of growing numbers of older people, on-going austerity measures and the expectation of many that their retirement income will be insufficient are just part of the demands on our services. Local Authority fee rates have fallen significantly in real terms every year since 2010-11 and continue to do so. The Annual Survey of UK Local Authority Usual Costs 2014-15 found that UK councils are providing an annual fee uplift of 1.7%, when 2.4% is necessary to keep up with cost inflation in care homes. If Local Authorities were to pay a fair price for care, it would clearly mean that MHA could do more for a greater number of older people.
- 1.4 There are also coming challenges to which we need to respond, in particular the implementation of the Care Act and whatever legislation a new government brings. The Care Act 2014 replaces 65 years of social care legislation with a single statute aiming to improve support and well-being with dignity, respect, independence and choice for people in need of care and emphasises equality, prevention and integration. The Act enshrines the new statutory principle of well-being and introduces the concept of meeting needs for all those who need care and support, rather than ‘providing services’. It also enshrines a duty on Local Authorities to deliver effective prevention and early intervention to help prevent, delay and reduce the development of needs for care and support. This renewed emphasis on prevention presents a key potential opportunity for MHA to promote our Live at Home schemes to help Local Authorities deliver on this duty.

- 1.5 MHA continues to keep its existing homes under review, both to ensure that they are able to meet the needs of today's older people and are also fit for the future. The redevelopment of our homes at Woking, Shirley (Croydon) and Poole continues, and in March 2015 we closed the existing homes at Exmouth and Bromley. These homes, originally built in 1905 and 1893 respectively, were no longer able to provide an environment appropriate to the care we seek to offer. We have worked closely with residents, families and staff to ensure that people are supported in these times of significant personal change. Both sites are to be redeveloped to provide almost 150 retirement living apartments, each with its own kitchen, bedroom, lounge and en-suite shower, with care and support packages available.
- 1.6 New assisted living schemes have been developed in Peterborough and Swindon and our ongoing partnership with Gladman, wherein MHA operates retirement living with care schemes which they have developed, continues with developments in Wolstanton, Staffordshire and Portishead near Bristol opening in 2015 and further developments are under construction in Yorkshire and Cheshire.
- 1.7 MHA are founding members of ARCO, the Associated Retirement Community Operators, and this aspect of our work continues to develop. In addition to ongoing developments in Auchlochan, we have begun work on a new retirement community in Pickering. This will eventually consist of 90 apartments and 78 bungalows, as well as communal facilities including a restaurant, coffee shop and hairdressing and beauty salons.
- 1.8 Residents in MHA's care homes took part once more in Your Care Rating, a national independent survey conducted by Ipsos MORI designed to give people an opportunity to express their views about a range of issues, in confidence, and enable care homes to benchmark their results. Satisfaction with the overall standard of the care homes in MHA was 97%, against a national average of 95%, with scores exceeding the national average in 16 of the 23 questions asked and matching it in the remaining seven.
- 1.9 MHA continues to develop staff members and encourage everyone to be involved in enabling residents to experience stimulation and enjoyment from personal care and daily routines in residential settings. Supporting the spiritual needs of older people remains at the heart of MHA's work, and the role of our chaplains continues to grow and develop. Their work is valued by residents and their families, as well as by colleagues and managers, and they play a significant part in developing a sense of community within our homes.
- 1.10 MHA is the largest employer of social care chaplains and music therapists in the UK, and this investment in chaplaincy, music therapy, reflexology and other forms of therapeutic support is one of the major uses of our charitable income. We are grateful for this continued support which is vital to the continuation and development of our work, as each and every gift helps us to improve the quality of life for older people. Legacy donations make up the majority of our charitable income and we have also continued to benefit from an increase in regular, monthly giving by many of our supporters.
- 1.11 Methodist Homes Sunday in 2014 raised in excess of £220,000, for which we offer grateful thanks. The date of MHA Sunday 2016 has been fixed for **Sunday 12 June**, although as always it can be moved to suit local circumstances. Worship materials will once again be produced and distributed with the spring edition of *Heart and Soul* and through Circuit Local Preachers' Secretaries and will be available on our website.

- 1.12 The latest audited accounts are available on request from our website or from Epworth House. The indications from the unaudited accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2015 are that MHA's finances are in a satisfactory position, which, with good stewardship, enables us to plan for the future with confidence. Our Annual Review, which tells the story of MHA's activities over the past year, is also available on the website or from Epworth House.
- 1.13 In beginning the next chapter of MHA's life, the Board and the Leadership Team have committed the organisation to an exciting future, building on the foundations of all that has been achieved in the past. The ambition to deliver more and better forms of care and support for even greater numbers of older people has been demonstrated so often in MHA's history, and that ambition remains both as a challenge and as an inspiration.

2. Church appointment to the Boards of MHA

- 2.1 David Hobbs was first appointed to the Boards of MHA in 2005, and returned for a second period of office in 2012. The Conference of 2014 appointed David as the Church's nominated Board member in accordance with SO 241. Due to personal circumstances David has decided to step down from the Board, and we record our thanks to him for his distinguished and dedicated contribution to the work of MHA.
- 2.2 In accordance with SO 241, we ask the Conference to recognise Dr David Hall as the Church's nominated Board member. David, an engineer by profession, was first appointed to the Board of MHA in 2006. He has previously served the Conference as Chair of the Connexional Allowances Committee.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

- 4/1. The Conference received the General Report of Methodist Homes.**
- 4/2. The Conference appointed Dr David Hall as the Conference's nominee to the Board of Methodist Homes, under Standing Order 241.**