

19. Methodist Homes for the Aged (MHA)

The theme for Methodist Homes Sunday 2009 is Choices, and the material produced by MHA for those leading worship underlines the crucial role that the ability to make choices has in promoting human well-being. The theme also takes us to the heart of the social and political context within which those providing services for older people operate, and underlines one of the key strategic principles which guides the work of MHA.

In our report to last year's Conference, reference was made to the forthcoming Green Paper on long-term care funding. At the time of writing that Green Paper has still to appear, something which points to the complexity of the issues involved, the increased numbers of older people requiring support and the financial resources required, both from individuals and from the state. Figures and headlines abound which point to the ageing population, not simply in the United Kingdom but throughout the world. In 2008 the Office for National Statistics announced that for the first time ever, the number of people aged over state pensionable age in the UK exceeded those aged under 16, and that the fastest growing age group in the population are those aged 80 years and over who currently constitute 4.5 per cent (2,749,507) of the total population.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection's report, *The State of Social Care in England 2007-2008*, states that while on the one hand, "People are looking for timely and individualised support to help live their lives as they choose", the reality is that "much remains to be

done to make personalised support a reality for people with the most complex needs". They conclude that, "despite improvements, most people still experience a 'one-size-fits-all' model of care that is not geared towards their individual needs".

Two major national strategy documents have been launched during the past year. In July 2008 the End of Life Care Strategy, *Promoting high quality care for all adults at the end of life*, was published. This covers adults in England and aims to provide people approaching the end of life with more choice about where they would like to live and die. It underlines the huge changes that have taken place in the demographics of death in relation to age profile, cause and place of death since 1900. Now around 65% of all deaths are of people aged over 75, and while most people hope to die at home, fewer than 1 in 5 have their choice met as around 58% of people die in hospital and 17% in a care home.

The other strategy document is the first ever *National Dementia Strategy*, published by the Department of Health. This sets out initiatives designed to make the lives of people with dementia, their carers and families better and more fulfilled. The key aims of the strategy are to increase awareness of dementia, ensure early diagnosis and intervention and radically improve the quality of care that people with the condition receive. These aspirations are backed by the injection of £150 million over the first two years, but come against a backdrop of around 700,000 people in the UK living

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with dementia and the likelihood of that number doubling over the next 30 years.

The aspiration to provide the choices necessary to meet the increased need of both volume and diversity of services for older people lies at the heart of MHA's strategy. This was reaffirmed on numerous occasions last year during the celebrations to mark MHA's 65th birthday, and it remains at the centre of all future planning. We remain focused on meeting the individual wishes of older people, founded on high quality, person-centred care, addressing people's spiritual and physical well-being and looking to improve the quality of life for older people inspired by Christian concern.

External and independent assessment of MHA's services, as well as the impression of those we seek to serve directly, are

important means of measuring how far these aspirations are reached. The report of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) for 2007/08 stated that "MHA care services performed well across all of the outcome areas. People were treated with dignity and had their privacy maintained while they received care. Both the care homes and the domiciliary care agencies exceeded similar services nationally." Our high standing is underlined by comparing MHA's performance against all other providers in the private and voluntary sectors, as shown in Figure 1.

MHA's performance, in terms of comparative facilities, is similarly impressive. Whereas on average the major corporate providers offer 88% of residents single rooms with 66% having en-suite toilet and shower facilities, MHA's

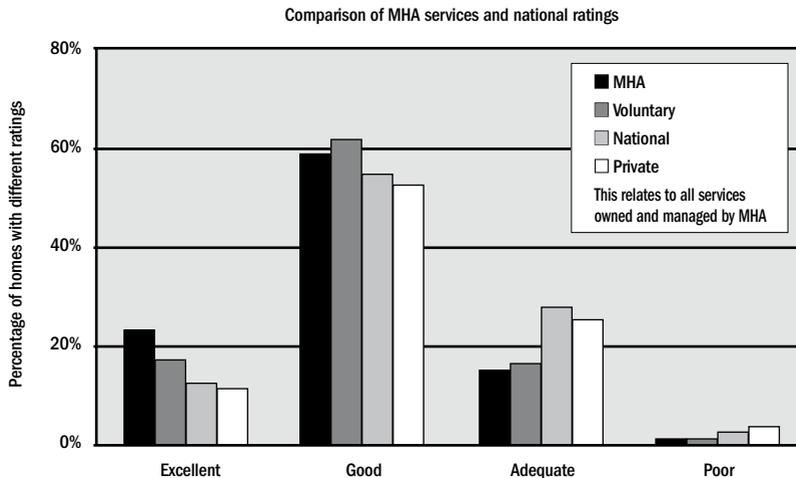


Fig 1: Source – *The State of Social Care Report 2008 (CSCI)*

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figures are 100% and 90% respectively. This positive picture was confirmed by our survey of resident satisfaction, and suggests that we are continuing to achieve high standards for older people. This report highlights the achievements of the past year as well as outlining plans for future years.

New Services

The current economic climate has had a limiting effect on our development plans, particularly with those schemes offering older people the opportunity to purchase apartments within housing schemes where a 24-hour care service is available. As a consequence, several planned developments are on hold, having obtained planning permission. Nevertheless, we have continued to add to the range of MHA services available.

- ∞ One of the biggest changes in the history of MHA is the acquisition of our first Retirement Community at Auchlochan in Lanarkshire, Scotland. Established in the 1970's as a Brethren foundation, set in 50 acres of gardens, woodland and lakes, Auchlochan provides a range of residential, dementia and nursing care homes and housing with 24-hour care to a community of around 400 older people.
- ∞ Beechville House at Bolton and The Homestead at Carterton in Oxfordshire were both opened successfully during 2008. Together they offer residential and nursing dementia care for 130 older people.

- ∞ Anjulita Court is a purpose built 62-bed residential and dementia care home on a new estate in Bedford, due to open in late summer 2009. Through the generosity of the Ibbett family, MHA is to lease the home on a peppercorn rent and manage it. Planning permission is being sought to develop housing with care apartments next to the home within the next year.
- ∞ We have completed the development of housing with care apartments adjacent to our existing projects at Hitchin and Penrith, as well as at a new site in Dore near Sheffield. These apartments are for sale, thus allowing people to retain their equity in property while benefiting from a 24-hour care service.
- ∞ In addition to establishing new services within MHA, we have continued to offer management services and expertise to other organisations who share MHA's values. In Autumn 2008 we entered into new agreements to manage the housing operations of the Sheffield Jewish Housing Association and the Frank Parkinson Yorkshire Trust in Sheffield and Leeds respectively.

Developing Existing Services

Alongside the new developments, we have continued to invest considerable resources in renewing and extending our existing care homes and housing facilities. Where this has not proved possible within the existing building we have looked to redevelop either on the existing site or nearby.

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- ∞ Planning permission was granted for the partial demolition and redevelopment of Granary House, one of our care homes in Whitstable, Kent. Building work has begun to create a new residential, nursing and specialist dementia care home which will become home to the current community at Cliff Dene during 2010.
- ∞ Planning permission is to be sought for the redevelopment of Hatherlow House, a small residential care home in Southport, which became part of MHA last year. The decision to close the home was made in March 2009 with residents moving to alternative MHA homes in Southport or Bolton, or other chosen homes.
- ∞ Homewood in Leamington Spa became part of MHA in 1952, the building having previously been a private house and then a hotel. For some time we have explored possible schemes for developing a new home on the current site, but this has not proved possible. Now we are delighted that the site of the former Abbacourt Hotel in Leamington Spa is being redeveloped as a care home for MHA which will open early in 2010.
- ∞ Plans are in hand for the redevelopment of Alexandra House in Dovercourt, Essex which dates from Edwardian times, and has been an MHA home since 1962. The redevelopment will see an increase in the number of residents and the provision of nursing and dementia care services.
- ∞ We completed the purchase of Paganell Grange, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire from Extra Care Charitable Trust, and have begun the work of extending the building to provide a dementia care wing.
- ∞ A major programme of refurbishment has been carried out at Willersley House in Hull. This is another long-standing MHA home where the building pre-dates its life as a care home. As well as redecoration and recarpetting, all of the residential rooms have been upgraded with improved access and often increasing their size. A similar programme has begun at Starr Hills in Lytham St Annes.
- ∞ As reported last year, we recognise that for many of those living in our housing schemes, the provision of extra facilities and services would increase the likelihood of them being able to live in the schemes for longer and preclude the need for them to move into residential care. A consultation exercise with residents, relatives and local authorities has been carried out in 12 schemes with a view to them becoming housing with care schemes, where a 24-hour care service will be provided by MHA staff. The response so far has been positive and work is underway to make the necessary changes to the buildings to allow the new service to begin. In housing schemes where such changes are not possible, we are continuing to explore the provision of additional services including laundry, shopping and cleaning.

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- ∞ Although much of our work takes place in residential communities, the largest single group of older people served by MHA are members of the Live at Home Schemes. The schemes continue to develop services which are designed to help their members remain as independent and active as possible, offering friendship and support to ward off isolation and loneliness. Much of this work continues to be carried out in partnership both with local authorities and local churches, and would not be possible without the commitment of countless volunteers.
- ∞ Recruiting and training quality staff, who share and demonstrate the values of MHA, remains a key to our success. We have continued to invest significantly in staff training, both that which is mandatory and that which develops individuals. We have extended the induction for new care staff to aid retention and now provide innovative training for all staff, using electronic systems of e-learning. Around 60% of care staff have now achieved NVQ level 2 or above.
- ∞ 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. Our network of around 100 chaplains is now an equal mix of volunteers and those employed by MHA, and their support has been enhanced during the past year by the recruitment of a second Chaplaincy Adviser. The contribution of chaplains is valued by residents and staff alike, and is also acknowledged by external inspectors as making a significant impact on the life of MHA's communities.
- ∞ We have also continued to develop and explore innovative ways of supporting the wider spiritual needs of older people who use MHA's services. This has been done partly through enhancing the programme of activities, both for individuals and for groups, and also through introducing various therapies for residents, including training staff to offer reflexology and massage, thus promoting relaxation.
- ∞ MHA continues to explore ways of offering meaningful end of life care to our residents and to support their families. "The Final Lap" training programme for care staff remains at the heart of this, and during the past year we have successfully developed two e-learning modules which are now being offered as part of induction training to all staff in our care homes and housing with care schemes.

MHA and the Churches

MHA's roots remain deeply embedded within Methodism, but MHA is an independent charity and the vast majority of our income comes from our fees for care and housing services, paid for by individuals and the State. Nevertheless, we value highly the many benefits that come to our service users because of our faith and values basis and our links with the Methodist Church and, increasingly,

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with other churches and faith groups. MHA once again expresses thanks through the Methodist Conference for the support that we receive, and our hope and prayer is that as our work continues to grow and develop in breadth and diversity, the support of the Church will develop as well.

- ∞ MHA is fortunate to benefit from the dedication of over 5,000 volunteers who give their precious time to older people, helping MHA to offer an extra special, person-centred service.
 - ∞ Many of our volunteers serve as MHA representatives in the Churches, Circuits and Districts of Methodism, and we ask that their role is supported and recognised at Circuit Meetings and Synods.
 - ∞ Charitable income is vital to the continuation of our work and every gift helps us to improve the quality of life for older people. Legacy donations are vital and we have continued to benefit from an increase in regular, monthly giving by many of our supporters. Capital appeals seek to support our new developments
- and grant giving Trusts and numerous community events all play an invaluable role in enabling MHA to reach out to more older people.
- ∞ Methodist Homes Sunday in 2008 raised around £235,000, for which we offer grateful thanks. The move of the date from November to June led to many events being held on the Saturday as well, particularly in celebration of MHA's 65th birthday.
 - ∞ Another source of support from the church comes in the form of those who serve on our various Boards. Details of the appointments are contained in the resolution below.

The latest audited accounts are available on request from Head Office. The indications from the unaudited accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2009 indicate that in spite of the challenges of the current economic climate, MHA's finances are in a most satisfactory position, which will make it possible to plan for the future with confidence as we look to develop our Strategic Plan for 2010-13.

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* * * RESOLUTIONS

19/1. The Conference received the Report.

19/2. The Conference:

- a)** appointed as shareholder of **MHA Care Group** and member of its Board:

The Revd Anne Gibson

Anne is the Superintendent Minister of the Leek Circuit of the Methodist Church and is currently Deputy Chair of the Chester and Stoke-on-Trent Methodist District. Anne has a broad experience of working with older people, primarily from when she worked in Social Services and latterly through providing pastoral care. Anne was previously a Board Member for Methodist Homes for the Aged and she was also involved in setting up the Victoria Live at Home Scheme in Sheffield.

- b)** re-appointed as shareholders of **MHA Care Group** and members of its Board:

Mr Brian Coldwell (Chair)
Dr David Hall

- c)** appointed as shareholders of **Methodist Homes for the Aged** and members of its Board:

The Revd Wes Blakey

Wes studied Theology at Manchester University before entering his first Circuit appointment for the Methodist Church in Wigan. After appointments as Circuit Minister in Circuits in different areas of Lancashire and Newcastle upon Tyne he became District Chair of the Nottingham and Derby Methodist District in September 2000.

Mr Peter Boggis

Peter's principal experience is as a strategy consultant, helping companies and other organisations develop a vision and a plan for getting there. After qualifying as a Chartered Accountant, he spent some 10 years in Africa in Management Consulting before returning to Europe in 1989. Since then he has operated at a senior level with two international strategy consultancies and now operates as an independent consultant, business advisor and strategist.

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He and his wife, Margaret, are active members of Kirkby Lonsdale Methodist Church in Cumbria.

- d) re-appointed as shareholders of **Methodist Homes for the Aged** and members of its Board:

Mr Keith Salsbury (Chair)
Mrs Nwabueze Nwokolo

- e) noted the retirement from **Methodist Homes for the Aged** of Prof. Malcolm Johnson and Mr Tim Walton and expressed gratitude for their distinguished service to the Board;

- f) appointed as shareholder of **Methodist Homes Housing Association** and member of its Board:

Hilary Cocker

Hilary is a chartered accountant and has worked in both the not for profit and private sector. She has a broad range of skills including leadership, managing change, risk management, financial strategy and audit. Hilary decided to leave full time employment at the end of 2008 to create time for public service and to set up her own consultancy and interim management business. Hilary has been a member of the Methodist Church for over 40 years.

- g) re-appointed as shareholders of **Methodist Homes Housing Association** and members of its Board:

Mrs Shelagh Morgan (Chair)
The Revd Dr Betty Bell

- h) noted the retirement from **Methodist Homes Housing Association** of Dr Chris Moore and expressed gratitude for his distinguished service to the Board.