

11. Methodist Homes (MHA)

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1. General Report

1.1 The year 2015/16 has been a significant one for MHA as it represented the first steps on our journey to meet the goals set out in our ten-year strategy to 2025. These goals can be summarised as follows:

- to improve directly the lives of around 50,000 older people using our services (currently this is around 16,000) and have a positive influence on the lives of many more
- to focus the growth particularly in the area of community services by quadrupling the reach of MHA's Live at Home schemes
- to develop our influence on public opinion, policy and action and so build our reputation and reach
- to increase our support in terms of both volunteers and voluntary income
- to lead a *Faith in Ageing* movement across all faith groups.

1.2 The mission of MHA remains 'to improve the quality of life for older people, inspired by Christian concern' but how this is articulated and expressed has been reviewed. Through an extensive programme of research and interviews, together with a wide-ranging literature review, we have established that the issue of loneliness amongst older people and its impact on their physical, spiritual and emotional well-being should be at the heart of our work. Furthermore we believe that because MHA is firmly grounded in many local communities, with our three potentially connecting services of Care Homes, Retirement Living and Live at Home, we are in a strong position to work with Methodist churches and others in reconnecting older people with communities of their choice.

1.3 As reported last year, in reviewing our purpose and setting an ambitious strategy, we have also begun to address the significant transformation necessary within our business processes and the systems which support them. Inevitably this kind of work has revealed a longer list of things which need to be fixed, not least because the impact of the current situation is felt most acutely by staff in our Care Homes and Retirement Living schemes and affects their ability to deliver the quality of care that MHA expects. This might also help to explain why, although we continue to receive high scores of resident satisfaction in the independently conducted Your Care Rating (Overall 97% in 2015 with a score of 98% for 'treats me with kindness, dignity and respect'), against the five key areas examined by the regulator CQC, only 69% of our Care Homes which have been tested have been given an overall rating of 'Good'.

1.4 The role of the regulator highlights the fact that the environment in which MHA operates continues to be challenging, with a number of external factors having a significant effect on our work:

- Local Authorities continue to pay Care Home fees at a level which falls short of what is required to deliver quality care for older people whilst at the same time care needs are increasing.
- Recruiting of non-nursing care staff will become increasingly competitive following the introduction of the Government's new National Living Wage.
- The national shortage of nurses continues and will be further exacerbated by restrictions on recruitment from abroad.
- The 'individual giving' donor market has been under close scrutiny and criticism following the exposure that many charities (not MHA) were using aggressive 'tele-sales' tactics, targeting vulnerable individuals and not protecting data sufficiently. This has led to further regulation and increased donor suspicion.

- 1.5 In drawing up the 10-year strategy, MHA has sought to respond to these external factors in positive ways, albeit ones that will colour our work in the coming years. In 2011 the proportion of MHA residents receiving nursing care reached almost 40%, following the acquisition of the 18 Care Homes from Southern Cross, but this has been reduced to around 30% through a mixture of increasing residential and/or dementia care in some homes and redeveloping some older nursing care homes into Retirement Living schemes. Similarly we have planned to reduce our exposure to Care Home fees set by Local Authorities.
- 1.6 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. During the past year we have closed Nethanvale, one of the Care Homes at Auchlochan, which the previous owners originally designed as a hotel. This is now being redeveloped as a Retirement Living scheme which will open later this year. Churchfields in Nottingham was also closed as the building is no longer suitable for use as a Care Home and future options are being explored.
- 1.7 In January 2016, the first residents moved into Mickle Hill – MHA's new retirement community in Pickering. This will eventually consist of 78 bungalows, 90 apartments together with communal facilities. Elsewhere the first phase of the re-development of Maidment Court in Poole and Hall Grange in Shirley have been completed, while work has begun on Retirement Living schemes on the sites of our former Care Homes in Woking, Bromley, Exmouth and the Isle of Wight. Finally, new Retirement Living schemes are under construction in Waterlooville and Otley.
- 1.8 Critical to achieving any of our plans is the recruitment and retention of great staff with the right values throughout our organisation. We continue to struggle with the sector-wide issues of sickness and staff turnover in our Care Homes. We traditionally pay our staff well for the sector but the forthcoming National Living Wage increase erodes our position somewhat. In response we have restructured our staff benefits package to give frontline staff a minimum increase of 6% with many receiving more and, in addition, they will have more individual choice in their benefits package. This means that we are now paying the vast majority of our staff the Living Wage.
- 1.9 Investment in our staff goes well beyond the pay packet, and 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 continue to support people living with dementia with around 14,500 Music Therapy sessions during the year, and we were delighted that this service was recognised at the LaingBuisson Awards 2015 by winning the award for Excellence in Dementia Care. MHA co-hosted with Anglia Ruskin University the first conference on Music Therapy and dementia and have helped with the script writing for the *Emmerdale* dementia storyline, which is now also featuring Music Therapy.
- 1.11 We continued the MHA tradition of marking the Leap Year day by holding *One Day*, a Conference and Celebration at Central Hall, Westminster. The afternoon session focussed on the many societal aspects of our work, while the evening's programme gave us the opportunity to reflect on the vocation of the second half of life. We were well served by a remarkable gathering of speakers, seminar leaders and panellists who gave us a real depth and breadth of engagement with some significant issues, and we have made some important connections with people and organisations with whom we can work in the future.

- 1.12 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. Methodist Homes Sunday in 2015 raised in excess of £200,000, for which we offer grateful thanks. The date of MHA Sunday 2017 has been fixed for **Sunday 11 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.
- 1.13 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 2016 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 Impact Statement, which tells the story of MHA's activities over the past year, is also available on the website or from Epworth House.
- 1.14 The MHA Board and the Leadership Team continue to plan and build a future for the organisation which can achieve our ambition to deliver more and better forms of care and support for even greater numbers of older people. In so doing we recognise that we are building on the foundations of all that has been achieved in the past and as has been demonstrated so often in MHA's history, that ambition serves as a challenge and as an inspiration.

2. Church appointment to the Boards of MHA

- 2.1 Through our Governance Committee we continue to strengthen the Charity's Board with new members bringing wide experience, particularly in the areas of marketing and social care. In accordance with SO 241, we ask the Conference to continue to recognise Dr David Hall as the Church's nominated Board member. David was first appointed to this role in 2015.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

- 11/1. The Conference received the General Report of Methodist Homes.**
- 11/2. The Conference, in exercising its power under Standing Order 241, nominated David Hall to the Board of MHA.**