

13. Methodist Homes (MHA)

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1. General report

- 1.1 The year 2016/2017 has seen some significant progress for MHA in looking to meet the goals within our ten-year strategy to 2025. It has also seen a continuation of the major programme of transformation within our business processes and the systems that support them. We express our thanks for the ongoing support we receive from the Methodist people, particularly through volunteering, advocacy and donations.
- 1.2 Alongside our ambition to increase the number of older people MHA serves, one of the major goals of 2016/2017 was to close the gap between the high scores we obtained in a survey of resident satisfaction and the lower scores received in some homes and schemes against the five key areas examined by the regulator, the Care Quality Commission (CQC). It is pleasing therefore to report that while overall resident satisfaction remained high at 96% in the independently conducted Your Care Rating, our overall CQC rating has improved from 69% to 85% Good or above, with two homes (Cedar Lawn, Stratford-upon-Avon and Starr Hills, Lytham St Annes) being rated as Outstanding overall.
- 1.3 The role of the regulator highlights the fact that the environment in which MHA operates continues to be challenging, and a number of external factors are likely to have a significant effect on our work over the next few years. These include:
 - **Brexit** – The process, negotiations and outcome are likely to have a range of impacts, with potential tighter restrictions on EU citizens living and working in the UK bringing increased pressures on recruitment and staffing.
 - **Social care funding crisis** – Local authorities continue to pay care home fees at a level which falls short of that which is required to deliver quality care for older people, whilst at the same time care needs are increasing. Pressure on government to address the health and social care funding crisis remains.
 - **Workforce** – The national shortage of nurses will continue and will be exacerbated by restrictions on recruitment from abroad, the removal of the nursing bursary, and an ageing workforce. Recruitment of non-nursing care staff will become increasingly competitive, especially in some parts of southern England, and while the introduction of the new apprenticeship levy offers opportunities to build career pathways to help in recruitment, it does so at a cost to MHA of over £500k a year.
 - **Fundraising/charity** – The ‘individual giving’ donor market continues to face significant scrutiny and criticism, which has led to further regulation and increased donor suspicion. The new Fundraising Regulator will drive the move towards donor opt-in and consequent risk to fundraised income from individual giving. However, these changes do offer MHA the opportunity to build better relationships with our more engaged donors, and we have chosen to move to opt-in during 2017, ahead of it becoming compulsory.
 - **An ageing society** – The life expectancy gender gap continues to shrink (now down to three years) – which suggests that more couples may be needing care home places and that there will be more lone men in the older age groups needing care provision. Loneliness is a growing issue for those in later life, especially people aged 75 and over and people who have lost their partner or are in poor health. Meanwhile, society continues to have a negative perception of care homes, and MHA will use our

communications and influence to demonstrate how we improve the lives of older people and the place that good-quality care homes can play in addressing this.

- 1.4 While the mission of MHA remains “to improve the quality of life for older people, inspired by Christian concern”, we continue to explore how that mission is both articulated and put into practice. The issue of combating loneliness and its impact on older people is at the heart of our work, and we look to continue to work with Local Churches and others in reconnecting older people with their chosen communities. Alongside this we are exploring ways of broadening our reach through restating our purpose and exploring what might be called our ‘brand’ in order to support our ambitious plans and to give us the platform from which we can use our practical experience to influence wider society and policy makers for the benefit of older people in general.
- 1.5 During the past year we have increased by around 1,000 the number of older people using our services as well as laying some good foundations which will significantly increase the number of those accessing our Live at Home schemes. Silk Healthcare became part of MHA in December 2016, enabling us to offer residential and residential dementia care to more than 300 additional older people in four care homes in northern England. A fifth care home, near Middlesbrough, is under construction and will open in 2018. Elsewhere, work continues on the second phase of the redevelopment of Hall Grange, Shirley and the construction of a new care home at Shefford near Bedford.
- 1.6 Our plan to grow our community services by extending the reach of our Live at Home schemes has been a particular focus of the past year. Membership now exceeds 10,300 older people, supported by more than 3,000 volunteers, and this has been achieved alongside a review of governance arrangements and the introduction of new IT systems. Feedback from members continues to be extremely positive, and this form of support is recognised as a key element of our goal of combating loneliness amongst older people. At a time when so much statutory funding is being removed, Hampshire County Council has agreed to partner with MHA to deliver Live at Home services across the county for at least a period of three years. This shows MHA’s ability to build successful, community-based partnerships, including with our valuable partner, the Methodist Church.
- 1.7 New retirement living schemes have been opened in Otley, Waterlooville, Auchlochan and Poole, alongside further development of the Retirement Community at Mickle Hill in Pickering. In Poole, the redevelopment of Maidment Court has supported 17 residents and a staff team to move from a care home into a retirement living scheme. Feedback from residents and their families has been extremely positive. We have worked closely with ARCO (the Association of Retirement Community Operators, of which MHA was a founding member) to improve the clarity and quality of materials provided to prospective residents in our retirement housing. We are delighted that all 34 of our schemes that are registered with ARCO are now 100% compliant with their code of practice.
- 1.8 Over the past decade MHA has developed a number of retirement living schemes of varying types, ranging from retirement housing for rent through to retirement living with a full care service available in apartments which can be purchased. We now have almost 2,600 properties and we believe that the time has come to review the next phase of the development strategy, looking both at our most recent developments and at the types of design that older people are likely to want going forwards. As a consequence, some projects which we had expected to have begun have been put on hold.
- 1.9 One of our strategic goals is “to develop our influence on public opinion, policy and action and so build our reputation and reach”. Our *One Day* Conference held in February 2016 at Central Hall, Westminster, helped to establish some meaningful relationships and our Policy and Research team are developing some focused work streams around combating loneliness amongst older people, and in particular finding ways of measuring the impact of some of MHA’s therapeutic work and our Live at Home schemes.

- 1.10 Another new area of work aims at developing a piece of thought leadership around the links between ageing and faith. The 2011 census suggested that of the 1,255,100 people aged 85 or over, just over 2% are part of a faith community other than Christianity. However, data from the same census indicates that the picture will change markedly over the next 20 years, and so MHA are initiating a piece of interfaith community consultation and dialogue which has the issues of ageing at its heart. An initial consultation is planned for May 2017, and the outcome will help to shape the next phase of the project.
- 1.11 MHA remains, at its heart, a 'people' organisation. We directly serve more than 17,000 older people and we touch the lives of many more. None of that is possible unless we continue to recruit and retain excellent staff with the right values and experience throughout the organisation. As with most of the care sector, we continue to wrestle with the high levels of sickness and staff turnover, although we are seeing some hopeful signs in response to the changes we introduced last year. Once more our approach to the staff pay and benefits package this year is aimed disproportionately at the lowest paid amongst our frontline staff so that we continue our move towards paying all staff the Living Wage.
- 1.12 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. Along with our ongoing investment in music therapy, reflexology and other forms of therapeutic support, none of this work would be possible without the charitable income we continue to receive through legacy donations, regular monthly giving and in response to specific appeals. We are grateful for this support and for the work of many volunteers who are involved in their local communities, helping to raise funds and offering their time and talents to the benefit of those whom MHA serves.
- 1.13 Methodist Homes Sunday in 2016 raised just under £200,000, for which we offer grateful thanks. This year, in order to set MHA Sunday in its context as part of our **Best Week for Ages** initiative, and to extend its appeal beyond simply our Methodist Church supporters, we have renamed it as the **Best Sunday for Ages**. The official date is **Sunday 11 June** although it can be moved to suit local needs. Our theme for worship is '**Befriending Age**' and a range of materials is available to download from our website (www.BestForAges.com/Church).
- 1.14 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 2017 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.
- 1.15 The MHA Board and the Leadership Team continue to plan and build a future for the organisation that 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. Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality

- 2.1 Having served MHA for 16 years, the current Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality, the Revd Dr Keith Albans, will be leaving MHA at the end of July 2017. During the time for which Keith has served MHA the organisation has grown markedly and the provision of chaplaincy in all of our residential services has been at the heart of this. MHA is now the major employer of social care chaplains in the UK, with around 130 individual chaplains. MHA is very grateful for the part Keith has played in the organisation's development and wishes him God's blessing as he returns to circuit ministry in September.

2.2 MHA welcomes the Revd Dr Christopher Swift, formerly Head of Chaplaincy Services in the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, as the new Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality who will take up his post on 1 June 2017.

3. Church appointment to the Boards of MHA

3.1 Through our Governance Committee we continue to strengthen the Charity's Board with new members bringing wide experience, particularly around 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**

13/1. The Conference received the General Report of Methodist Homes.

13/2. The Conference, in exercising its power under Standing Order 241, nominated David Hall to the Board of MHA.