



# Trust Times

Dear Residents,

*Firstly, before reading any further could I please ask you to look at the announcement on the very last page?*

I have been with the Trust now for just over seven years, and I informed the Chairman of the Trust a few months ago that I would be resigning later in the year to pursue another business opportunity. It is just possible therefore that this might be the last time I write the editorial for your newsletter.

The Trustees are now actively seeking to recruit a new CEO and I am sure they will attract really good applicants to help move forward and further develop the good work that has been done over the years.

I feel particularly proud that the programme of remodelling bedsitters into high quality, self-contained one-bedroomed flats (at Mason Court and Mason House) is nearing completion. I am also very pleased that during my time with the Trust, as a result of 'year on year' cost control, your service charges have never had to be increased.

We are in the very final stages of building a new bungalow at Mason Court at the moment, and I can also tell you that plans for an additional thirteen flats together with general improvement / modernisation work at Mason House are progressing well.

There are some really good articles in this edition of your newsletter and I hope, like me, you find them interesting.

So finally, let me assure you that I will keep you informed about the Trust's progress in finding my successor, and I hope you all enjoy a really good summer.

Best wishes

**Richard Hall**  
**Chief Executive**



## CONTACT US

### HEAD OFFICE:

Mason Court  
Hillborough Road  
Solihull

B27 6PF

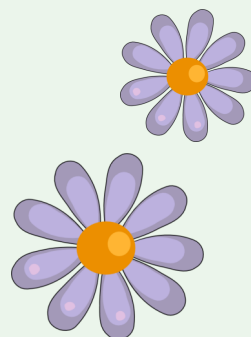
T: 0121 245 1002

F: 0121 707 1090

E: [enquiries@sjmt.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@sjmt.org.uk)

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## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

### *Happy 105th Birthday to Edna Appleby, Alexandra House*

We are delighted to announce that Edna Appleby celebrated her milestone 105th birthday on Sunday 7th May 2017. Edna was born on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1912 and spent her early life growing up in Solihull, living on Olton Boulevard. Edna is one of seven children, born to her parents Arthur and Amy. She now has only one living sibling, Joyce, who is 86 years old. Edna has certainly led an interesting life and in 1936, she married her husband Albert, with whom she shared many happy years before he sadly passed away in 1976. They had four children together, Carol, Clive, Peter and Derek.

In November 2015, Edna moved to Alexandra House where she now lives happily. She celebrated her birthday at Alexandra House with her family and friends, who organised a fantastic party for her. Everyone enjoyed a delicious buffet and entertainment was provided by 'Vintage Class', a 1940's style singing group. The Mayor of Solihull, Councillor Mr Mike Robinson and the Mayoress of Solihull, Mrs Jenny Robinson were also in attendance and joined in with the celebrations. Happy birthday Edna!



### *Happy 100th Birthday to Annie Fowler, Alexandra House*

We wished Annie Fowler a very happy 100th birthday, which she celebrated with her family at Alexandra House on 23rd January 2017. Annie moved into our Residential Care Home in January 2013 and enjoys spending her time knitting and making toys. Happy birthday Annie!



#### **PLEASE NOTE:**

**Any milestone birthday celebrations that have occurred after this Newsletter was formatted will be included in the next edition.**

## DOMICILIARY CARE - Can we help you?

Did you know that we have highly experienced and qualified Domiciliary Care Staff, who provide services that help our sheltered housing residents maintain their independence and support them to stay longer in their own homes?

They are able to provide a broad range of services for our residents, including: general housework, laundry, dusting, vacuuming and general tidying-up.



Wherever possible we try to use the same member(s) of staff for each resident, so as to provide continuity and the same friendly face.

Our domiciliary services deliver excellent quality and reliability ***tailored to your needs*** and, as a Charity, our services are kept affordable at only £12.00 per hour, which can be charged in half hour sessions, with a minimum of 30 minutes for £6.00. With reasonable notice, you can either increase or reduce the weekly hours of domiciliary care you receive, depending on circumstances.

**For more information please contact either:-**

**Anita Shan: 0121 245 1079**

**or our Customer Service Team: 0121 245 1002**

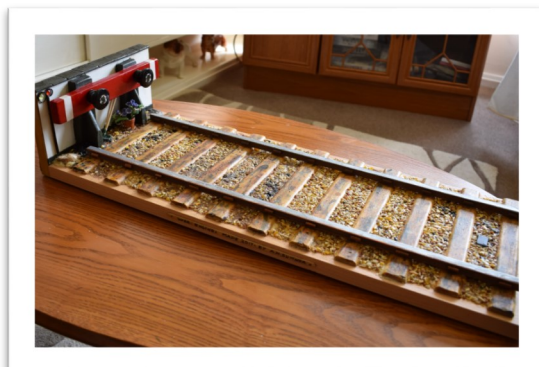
## HOBBIES + INTERESTS

### Arthur Sumner, Mason Court

Arthur has built the very impressive model steam train and plinth pictured on the right. He built these from recycled bits and pieces he found around his home and in the skip, including plastic cartons, coffee and cocoa containers, match sticks, milk bottle tops, five different types of glues and scraps of old wood and metal.

From start to finish, this process took six months to complete. The steam engine that the model is based on is actually still running on the West Somerset railway, which runs from Bishops Lydeard to Minehead in Somerset. The original train is pictured below and I'm sure you'll agree it is almost a spitting image of Arthur's model!

Over the last few years, Arthur has also made a small boat, a dolls house and a Lancaster bomber airplane and as you can see, his work is finished to a very high standard indeed!





## **EMERGENCY CALL OUTS – When to call the repairs team...**

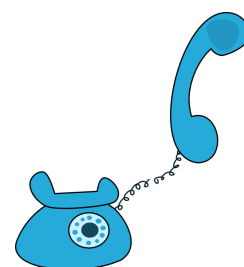
You will be aware that our staff attend emergencies when our offices are closed in the evening, weekends or bank holidays, to carry out repairs to prevent a health and safety hazard or to avoid major damage to a property.

We know that this service is much-valued by residents and we are keen that you continue to use it when you require assistance.

However, sometimes residents call out staff for reasons that are neither emergencies nor the Trust's responsibility, and that can prevent our staff attending real emergencies elsewhere in the Trust.

Please remember the Trust reserves the right to make a £50 charge to a resident if our emergency out-of-hours service has been called out unnecessarily in circumstances that do not constitute an emergency.

If you are unsure about what constitutes an emergency please contact your Scheme Manager or Keith Terry, our Property Services Manager.



## **Sue's Surgeries**

Sue Stobart, our Debt Management and Benefits Adviser, is continuing to hold her monthly Advice Surgeries at each of our Schemes to provide help and advice to residents who may be experiencing financial management difficulties. The upcoming dates for Sue's Surgeries are listed below:



<b>Mason Court</b>	Wednesday 5th July 2017	10.30am
<b>Mason House</b>	Thursday 6th July 2017	10.30am
<b>Mason Cottages</b>	Wednesday 12th July 2017	10.30am



## CELEBRATING SIR JOSIAH MASON'S 222ND BIRTHDAY!

*By Judith Toase, Scheme Manager at Mason Cottages*

The dark days of winter were getting us down  
All were huddled inside with a frown  
We needed a lift to cheer us up  
An idea into our heads did pop

Let's have a Fish and Chip Supper  
So the date was set for 16<sup>th</sup> February proper,  
Then along comes Audrey Mary  
An honorary Resident- quite contrary  
"I thought you would have had it on Founders  
Day?,  
To miss Sir Josiah's Birthday what would he  
say?"  
Sir Josiah would be 222 on 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb  
And would have been rather a big celeb  
So this special date we chose instead!  
And marked on the calendar in red.

Now Audrey Mary doesn't live here  
But along the main road travels with good  
cheer

Audrey puts us all to shame  
For forgetting the **Big Man**, we take the  
blame.

So the 23<sup>rd</sup> we said we would do  
and invited residents old and new,

Along with our Audrey and  
another guest

Betty Foster who is just the  
best!

A Trustee who we all treasure

Who stands for our residents  
with very good measure

We love our Betty and see her often

For Sir Josiah she has a soft one.

On the day of the party Audrey arrives  
With two birthday cakes - what a surprise!  
At 4 o'clock the Fish and Chips are there  
For 36 residents all to share.

So a toast to our founder we will all share  
We raise our glasses to his Portrait over  
there

Happy Birthday dear Sir Josiah we voiced all  
together

Forget you I don't think, not now and not  
ever!





## ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

Sir Josiah Mason Trust recently contributed to Age UK Solihull's World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was developed and launched on June 15, 2006 and is recognised annually. It aims to focus global attention on the problem of physical, emotional, and financial abuse of elders.

On Thursday 15th June 2017, to help raise money, residents at our Sheltered Housing schemes (Mason House and Mason Court) held coffee mornings, sold cakes and held raffles. Staff members at our Head Office wore purple and 'dressed down' for work, donating £1 each to Age UK Solihull. Several staff members also brought in purple-themed cakes to sell, to help raise money for this important cause.



In our Residential Care Home, Alexandra House, residents and staff also joined in and entertainment was provided. Our Catering Manager, Pat Hines, arranged an afternoon tea with purple-themed cakes, and donations were also collected. Photos from the day can be seen below...

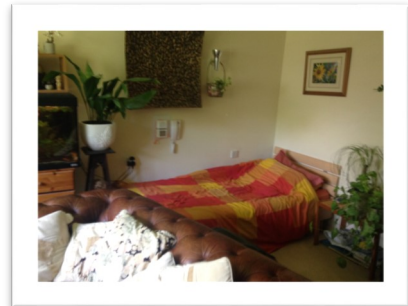


*If any of you would like to contribute to this Newsletter, please do get in touch with the Customer Services Team, 0121 245 1002 or email [enquiries@sjmt.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@sjmt.org.uk)*

# Our Remodelling Programme

*By Keith Terry, Property Services Manager*

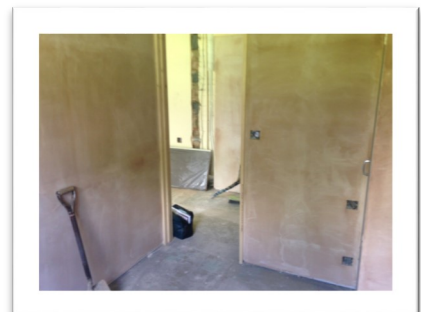
In 2011, the Trust recognised that the current bedsit accommodation in Mason Court and Mason House was becoming unpopular with existing residents and there were increasing difficulties in attracting new residents to our schemes to occupy this type of flat. One of our bedsits is pictured on the right.



In response to this the Trust took the decision to refurbish the bedsit accommodation in Mason Court and Mason House by remodelling the layout of the flats to provide one bedroom/person accommodation.

There were, in total, 36 bedsit flats in Mason Court and 42 bedsit flats in Mason House that required refurbishment and re-modelling. The re-modelling programme has been accelerated over the last few years and the Trust has employed Paul Goodman Builders to carry out the programme.

Over the last 12 months, the Trust has completed 11 re-modelled bedsits in Mason House and 4 re-modelled bedsits in Mason Court. At the time of writing this article, there are currently six bedsit flats in the process (as pictured on the right) of being re-modelled and a further eight bedsits requiring re-modelling to complete the programme.





The remodelling programme has been very challenging with various layouts having to be designed to accommodate the varying types of bedsit in order to provide both suitable living space as well as providing modern bathroom and kitchen facilities.

The re-modelling of a bedsit involves providing a separate bedroom and a lounge/kitchen area, some of which are open plan. The refurbishment includes provision of modern bathing facilities including a low level access shower cubicle with electric shower; vanity unit with basin; low level WC and heated towel rail/down flow heater. The kitchen refurbishment included both base and wall units; sink unit; built in oven; electric hob; cooker hood and a built-in fridge freezer.

The refurbishments are completed by installing new doors; skirting and built in wardrobes where required; complete rewiring; thermal radiators; non-slip vinyl flooring in bathroom and kitchen; carpets to lounge, bedroom and hall and blinds throughout.

Photos of a recently completed remodelled one bedroom flat can be seen below...



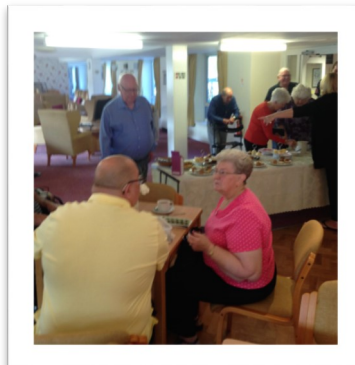
# Activities from around our schemes

## OLTON

On 30th September 2016, residents at Mason Court and Jubilee Court helped to raise money for a Charity close to many people's hearts, Macmillian Cancer Support. As most of you will know, Macmillan are a source of support for people living with cancer and offer help with money worries, advice about work or are there to listen if you just want to talk.

Residents held a coffee morning and served tea and cakes to help raise money for this special charity. Hundreds of pounds were successfully raised and were donated to the organisation. Well done to everyone involved!

Photos from the coffee morning can be seen below.



On Saturday 5th November 2016, residents at Mason Court and Jubilee Court enjoyed a fireworks display, held in the grounds of the Olton scheme. The skies above the schemes were lit up in beautiful colours and a delicious buffet was provided, residents thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. Photos from the event can be seen below.



## SHIRLEY

On 11th May 2017, residents at Mason House and Ruth Patrick House experienced a fantastic day out on a canal barge cruise along the beautiful Vale of Llangollen in Wales. Residents passed over the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct (pictured on the right) which is 30 metres high above the river Dee, also known as the 'Stream in the sky' - it was simply breath-taking. Following the cruise, residents headed off to a lovely country Inn for a hearty lunch set in the most beautiful surroundings. The day out was ended with a leisurely drive over the Horeshoe Pass providing an opportunity to enjoy the stunning Welsh mountain countryside.



Residents at our Shirley scheme have several forthcoming trips planned including a day out on a steam train through Wales, lunch and a visit to the British Iron Works Centre in July 2017 and a trip to Hatton Country World, to which residents are much looking forward.

## ERDINGTON

We are delighted to report that £60.00 was raised by residents at our Sheltered Housing Scheme in Erdington (Mason Cottages) and was kindly donated to Marie Curie. As you will be aware, Marie Curie help to care for people living with any terminal illness, and their families. They offer expert care, guidance and support to help them get the most from the time they have left.



Money was raised by residents who had knitted items and then put them up for sale. 'Bric a brac' was also included in the sale with residents giving what they thought items were worth. Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way!

There are now more items for sale and it looks as if this will be a continuous charity appeal with a different charity benefiting from the proceeds every couple of months.

# PENSION CREDIT

Did you know that one in five pensioners miss out on hundreds of pounds' worth of benefits they could claim? Does this apply to you? You may be surprised.

Recent research has shown that around 1 in 3 of the 4 million UK residents entitled to claim **Pension Credit** have never done so. As a result many are losing out not only on a guaranteed minimum weekly income but additional assistance from the Government. Claiming even a small amount of Guarantee Pension Credit can make you eligible for extra money as part of several other benefits including health costs and help with council tax.

## **There are two types of Pension Credit - Guarantee and Savings**

The first part is called Guarantee Pension Credit because it guarantees you a minimum weekly amount to live on. Currently, that amount is £159.35 for singles and £243.25 for couples. If your total weekly income is less than the amounts shown, we can help you.

### The perks you can get when you are in receipt of Guarantee Pension Credit:

You may not have to pay Council Tax.

You don't have to pay for NHS dental treatment and you can claim help towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses and claim travel costs to and from hospital appointments.

If you are disabled, you may also qualify for a Severe Disability Addition, worth £62.45 for singles and £124.90 for couples, per week.

As you can see, membership of the Guarantee Pension Credit club is a very good thing! You have nothing to lose by applying and everything to gain.





The second part is a Savings credit (for those aged 65 and over before April 2016) paid by the Government as a reward for people who have made a provision for their retirement in the form of savings or a private or occupational pension. The maximum weekly savings credit is currently up to £13.20 for singles and up to £14.90 for couples.

*Unfortunately, benefits don't arrive automatically. You have to claim them, and 'if you don't ask, you don't get'!*

Our Debt Management and Benefits Advisor, Sue Stobart, is available to advise anyone who would like more information on Pension Credit and can assist you to make a claim if you are eligible. Please contact Sue on **0121 245 1003** to make an appointment.

## STAFF CHANGES

### Susan Taylor, Residential Care Home Manager



We are pleased to welcome Susan Taylor as our new Residential Care Home Manager at Alexandra House. Susan is a qualified and highly experienced manager who has worked in the care industry for thirty years. She has experience working in residential care, domiciliary care and in the NHS and will bring valuable expertise and skills to this important role.



### Nicola Ashmore, Administrator

We welcome Nikki, who joined us in June 2017, as our Administrator, a new role created in the Customer Services Team at the Mason Court office. Nikki has settled in very well and is already proving to be a valuable asset to the department!

# *In Memory of Tony Birch*

*By Keith Terry, Property Services Manager*

As you may be aware the Trust lost a highly valued member of staff, Mr Tony Birch, in late November 2016.

Tony Birch was employed as a Maintenance Assistant by the Trust for five and a half years to carry out general repairs and health and safety checks including the inspection, testing and maintenance of fire alarm systems etc. at our sites in Olton, Shirley and Erdington.

Although I only knew Tony for a short period of time, I know that he was a skilled tradesman who was able to complete a range of duties and was flexible, methodical and organised in his approach and completed his tasks diligently and to a high standard.

Tony was an excellent example of the customer-focused approach that the Trust requires from its employees and I know that he always treated residents with courtesy, respect and dignity and often went that “extra mile” to assist residents.

As well as performing his contractual duties Tony regularly helped out residents at Mason Court with various social activities including their regular skittles night functions.

I know that residents, in appreciation and memory of Tony, arranged collections and I would like to thank you for your kind generosity on his behalf.



# Care Home Open Day...

We are delighted to announce that we will again this year be holding an Open Day at Alexandra House, our Residential Care Home, Alexandra Court, our Extra Care Scheme, and Mason Court, one of our Sheltered Housing Schemes, in Olton. The Open Day will be held on **Saturday 12th August 2017** from **2.00pm until 4.00pm**. We would like to invite you to visit our schemes, meet our care staff and have a look around. You will be more than welcome!

Last year residents enjoyed an afternoon filled with a wide range of entertainment provided by a musical motivation specialist who regularly visits our schemes. Our Catering Manager, Patricia Hines, put on a delicious afternoon tea which was greatly enjoyed by all of our visitors. We were also pleased to welcome the former Mayor of Solihull, Councillor Mr Mike Robinson and the Mayoress of Solihull, Mrs Jenny Robinson, who visited our Care Home and Extra Care scheme.



## NOTE TO RESIDENTS:

If a resident intends to move to other accommodation, he/she must give the required notice to the Trust in accordance with the Occupancy Agreement.

Scheme Managers have copies of the necessary Termination Form that must be completed.

Residents should ensure that when they depart, their home is left in good order, empty of all personal contents and any rubbish, and that all keys and fobs are returned to the Scheme Manager's office.

# Resident Rep News

## YOUR RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

### MASON COURT & JUBILEE COURT

Resident Representative	Pat Medina
Deputy Resident Representative	Jean Withers

### MASON HOUSE & RUTH PATRICK HOUSE

Resident Representative	Sue Keates
Deputy Resident Representative	Shirley Grant

### MASON COTTAGES

Resident Representative	David Morrison
Deputy Resident Representative	Colin Carter



Dates for  
the Diary:

## RESIDENT MEETINGS

### Mason House

10.30am Tuesday 8th August 2017

### Mason Cottages

11.00am Wednesday 6th September 2017

### Mason Court

10.30am Wednesday 4th October 2017





# Fundraising at Mason House

*By Sue Keates, Resident Representative for Mason House  
and Ruth Patrick House, Shirley*

As a body, residents at Mason House and Ruth Patrick House raised £88.00, during December 2016, following a very successful Christmas raffle which was drawn on the day of the Christmas meal. We had over 50 prizes, of which many were kindly donated by local businesses. It was decided by residents that the money raised should be donated to Acorns Children's Hospice, a long established Charity providing holistic, specialist, palliative care services to life limited or life threatened children, young people and their families in our region. Following this, I received a lovely letter from the Acorns Charity thanking residents for their continued support over the year.



Residents have enjoyed a variety of activities over the past few months including a trip to Hillfield Farm, in Solihull. Originally, one of our favourite places to eat out as a group was Tidbury Green Golf Club, but this was unfortunately closed down in order to be sold for a new housing project. This meant that we had to find an alternative and so on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017, a group of us decided to try out Hillfield Farm. There was lots to choose from on the menu and there was also a carvery option available. They put on a "Cake Away" which includes lots of different varieties of cake to take home. I purchased a number of different cakes to take back to Mason House to make the outing extra special and following our meal, we all had tea and cakes, and a good natter!



Our next group meal will be provided 'in house' and will kindly be cooked by our Scheme Manager, Jackie Whyte, at the end of March. Jackie will be cooking bangers and mash! Our next outing will be in May, when we will be visiting Webb's garden Centre, where there is also a large Hobbycraft store on site — residents are looking forward to this.

# Let's Get Cooking

## Everyday Fish Pie with Cheese Mash

### INGREDIENTS:

For the filling:

- 400ml/14fl oz whole milk
  - 1 small onion, thickly sliced
  - 2 bay leaves
  - 500g/1lb 2oz thick white fish fillets, preferably cod, haddock or pollock, skinned
  - 40g/1½oz butter
  - 40g/1½oz plain flour
  - 150g/5½oz frozen peas
  - 200g/7oz large raw prawns, peeled
  - sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
  - 100g/3½oz mature Cheddar cheese, grated

For the topping:

- 800g/1lb 12oz medium potatoes, peeled and cut into quarters
- 40g/1½oz butter, cubed
- 3 tbsp milk
- 

**Prep & Cook time:** 30 mins - 1 hour  
**Serves:** 2

### METHOD:

1. To make the filling, pour the milk into a large lidded pan and add the sliced onion and bay leaves. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.
2. Place the fish fillets in the pan and bring to a very gentle simmer, then cover and cook for two minutes.
3. Remove the pan from the heat and leave to stand and infuse for 20 minutes. Drain the fish through a colander into a bowl, then pour the milk into a jug.
4. Meanwhile, make the mash for the topping. Half fill a large saucepan with cold water. Add the potatoes and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes or until the potatoes are soft.
5. Drain the potatoes and return them to the pan, then mash with the butter, milk and three-quarters of the grated cheese. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.
6. Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.



7. To finish the filling, melt the butter in a medium saucepan and stir in the flour. Cook for a few seconds, then gradually add the infused milk, stirring constantly, and simmer over a medium heat for 3–4 minutes until the sauce is smooth and thick. Stir in the peas and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

8. Spread one third of the sauce into the base of a 1.5 litre/2 $\frac{3}{4}$  pint ovenproof dish. Scatter half the fish fillets over the sauce, breaking them into chunky pieces as you go and discarding the onion and bay leaves.

9. Arrange half the prawns on top of the fish and pour over another third of the sauce. Repeat these layers, finishing with the final third of sauce.

10. Spoon the topping over the fish mixture, spreading the mash to the edges with a palette knife. Fork the surface and sprinkle over the remaining cheese. Place the dish on a baking tray and bake in the centre of the oven for about 25 minutes or until the top is golden-brown and the filling is bubbling.

## Eat and enjoy!



**We are delighted to inform you about our new Facebook page which will include all the latest news, events and exciting activities going on at the Trust.**

We invite you and your friends and family to 'like' our page. If you have a Facebook account, you can ensure you are kept up to date.

Our Facebook page can be found at the following address:

<https://www.facebook.com/sirjosiahmasontrust/>

In case you haven't already looked at our new website, we strongly recommend that you do—and it can be found at the following address:

[www.sjmt.org.uk](http://www.sjmt.org.uk)

# The Relief in Need and Educational Charity

*By Julie Millard, HR and Training Manager*

Sir Josiah Mason Trust is the trading name of our three separate registered charities, the Almshouse Charity, the Care Charity and the Relief in Need and Educational Charity.

Our Relief in Need and Educational Charity aims to help young people in the local area by providing grants to support their education and training. As part of its objectives, this charity currently offers a number of bursaries to students at The University of Birmingham through their Access to Birmingham Scholarships Programme. Since 2013, we have donated £45,900 which has supported 13 individuals from our region to undertake degree courses in subjects such as Social Policy and Social Work. Many of these students may not have been able to access higher education without these scholarships. In addition, through Solihull Council, we support grants for individual tuition for 'looked after' young people to enable them to go on to access higher level qualifications and training.



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

For many years, the Relief in Need Charity has also funded apprentices in different areas of the charity. Apprenticeships are an excellent way of getting a head start in a particular field of work and enable people to start working and earning a decent wage while they learn key skills and gain the qualifications that employers need. The Trust employs apprentices in the customer service team at Mason Court, in painting and decorating, property maintenance and more recently in the Care Charity and in the catering function.

Our Care Apprentice, Maryam Shapoor has been with the Trust well over a year now and has now completed her Level 2 Health and Social Care qualification.



## Summer Newsletter, Issue 9— June 2017

She has shown herself to be a caring, enthusiastic and committed Care Assistant at Alexandra House and we are pleased to report that she was taken on into a permanent role from December of last year. We wish her all the best in her new job.

Liam Fossick started with the Trust in June 2016 as our Apprentice Painter and Decorator, working alongside our highly experienced painter John Nugent. Liam is working towards his City & Guilds Level 2 Painting and Decorating qualification and is making good progress.

David Adshead joined our catering team in July 2016 and is well under way with his Level 2 Diploma in Catering and Hospitality. He is well liked by staff and residents and is proving to be an invaluable member of the catering team. He too has been offered a permanent job in the catering team.

Olivia Roberts joined the Customer Service team in September 2016 and is making very good progress with her Level 2 Business Administration Diploma as well as providing important general administrative support and receptionist work.



Meekaaeel Nawaz joined us in December 2016 as our Maintenance Apprentice to work with and support Andy Cunningham. Meekaaeel (or 'Mick' for short) is already proving to be an asset to the maintenance team and he comes to us with a Level 3 Plumbing qualification. He will complete his Level 2 Diploma in Building Maintenance NVQ over 12 months.

We wish our team of apprentices the very best with their training and future careers.

# Summer Search

V	V	L	P	N	Y	S	A	M	P	M	V	C	L	S
R	C	N	C	O	V	L	P	M	S	F	R	O	S	I
S	I	I	R	D	A	Z	K	A	U	H	D	S	U	Y
J	N	B	Y	E	N	Y	Q	E	Z	F	E	R	E	J
Y	C	F	U	L	H	A	Z	R	E	K	M	D	X	U
L	I	C	L	B	K	D	Q	C	L	Q	O	H	W	P
U	P	H	K	M	F	I	A	E	T	S	W	D	X	A
J	M	U	Z	I	V	L	Y	C	S	E	N	U	J	O
M	J	H	X	W	L	O	I	I	A	P	K	D	N	J
M	V	H	L	R	O	H	L	B	C	T	A	C	U	Z
M	G	N	I	M	M	I	W	S	D	A	L	D	U	I
T	K	P	F	E	N	I	H	S	N	U	S	A	E	B
S	G	Q	J	S	O	F	Z	T	A	U	Q	F	O	H
C	Q	Y	L	Z	F	F	Q	E	S	K	I	L	A	M
A	L	T	S	B	W	I	T	A	B	E	A	C	H	L

BEACH  
 BUCKET  
 HOLIDAY  
 ICECREAM  
 JULY  
 JUNE  
 PICNIC  
 SANDCASTLE  
 SPADE  
 SUNSHINE  
 SWIMMING  
 WIMBLEDON

# Booking Property Repairs

As you are aware, the Trust is responsible for the repairs and maintenance of your flat; cottage or room as well as the Schemes at Olton; Shirley and Erdington. This includes:

- The structure and exterior including roof, drains, gutters and downpipes, windows, doors, walls, floors and ceilings.
- The supply of heating, water heating, water and electricity including sanitary-ware, pipework, heaters, electric wiring and certain white goods.
- Keeping the interior and exterior of the Scheme in reasonable state of decoration.
- Common areas such as entrance doors, corridors, stairways and lifts.



The response timescale for completion of repairs are as follows:

**Emergency Repairs** – within 12 hours (4 hours to respond and make safe)

These repairs are to ensure the health and safety of residents and to protect the security of individual properties and or Scheme and include complete electrical failures; lift failures; loss of hot water; loss of heating; severe water leaks; fire alarm activation; blocked drains; failure of door entry systems; failure of electronic gates and barriers; non- flushing WC's; loss of keys or lock ins/lock outs and immediate health & safety issues.

**Urgent Repairs** – within 5 working days

These repairs include repairs to individual electric fittings; electric appliances (Trust only); minor water leaks; individual heating appliances; fire doors; individual items of sanitary – ware; water supply; roof leaks and extractor fans.

**Non- urgent Repairs** – within 28 calendar days

These include repairs or renewal of doors, windows, kitchen units and worktops; ironmongery; light diffusers and fixtures and fittings. Also included are renewal of extractor fans; rainwater goods; sanitary-ware; re-glazing; re-washer taps, repairs to external paths; walls fences; roads; gates; outbuildings and both external finishes and internal finishes.

The above list is not exhaustive and if you have any concerns or need an explanation as to which category your individual repairs request falls under then please speak to your Scheme Manager, Care Manager or a member of their team.

# LOCAL HISTORY . . .

*By Chris Jones, Sheltered Housing and Care Services Manager*

## **The canals around Shirley..**

Following on from the article concerning the Canal Childrens' hostel in Erdington in the last edition, in this edition, I thought we would turn to look at the canal around Mason House.

### ***Majors Green Drawbridge***

If you turn right at the end of Green Lane when leaving Mason House (and Ruth Patrick House) and then continue down Haslucks Green Road for a few hundred yards, on your right hand side you come to the Drawbridge Public House and beside it the Majors Green Drawbridge. The bridge carries the lane over the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal and is usually in the closed position.

The illustration below shows it when opened and the limited clearance there is for a boat passing underneath. The bridge is unique as it is believed to be the only working road drawbridge left in England. When built it had wooden counter weights but these were replaced in 1965 with steel.



The Stratford-upon-Avon Canal was conceived as part of a network of canals which would allow coal from the Black Country to reach lucrative markets in Oxford and London, without having to use the costly Birmingham canals. An Act of Parliament was passed on 28th March 1793 for the construction of a canal from a junction with the Worcester and Birmingham Canal in Kings Norton to Stratford-upon-Avon. Along the 25 mile route of the canal there is a total of 54 narrow locks and as a consequence, it is now far more popular with boaters due to its rural setting and quirky features than it ever was in the days of working boats on the canals! The canal declined due to railway competition in the late Victorian era and was largely abandoned by 1945.

However, a high-profile campaign by newly formed Inland Waterways Association in 1947, under the leadership of Tom Rolt (who also helped save the Talylyn railway in North Wales), involved the right of navigation under Tunnel Lane bridge at Kings Norton which required the Great Western Railway to jack it up in order to allow boats to pass.



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This campaign at Kings Norton saved the canal from closure and started the movement to re-establish and save many of our canals. The southern part of the canal was also then restored by the National Trust between 1961 and 1964 with a re-opening by Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

To the south of the drawbridge the canal continues to Kingswood Junction. Past the junction, on this southern section, interesting features of the canal include the **unique barrel-roofed lock keeper's cottages** to be found south of Kingswood Junction.



All but two have been swamped by large modern extensions, but those at locks 28 and 31 are believed to be in their original state with no electricity supply or mains water.

The **Split bridges** along the canal in several places also date from 1790s and as in the illustration (pictured top right), the gaps allow the rope from horse drawn boats to pass through without hindrance in the days of working boats.



The final unusual feature of the canal is the many aqueducts. There is a Majors Green Aqueduct near to Mason House which carries the canal over the River Cole and local road but those near Wooton Wawen are the most impressive.



The 475ft (145m) Edstone Aqueduct is the longest aqueduct in England. It takes the Stratford Canal above a minor road and used to carry it over the tracks of the former Alcester Railway line, and locomotive firemen would often top up their boilers via a convenient pipe feeding down from the aqueduct!

The canal joins the River Avon at the Bancroft Basin in Stratford-upon-Avon, where a pretty park and waterfront paths are overlooked by the famous Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

# What is the role of a Trustee?

The Trustees of all three charities share collective responsibility for ensuring good governance and they have adopted 'Excellence in Governance' – The Code for members and good practice guidance, as issued by the National Housing Federation. Trustees also follow guidance and regulations as issued by the Charity Commission.

The Board of Trustees between them have a deep understanding of housing, care and support issues. In addition, they are responsible for setting high level strategic objectives, ensuring the financial viability of the Trust, for approving business plans and importantly, in monitoring operational performance to ensure that we're actually achieving agreed objectives.

So, who are our Trustees?



**Alison Crawley,**  
**Chair of Trustees**

Alison qualified as a solicitor in 1981 and has worked in private practice as well as lecturing in Law. Alison is now a legal services consultant and she joined the Board in early 2011.



**Annabel Anderson,**  
**Chair of Almshouse Charity**

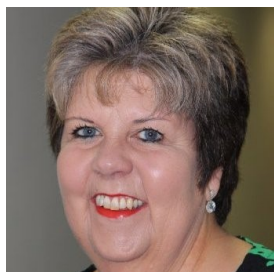
Annabel joined the Board in 1994 and has many links with previous pupils of the Sir Josiah Mason Trust Orphanages. She is currently the Chair of the Almshouse Charity and also our Housing, Care and Property Services Committee.



**Ken Meeson,**  
**Chair of Care Charity**

Councillor Ken Meeson is currently the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing at Solihull Council with responsibility for Adult and Children's Services, as well as Public Health. Ken joined the board in 1995.

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**Julie Houlder,  
Chair of Relief in Need  
Charity**

Julie was appointed as a Trustee in March 2014 and is a professionally qualified accountant and coach. She worked within the public transport industry for many years as Head of Finance and later as Head of Business Management and was an Executive Board member.



**Cllr. Gareth Moore,  
Trustee**

Gareth is a serving Councillor with Birmingham City Council representing the constituents of the Erdington Ward. Gareth was appointed as a Trustee in October 2011.



**Betty Foster,  
Trustee**

Betty has deep ties to the Trust having been a child in Sir Josiah Mason's Orphanage. She has been a Trustee since January 2010.



**Michael Baylis,  
Trustee**

Michael retired in 2013 following the sale of the motor group he founded in 1994. Prior to this he held several directorships within the retail motor industry. He was appointed as a Trustee in 2014.



**Mike Goodwin,  
Trustee**

Mike has been a Trustee since 1994. He enjoyed a successful career as a Chartered Engineer and is now retired.



**Philip Soule,  
Trustee**

Philip qualified as a solicitor in 1981 and has been practising since then, specialising in commercial property and later working as a self-employed consultant. He joined the board in 2016.



**Jonathan Pyke,  
Trustee**

Jonathan was appointed as a Trustee in December 2016. He qualified as a solicitor in 1993 and is employed by a Retail Bank as in-house Counsel.



**Mike Smith,  
Trustee**

Mike was appointed as a Trustee in April 2017. He has a wealth of knowledge surrounding the housing sector and his experience will surely prove to be invaluable.

# Trustee News

## we welcome. . .



We welcomed Philip Soule in September 2016. Philip qualified as a solicitor in 1981 and has been practising since then, specialising in commercial property and later working as a self-employed consultant, exclusively providing advocacy in child care and contact cases. Philip is also the Club Secretary of Edgbaston Priory Club, a private members sports club situated near Birmingham City Centre. Philip is a member of the Finance Committee and the Housing, Care and Property Services Committee.

We welcomed Jonathan Pyke in December 2016. He qualified as a solicitor in 1993 and is employed by a Retail Bank as in-house Counsel, dealing with a wide range of operational issues. He has worked at the Bank since 2003. Jonathan is a member of the Trust's Finance Committee.



We welcomed Mike Smith to the board in April 2017. Many of you will know Mike, from his time as our Sheltered Housing and Care Services Manager from February 2012 until March 2016, when he decided it was time to retire. Mike truly cares about the value of good quality, affordable housing and the unique nature of Sir Josiah Mason Trust. He has a wealth of knowledge surrounding the housing sector and his experience will surely prove to be invaluable.



# Do you know someone caring for an elderly relative or friend?

## Do they need a break?

The Trust provides respite facilities at Alexandra Court, our Extra Care Scheme, and Alexandra House, our Residential Care Home. Our friendly, professional, attentive staff focus on the individual needs of our residents, and our respite facilities are available for just a few days or for a longer term.



Alexandra Court is our purpose-built facility, which is registered with the Care Quality Commission and has 24-hour staffing provided by qualified teams. Our complete affordable service provides daily support, meals, laundry and cleaning. Our buildings are secure and have private gardens, spacious communal areas and regular social activities.

We have respite rooms available. If you would like to know more, please contact our Customer Services Team on **0121 245 1002**.



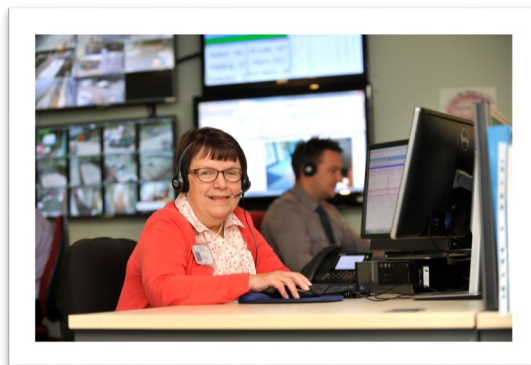
## Residents' Visit to Worcestershire Telecare

Around 25 residents from Olton, Shirley and Erdington visited our alarm call centre provider, Worcestershire Telecare in Kidderminster on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017.

Worcestershire Telecare has been at the forefront of community alarm services since the company was established 20 years ago and is a Platinum Member of the TSA, which is the industry body for telecare and telehealth in the UK. It has a wealth of experience of working in the telecare sector and is one of the top performing centres in the country.

Our residents visited the hi-tec call centre located in offices of Community Housing Group and were shown around the centre. Whilst there they got the opportunity to speak to the call handlers, to whom many had spoken to over the years, and were shown how the centre receives emergency and door entry calls. We also set up some test calls from Mason Court to the centre!

After the tour, Worcestershire Telecare provided a buffet lunch for residents before they set off back to the Trust's schemes.



### Useful Organisations:

The Citizen's Advice Bureau provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice on people's rights and responsibilities.

The address of your local branch can be found on their website - [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) or your local branches can be contacted on the numbers shown below:

Shirley Centre (Stratford Road) - **0121 744 3238**

Solihull (The Priory) - **0121 705 2212**

Kingstanding Bureau - **0844 477 1010**



**Citizens Advice**  
the charity for your community



## What you said...

In October 2016, the Trust issued a Customer Satisfaction Survey to all Sheltered Housing Schemes in order for our residents to provide feedback. When responses to all questions were totalled up from all scheme the results were as follows: 58.64% of all responses were very satisfied responses – with an increase of 4% on the last survey in 2013. 37.82% were satisfied responses and just 3.54% were not satisfied responses.

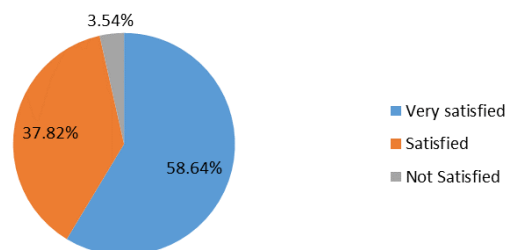
Across all schemes, the summary results suggest key areas of satisfaction include staff helpfulness, Scheme Manager services and overall home quality. There were some really positive comments about staff especially and these are much appreciated.

Although dissatisfaction levels are very low in general, some areas where there tended to be less satisfaction included the general appearance of external gardens and also the condition of internal communal areas. A graphed response of overall survey results is pictured on the right.

We are now looking into what we can do to improve our performance in these areas.

A customer satisfaction survey was also issued to all residents at Alexandra Court in October 2016. The Trust achieved a 96% satisfaction rate at Alexandra Court with regard to the services we provide at our Extra Care Scheme.

**Sheltered Housing Satisfaction Survey  
- Overall Results**



A range of statements about the service formed the Alexandra House survey, also distributed to relatives of residents in our Residential Care Home in October 2016. When analysed, overall results show 95% of residents and / or their families were happy with the quality of the service we provided.



**Thank you** to all who took the time and effort to complete our survey forms. The issues you have raised are helping to us to improve how we deliver services to all of our residents.

# Important Announcement

After about 43 years working in the social housing sector (and the last seven as our CEO), Richard Hall has recently indicated to me that he intends to leave the Trust later this year to pursue new opportunities.

Since joining us Richard has undoubtedly made a huge improvement to the way that all three charities operate, bringing a professional outlook and approach to the management of the organisation. We thank him also for the way he modernised our policies and operating processes.

Indeed, I can tell you that as a group of charities we are in much better shape today, with a very positive outlook for the future. I and all other Trustees are very grateful to Richard for his sound judgement, guidance and leadership.

So, over the coming weeks we intend to commence a process to recruit his successor. Trustees and the senior management team are all keen that this is planned in a way which minimises delay and any disruption. The appointment of the new CEO is key to carrying on the good work already undertaken, and to move forward as the Trust continues to develop.

I shall of course write to you again when we have further news, but at this stage I thought it important that you should be informed of the changes that will be taking place over the coming months.

Yours sincerely,



**Alison Crawley**  
**Chairman of the Board of Trustees**