

ST. MARY'S HOMES

GODSTONE

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

Year Ended 31st December 2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF ST. MARY'S HOMES

I report on the accounts of the Homes for the year ended 31 December 2023 set out on pages 1 - 8 of the accounts.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirements of Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of the procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:-
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Acthave not been met, other than in respect of the exclusion of tangible historic fixed assets commented on in Note 2 to the Accounts, or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed Janet Mackinnon Date.....October 2024

Name JANET MACKINNON

ST. MARY'S HOMES, GODSTONE

TRUSTEES

Rev Peter O'Connell (ex officio) Chairman

Graham Millar (ex officio)

Louise Case (ex officio until 9th of May 2023))

Philip Anderson (resigned 25th July 2023)

Joanna Gregory

Nicholas Barker

Katharine Eberhart (appointed 9th May 2023)

Louise Case (appointed 10th of May 2023)

Jonathan Oaks (appointed 15th February 2023)

OFFICERS

Andrew Turner (resigned 9th of May 2023) Honorary Treasurer

Andrew Turner (resigned 30th of November 2023) Assistant Treasurer

Janet MacKinnon Independent Examiner

ADDRESS

St. Mary's Homes
Church Lane
Godstone
Surrey RH9 8BW

BANKERS

Lloyds Bank

SOLICITORS

Dollman & Pritchard
8 The Square
Caterham
Surrey CR3 6XS

HISTORY

St. Mary's Homes were founded in 1872 in the quiet and pleasant Church Town area of Godstone. They were designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and comprise eight residential units and a small chapel. Each of the units consists of at least a sitting room, bedroom, bathroom and kitchen. The buildings are arranged around three sides of a courtyard in the centre of which stands an old well.

The Homes were founded through the sole generosity of Mrs. Augusta Nona Hunt who moved to Wonham House in the parish of Godstone with her infant daughter, Mabel Fanny, having been suddenly widowed at a young age. Contemporaries record the personality and piety of the young widow and describe her as being "of a singularly lovable nature, devoted to everything that is pure and beautiful and given to good works".

Tragically Mabel Fanny died on 27th June 1872 shortly after her eighteenth birthday and Mrs. Hunt resolved later that year to commemorate her daughter by establishing St. Mary's Homes.

Over the years accommodation has been provided for many local people in need. It was not originally necessary for the residents to contribute to the running of the Homes but, due to increased maintenance costs and in particular, the rising price of fuel and other public utilities, the residents have been required to make weekly contributions since 1971. When they were built the standard of the Homes was basic but considered acceptable for the times. In order to keep up with the rising standards expected from this type of accommodation successive generations of trustees have carried out improvements to enhance the comfort and amenities of the accommodation.

In addition to the residents' contributions the maintenance of the Homes by the Trustees benefits from an income derived from endowments, bequests and donations from local residents and visitors.

TRUSTEES REPORT

The Trustees present their report and the examined financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023. This report is prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2005 and 2008. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities 2016 (SORP FRS 102) in preparing this annual report and financial statements.

Structure, Governance and Management

After Mrs. Hunt's death in 1878, the Homes were maintained by her family until 1901 when their administration was taken over by Trustees appointed from the parish of Godstone under a Deed Poll dated 4th January 1901. This states that the Homes should be used to accommodate people in financial need who are "aged or infirm persons of good character", preference being given to those applicants residing in the parish of Godstone or having some longstanding connection with it.

The Homes are a Registered Charity (no. 206075), members of The National Association of Almshouses and English Heritage.

The Homes have also historically been known as Augusta Nona Hunt for Almshouses. The chairman of Trustees is designated to be the Rector for the Parish of Godstone and both the Rector and the churchwarden(s) of the Parish are appointed ex-officio. Other new trustees are appointed at the discretion of the current trustees. The trustees recognise the need for the appropriate induction of new trustees and the training of existing trustees.

The organisational structure of the charity is that the trustees are responsible for running of the Homes on a volunteer basis. There are no employees. The trustees meet at least twice a year to approve the budget, set maintenance contributions and approve the financial accounts.

Risks

The trustees review the risks to which the charity is exposed and seeks to mitigate those risks. The trustees commissioned a Fire Risk Assessment in September 2022 and are currently implementing the recommendations set out in the report.

It is considered that the primary economic risk facing the Homes is the likelihood that in the future it will be difficult to find suitable residents who will regard the Homes as an attractive place to reside. This would have a profound impact on the viability of the Homes.

The trustees have adopted a Disaster Recovery Plan which has been circulated to all those who might be called upon to help in the event of an emergency. This plan is updated as necessary. Insurance cover is reviewed on an annual basis.

Objectives and activities

In accordance with the spirit of the founding documents, the objects of the charity are still to provide accommodation to single persons or couples, who are either aged or infirmed, in financial need and who are able to maintain themselves. Wherever possible preference will be given to applicants who have a connection with Godstone and its environs.

Achievement and Performance

The Homes have been fully occupied for most of the year.

Financial Review

The financial position of the Homes as at 31 December 2023 was satisfactory with a surplus in the general fund of £7,759, after transfers to reserves and before revaluation of the investment assets, as shown in the accounts. The rising costs of energy has significantly added to the running costs of the homes.

Reserves policy

The investment assets held by the charity comprise the Endowment Fund and the General Fund together with two Reserve Funds which have been built up and authorised at rates approved by the Almshouse Association and the Charity Commission. These reserve funds comprise an Extraordinary Repair Fund ("ERF") and a Cyclical Maintenance Fund ("CMF"). Although the fully authorised amount capable of transfer to the ERF has always been achieved, this has not always been possible for the CMF due to limited resources. It is the policy of the Trustees to maximise available reserves commensurate with, firstly, likely future maintenance requirements and, secondly, keeping residents' weekly contributions at an acceptable level.

Investment policy

The investment policy adopted by the trustees is to seek to secure a balance between maximising income to supplement residents' weekly contributions whilst maintaining and enhancing capital values to keep pace with inflation and the likely future costs of ensuring the objects of the charity are achievable and sustainable in the future.

Rathbone Investment Management Ltd manage the Homes investment portfolio on behalf of the trustees.

Realised and unrealised gains and losses on investments are summarised in the accounts to reflect changes over the preceding 12 months.

Equivalent Fair Rents

In May 2016 the Valuation Office Agency visited the Homes in order to evaluate appropriate open market rental values for the flats. Equivalent fair rents for the flats excluding services were estimated as follows;

Flats 1-6	£135 per week
Flat 8	£170 per week
Flat 9	£170 per week

The contributions currently paid by residents remain substantially below these levels and the above valuations are now historic. The trustees have submitted a request for an updated review to the Valuation Office Agency and are awaiting a result.

Plans for the Future

The Trustees are aware of the need for continual improvement to the standard of accommodation in order to maintain a high occupancy level thereby ensuring the viability of the Homes. It is intended to continue with the policy of improving the facilities of the Homes as and when opportunities occur and funds permit.

By Order of the Trustees



Statement of Financial Activities to 31 December 2023

	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Cyclical Maintenance Fund (Unrestricted)	Extraordinary Repair Fund (unrestricted)	Endowment Fund (Restricted)	Total 2023	Total 2022
Income						
Residents Contributions	53,695				53,695	50,963
Donations and Legacies	124				124	183
Dividend Income	4,765	4,538	2,099		11,402	12,104
Total Income	58,584	4,538	2,099		65,222	63,250
Expenditure						
Electricity	8,759				8,759	5,655
Gas	10,016				10,016	5,489
Water Rates	1,306				1,306	1,416
Insurance	2,729				2,729	2,422
Flat Renovations	6,725				6,725	
General Maintenance	8,386				8,386	10,445
Water monitoring	1,592				1,592	1,244
Security Systems	671				671	651
Investment Management	(325)		488	1,019	2,160	2,445
Garden	1,700	978			1,700	2,840
Responsible Persons	780				780	
Sundries	1,203				1,203	349
Total Expenditure	43,544	978	488	1,019	46,028	32,956
Net Income	15,041	3,560	1,611	(1,019)	19,193	30,294
Movement b/w Funds	(7,282)		7,282			
Adjusted Net Income	7,759	3,560	8,893	(1,019)	19,193	30,294
Gains and loss on investments	2,468	11,607	6,594	8,362	29,032	(53,323)
Net movement in funds	10,227	15,168	15,488	7,344	48,226	(23,029)
Fund Balances brought forward	86,397	203,685	104,892	212,128	607,103	630,132
Fund Balances carried forward	96,624	218,853	120,380	219,472	655,329	607,103

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets - Endowment			
Investments at Market Value	9	215,126	209,039
Cash at Bank and with Brokers		4,346	3,090
		219,472	212,128
Current Assets			
Investments at market value		379,743	331,493
Debtors and Prepayments		1,500	1,551
Cash at bank and at brokers		66,279	65,192
		447,521	398,235
Current Liabilities			
Amounts falling due within one year		11,664	3,260
Net Current Assets	10	435,857	394,975
Total Net Assets		655,329	607,103
Funds represented by			
Restricted Funds			
Endowment Fund		219,472	212,128
Unrestricted Funds			
Emergency Repair Fund		120,380	104,892
Cyclical Maintenance Fund		218,853	203,685
General Fund		96,624	86,397
		435,857	394,975
		655,329	607,103

Notes to Accounts

1. Accounting policies: these accounts have been prepared on the accruals basis under the historical cost convention and in accordance with, except where specifically stated, The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2005 and 2008 and the Charities SORP 2016 (Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities).
2. The land and listed buildings comprising St. Mary's Homes are inalienable and historic freehold tangible fixed assets which are not included in the accounts contrary to SORP 2005 para 253. These assets were gifted to the original Trustees over 100 years ago and the Trustees do not believe that a current value placed upon them is necessary for a proper appreciation of these accounts. They are valued for insurance purposes at £3,310,502.

The title to the Homes remains unregistered at the Land Registry. On 12 June 1956 the Homes and accompanying land were vested in the Official Custodian for Charities. This Order together with the original Deed of Gift (Deed Poll) of 1901 are held on behalf of the trustees by Dollman & Pritchard.

3. None of the investments are irredeemable and were valued by Rathbones as at 31 December 2023. Investment gains and losses comprise actual acquisitions and disposals and any increase or decrease in value since 31 December 2022.
4. Investments are held by the nominee company of Rathbone Investment Management Ltd for the benefit of the Homes.
5. The Homes have no employees.
6. During the period reimbursed expenses incurred by the trustees, the officers of the charity and the independent examiner did not exceed £200. This figure does not include direct costs attributable to the Homes but disbursed by the trustees or officers personally in the first instance.
7. Provisions for the Extraordinary Repair Fund and the Cyclical Maintenance Fund are in accordance with the recommended scale laid down by the Charity Commissioners and the Almshouse Association.
8. There are no loans outstanding.
9. Fixed assets comprise endowed investment funds which arise from generous bequests received in the past as follows;

Augusta Nona Hunt Bequest
Robert and Marie Lindley Fund
Parker Smith Fund
Mary Stubbings Gift
Brazier Gift
Robert Goodwin Steer Memorial Fund
Miss Lindley Bequest

10. Current assets comprise general unrestricted funds of the Homes together with the Extraordinary Repair Fund ("ERF") and the Cyclical Maintenance Fund ("CMF"). The Extraordinary Repair Fund is used for exceptional repairs and refurbishments and building works. The Cyclical Maintenance Fund is reserved where possible for repairs and renovations of a recurring and cyclical nature.