

27. Methodist Homes (MHA)

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Thank you for the continuing generosity of our Methodist family. Your dedication to Methodist Homes (MHA) and your overwhelming support of our mission, vision and values has again supported our vital work in helping people to live later life well.

1. General Report

- 1.1 Methodist Homes marked its 80th year in 2023 culminating with its 80th anniversary service held at Wesley Church, Harrogate on 23 September. It was wonderful to be joined by so many friends from the Methodist Church. The President of the Conference, the Revd Gill Newton, preached an inspiring sermon, encouraging us to look back with thanksgiving, and to continue forwards in confidence, knowing that God is good, loving and faithful. Our patron, Pam Rhodes (television and radio presenter) also joined us and participated in the service.
- 1.2 In August 2023, we were greatly saddened by the unexpected death of the Revd Crispian Acher, who had recently taken up the interim post of Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality, stepping up from his substantive role of Head of Chaplaincy South. Crispian was a much loved and respected chaplain and is greatly missed.
- 1.3 In January 2024, the Revd James Francis joined us as the new Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality. Unfortunately, however, due to personal circumstances, he recently left MHA, and we are therefore recruiting again to this crucial role, and we will seek to appoint as soon as practically possible. In the interim, Sam Monaghan (MHA CEO), will lead the Chaplaincy and Spirituality Directorate, ably supported by the Revd Sam Cowling-Green, our new Head of Chaplaincy, who started on 29 April, and Abby Ogier, Area Support Chaplain, who will continue acting up as our other Head of Chaplaincy, which is the role she has been filling for the past year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Revd Kate Le Sueur, Head of Chaplaincy North, for her dedication and commitment to MHA over the past five years. Kate leaves MHA on 10 May to enjoy a well-earned retirement.
- 1.4 Over the past year MHA has continued to deliver high quality care and support to 19,000 people: 4,800 in our care homes; 2,700 in our retirement living settings and 11,500 members of our MHA Communities schemes. 91% of our homes and

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schemes are rated as Good or Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission and we remain a Real Living Wage Employer. This year has also seen us further embracing technology through the roll out of digital care plans across our care homes and the development of our MHA Active App, offering a range of activities and interests, now accessed by over 2,000 regular users.

2. Challenging Operating Environment

- 2.1 2023 was another challenging year with the cost-of-living crisis, inflation, massive increases in energy costs and a shortage of workers across the care sector. As a result, following a strategic review of its services, MHA announced a number of measures to address these challenges.
- 2.2 These included a decision to sell ten care homes around the UK, place Auchlochan Garden Village in Scotland and its two associated care homes into administration, and sell the charity's three remaining retirement living schemes in Scotland.
- 2.3 Since the announcement, Hafan y Waun in Aberystwyth has transferred to the local authority and another eight homes are in the process of being sold as going concerns. Sadly, the buyer for Cedar Lawn in Stratford upon Avon withdrew, so, in January, MHA had to make the difficult decision to close the home.
- 2.4 In the longer term, by making changes now, Methodist Homes will better withstand the financial challenges facing the care sector, whilst continuing to be able to offer its exceptional care in its care homes, retirement living schemes and community schemes, in the steps of its founder, the Revd Walter Hall, who wanted to provide people with care and support to live later life well.

3. Accounts and Governance

- 3.1 The latest audited annual report and accounts are available on our website or on request from Epworth House.
- 3.2 During the year Janet Haugh and Denise Sanderson-Estcourt stepped down from the Trustees; Ian Ailles retired having served the full term, and we welcomed Jessica White as a new member of the Board.
- 3.3 Ruth Gee will be stepping down as the Methodist Conference nominee on MHA's Board at this year's conference. We extend to Ruth our sincere gratitude for all her contributions as our Trustee and for her assistance in sustaining MHA's positive relationship with the Methodist Church. We are looking forward to welcoming and working with her successor once appointed, and with them further developing our Methodist links.

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- 3.4 Our Trustees, who oversee the work of the Charity, continue to offer excellent advice and guidance, sharing between them considerable expertise across the range of MHA's activities. The focus of MHA's holistic approach to care is at the root of their willingness to serve as Board members, and they bring a range of spiritual and belief commitments to the role.

4. Other Notable Events in the Year

- 4.1 On 29 February 2024 we were delighted to welcome the President of the Conference – the Revd Gill Newton – to our Hall Grange care home in Shirley, near Croydon, where we launched the children's book, "Finding Nana", which was developed in recognition that it can be daunting for children when a loved one moves into a care home. It seeks to address the anxieties that such young people may have when preparing to visit a friend or relative for the first time. The story has been written by author Jenni Bacon following visits to an MHA home and is illustrated by Sophie Parmenter. It has been published in partnership with Methodist Publishing and BRF.
- 4.2 MHA Sunday 2024 will be themed around Mark 4:30-32, the parable of the mustard seed, as we reflect on how the seemingly small act of making a regular telephone call has a big impact in our telephone befriending service. This year's video features Dot and Grace, who were 'matched' through MHA's befriending service, and shows them meeting face to face for the first time. MHA Sunday is on 9 June 2024, but churches are welcome to hold it on any date that fits with their calendar of activities.
- 4.3 Our dedicated web page has free downloadable resources including an order of service (available in English and Welsh), the video, sermon notes and a fully worked sermon. Gift Aid envelopes are also available, visit mha.org.uk/Sunday.
- 4.4 All within MHA are very grateful and value greatly the continuing prayers, volunteering, engagement and financial support received from Methodists locally and nationally.

Thank you for all your support. In faith and kindness, we are stronger together.

***RESOLUTION

- 27/1. The Conference receives the Report.**