

Royal Recognition

On 10th December 2018 the Amersham United Charities Chair, Rev'd Canon Tim Harper, with a representative Trustee and a representative Resident of the Charity met HRH The Duke of Gloucester, Vice-Patron of the Almshouse Association, to receive the Patron's Award for the refurbishment of the Miss Day's Almshouses in the High Street, Old Amersham, for recognition of overall excellence in the recently completed redevelopment, with particular emphasis on architectural merit, practicability and sustainability.



Photos courtesy of David Owens Photography:
www.david-owens.co.uk



The Almshouse Association is keen to promote the highest standards of almshouse accommodation and to ensure that almshouses continue to provide safe, warm and comfortable homes. New designs and remodelling projects should add to the rich architectural heritage that almshouses represent. In support of this objective, HRH The Prince of Wales, the Association's Patron, presents Awards to recognise outstanding almshouse projects.

For some time it had been recognised that Miss Day's Almshouses did not provide appropriate accommodation for modern living. In 2013 a scheme was developed to convert the nine existing independent homes into seven, retaining the historic front façade and other important features of the Grade 2 listed building. This provides greatly improved kitchen and lounge areas within the cottages, including a downstairs toilet, and the replacement of the original crooked narrow staircases with straight ones to the enlarged bedroom and shower room. External walls have better insulation, significantly improving the thermal efficiency of the building. Utility services have been upgraded and more storage facilities provided. The redevelopment of the cottages has given considerable benefit to the residents, and has met the Charity's objectives in providing affordable homes in the locality where residents have lived for much of their lives.

Chartered Surveyors Leonard Tridgell Associates were appointed to develop detailed plans and manage the project, including obtaining the necessary planning and listed building consents. The work has been carried out by Edgar Taylor (Buckingham) within the budget of just under one million pounds and to the contract time, being completed in late Summer of 2017.

The Charity was delighted that Countess Howe agreed to be Patron for the Appeal to raise the necessary finance through an extensive local fundraising campaign. Major grants were awarded from the Homes and Communities Agency via the Almshouse Consortium Limited, and from Chiltern District Council. Grants were obtained from local and national trusts and foundations, and significant funding was raised from the local residential and business community. The target

finance was achieved through an interest free Almshouse Association loan, and by negotiating a small balancing loan from CAF Bank.

The 2017 Patron's Award presentations ceremony took place at Hammersmith United Charities, who are celebrating their 400th anniversary. Tim Harper said *"I was delighted, as Chair of Amersham United Charities, to receive the Award on behalf of the team of trustees who had done the real work. Simon White and his colleagues, of Leonard Tridgell Associates, have given excellent and comprehensive service in design, specification, contractor selection, contract administration, project cost control and post-project follow-up work, all of which were a major contributory factor in the Charity receiving the Patron's Award"*. Resident Gayle Berrington said *"It was an honour for me to represent the residents of Miss Day's Almshouses, and meet the Duke of Gloucester"*.

