



Quinquennial Inspections Ltd

Ecclesiastical • Almshouses • Heritage Buildings

Quinquennial Inspection Report

Dore House,
56a Lordswood Road, Harborne,
Birmingham B17 9DA



6th September 2024

Project number: 1253C-02

Telephone: 0121 471 1478
Email: info@quinquennialinspections.co.uk

51 Derwent Road, Ten Acres,
Stirchley, Birmingham, B30 2UY

Directors • [Tim Richardson](#) MCIAT MCIQB MSAI MRICS • [Louise Richardson](#)
Registered in England and Wales No. 9801416



CONTENTS

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION
- 2.0 ASSESSMENT OF PROPERTY CONDITION
- 3.0 EXTERIOR
- 4.0 INTERIOR
- 5.0 SERVICES AND INSTALLATIONS
- 6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER ISSUES
- 7.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- | | |
|------------|---|
| APPENDIX 1 | Summary of Approximate Costs |
| APPENDIX 2 | HSE Guidance on Legionella 2014 |
| APPENDIX 3 | SPAB Guidance on cement pointing |
| APPENDIX 4 | Almshouse Association Guidance on PAT Testing |

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Property Address

Dore House, 56a Lordswood Road, Harborne, Birmingham B17 9DA.

1.2 Client's Name and Address

Harborne Parish Lands Charity, 109 Court Oak Road, Harborne, Birmingham B17 9AA.

1.3 Buildings and structures included in the survey

Dore house comprises 6 one-bedroom flats. No's. 1, 3 and 4 were surveyed internally.

No's. 2 and 6 were surveyed internally in 2018 and No's. 1, 2 & 6 in 2012.

This means that No's 1, 2 & 6 have been surveyed twice each.

Dore House was a Victorian villa converted into flats in 1994.

There are communal corridors, stairs, a lift and a basement.

In this report the individual dwellings are referred to as "flats" and the building, as a whole, as the "property".

Where elements of the building have been identified in this report as 'left hand' or 'right hand', these areas are viewed as from the front of the building.

1.4 Date of Survey and weather conditions

The survey was carried out on 6th September 2024. Weather conditions at the time of the inspection were dry following a dry week.

1.5 Limitations of Inspection

External inspections were from ground floor level only with the use of binoculars and with a 3m ladder.

In carrying out the Survey the following assumptions have been made:

- a: That high alumina cement, concrete or calcium chloride additive or any other problematic materials or techniques were not used when the building was constructed, or in any subsequent alterations.
- b: That future inspections of any hidden parts of the structure which have not been inspected would not reveal material defects, or cause the surveyor to alter materially any indicative costings provided.

Woodwork or other parts of the structure which are not uncovered or exposed, or were inaccessible have not been inspected. It is, therefore, not possible to report that the property is free from defect. However, conclusions about the construction have been drawn from surface evidence visible at the time of the inspection.

1.6 The Site and Surrounding Areas

British Geological Survey records indicate that the property is built on:-

Bedrock Geology

Alveley Member - Mudstone. Sedimentary bedrock formed between 309.5 and 308 million years ago during the Carboniferous period.

Superficial Deposits

None noted.

1.7 Recommendations for Further opening up

None.

1.8 Recommendations for Further Specialist Advice

- A proper compartmentation survey of the roofspaces and voids should be carried out, making reference to the drawings done at the time of conversion in 1994 and showing all areas where compartmentation is missing or compromised .

1.9 Works undertaken since last inspection

The previous stock condition survey was done by Tim Richardson MCIAT MSAI MCIOB MRICS in April 2018. Since that time the following work has been undertaken:

- Some tree work
- Various internal repairs

1.10 Outstanding work from last inspection

- Stone cleaning and restoration
- Possible provision of a lightning protection system

1.11 Summary of General Structural Condition

The property is in good condition with no major items of disrepair, some minor issues need addressing and some maintenance will be needed within the quinquennium. The flats are all 'decent' according to the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

1.12 Health & Safety Issues

- Some rear paving is uneven (section 3.6.1)
- A Legionella risk assessment is required for the flats' hot and cold water systems (section 5.6).
- Fire compartmentation is compromised in the roof void (section 3.6.1).

1.13 Description of Defects

Further details of the defects listed below are contained in the relevant sections of this report; costs for rectifying the items are included in Appendix 1.

2.0 ASSESSMENT OF PROPERTY CONDITION

In assessing the property the current statutory national housing standards have been considered; these are – The Decent Homes Standard and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. Cracks are categorised in accordance with BRE (building Research Establishment) Digest 251. Whilst these standards are not mandatory for Almshouses, the Almshouse Association recommends following them as best practice.

2.1 THE DECENT HOMES STANDARD

To be defined as 'decent', a home must meet each of the following criteria:

It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing

The Housing Act 2004 introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, which came into effect in April 2006; this is an evidence-based inspection, which considers the effect of 29 given hazards that might exist in a property. The system enables risks in dwellings arising from health and safety hazards to be assessed and then minimised or eliminated.

It is in a reasonable state of repair

Dwellings which fail to meet this criterion are those where either:

- one or more of the key building components are “old” and, because of their condition, need replacing or major repair; or
- two or more of the other building components are “old” and, because of their condition, need replacing or major repair.

It has reasonably modern facilities and services

Dwellings which fail to meet this criterion are those which lack three or more of the following:

- a reasonably modern kitchen (20 years old or less);
- a kitchen with adequate space and layout;
- a reasonably modern bathroom (30 years old or less);
- an appropriately located bathroom and WC;

- adequate insulation against external noise (where external noise is a problem);
- adequate size and layout of common areas for blocks of flats.

It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

This means that the dwelling must have both effective insulation and efficient heating.

For a house heated by electricity there must be a minimum of 200mm thermal insulation in the roofspace.

2.2 THE HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY RATING SYSTEM

The property is inspected to ascertain whether there are any hazards. A full scoring exercise has not been carried out but hazards can be scored and categorized as serious (category 1 hazards) and other less serious (category 2 hazards). Other hazards may exist (category 3 hazards) but these are deemed to be an acceptable level of risk.

The 29 hazards that can be assessed are those associated with or arising from:

(A) Physiological Requirements

Damp and mould growth
Excess cold
Excess heat
Asbestos and Man Made Fibres (MMF)
Biocides
Carbon monoxide and fuel combustion products
Lead
Radiation
Uncombusted fuel gas
Volatile Organic Compounds

(B) Protection Against Infection

Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse
Food safety
Personal hygiene, sanitation and drainage
Water supply for domestic purpose

(C) Protection Against Accidents

Falls associated with baths
Falling on level surfaces

Falling on stairs and steps
Falling between levels
Electrical hazards
Fire
Flames, hot surfaces
Collision and entrapment
Explosions
Position and operability of amenities
Structural collapse and failing elements

(D) Psychological Requirements

Crowding and space
Entry by intruders
Lighting
Noise

3.0 Exterior

3.1	Roof Coverings		
3.1.1	Structure	Traditional 'cut' timber roof of rafters and purlins.	
	Condition	Good. The timbers in the roof void have an average moisture content of 12%, which is dry. There is some distortion of the timber members but nothing particularly unusual given the age and type of the property.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.1.2	Pitched roof covering	The roof covering is of manmade slates with wood cored roll to the ridge and hips.	
	Condition	The covering is faded – this was a common problem with this type of slate but appears to be an aesthetic problem only at the moment. It may be necessary to replace the covering if they deteriorate further but this may not be needed. The slates do not appear to be substantially worse than seen on the previous Quinquennial Inspection and the degree of fading seen may be the limit. There is some minor moss growth to the front slope although this is not currently causing any problems.	

			
	Repair needs	Replace roof covering if required.	4
		Clear moss growth.	3
3.1.3	Fascias, soffits and bargeboards	Painted boards.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.2	Rainwater Goods		
3.2.1	Gutters and rainwater pipes	UPVC ogee gutters and circular rainwater pipes.	
	Condition	UPVC items are in good condition, a few have discoloured and faded but appear to be effective. As it was not raining at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm if the rainwater goods are effective.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.2.2	Gullies	Gullies are clay with metal / plastic grids.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.3	Walls		
3.3.1	Chimney stacks	Brick chimney stacks with lime / cement mortar pointing.	
	Condition	Good.	
			
	Repair needs	None.	
3.3.2	Walls - brick	Facing brickwork in English bond with cement mortar pointing. There is a damp proof course visible to all walls.	
	Condition	Older bricks are relatively soft and they appear to have been handmade and were originally pointed with lime putty; the pointing, some of which probably dates from the 1994 works, appears to be Portland cement mortar and, as a result, is much harder than the bricks. This means that when the bricks become wet, water can no longer evaporate out of the joints and is retained in the bricks themselves, frost action then expands the water and causes the faces to fall off. The situation is much the same as seen on the previous Quinquennial Inspection, although a few more bricks have spalled and areas of pointing deteriorated. Whilst the bricks give a poor appearance the majority are in good condition – cutting out	
			

		the bricks is probably too drastic and would cause more damage than good but any new mortar should be carefully matched to ensure it is softer than the bricks. The hard mortar can be removed where it is loose enough to do so by hand but again cutting out the mortar would be likely to cause damage to the bricks.	
	Repair needs	Test areas of potentially loose stonework. Repoint isolated areas of brickwork. Replace isolated spalled bricks.	1 3 3
3.3.3	Walls - stone	Facing brickwork in English bond with cement mortar pointing. There is a damp proof course visible to all walls.	
	Condition    	A small section of stone finial has become detached from the top of one of the windows and fallen. Other stone features show signs of wear, some cracking and age related deterioration although without carrying out a physical 'hammer test' it is impossible to say how sound these are. From a visual survey only, any missing sections look to be in reasonable condition. Other stonework is blackened but cleaning is not a particular necessity. A few areas of stone are chipped and missing but most of this appears to be longstanding, there is delamination to some stone sills. A programme of stone cleaning and renewals would be desirable but not required at the present time. The situation is slightly worse than that seen on the previous Quinquennial Inspection.	

			
Repair needs		Test areas of potentially loose stonework. A programme of stone cleaning and restoration is nevertheless recommended as a prudent measure.	2 3

3.3.4	Damp proof course	No actual DPC is visible but the plinth has been rendered with a cement mortar.	
	Condition 	The plinth render is cracked and has been patched in places but with no major defects. British Standard 7913: 2013 lists a number of actions to be taken in the case of rising damp in an old building.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.3.5	Airbricks	There are terracotta and plastics airbricks present.	
	Condition 	Good or fair, one plastic airbrick has been cut to run cables through, forming a possible entry point for vermin.	
	Repair needs	Re-route cables and replace airbrick.	3

3.4	Doors, Windows, External Joinery and Metalwork		
3.4.1	Doors	Painted softwood. There is one communal front door fitted with an automatic opener, other doors are glazed French doors in Flats No. 1 and 2.	
	Condition 	The resident in Flat No. 1 reported problems with the right hand French door. Doors are now 30 years old and although generally in good condition some minor issues exist. They are not so badly defective that replacement is needed but some repairs are. Replacement in softwood would be more appropriate to preserve the character of the building although modern softwood is often poorly seasoned and has a limited life, so there is little advantage in replacement at the present time. Repair is both a more environmentally benign solution and probably more cost effective even in the long run. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Repair needs	Ease and repair door.	2

3.4.2	Windows	Wood double glazed casement windows to the flats. There is a stained window in leaded lights above the staircase, these are fitted with aluminium secondary glazing.	
	Condition    Hallway   No. 3	Generally good, four panes of glass are cracked to the window above the staircase but the glass is intact. One pane is bowed – the yellow glass above the left hand lamp. There is very minor mould to the window in the living room and bedroom of No. 3, the seal to the double glazed unit has also failed. There is slight wear to the kitchen window. The resident in No. 4 has stated the living room window is draughty, there is kitchen paper stuck in the gaps and there is a hole adjacent to the sill externally. The casement fastener in the bedroom does not work, the trickle vent covers are loose and ineffective. The seal to the double glazed unit in the bathroom window has failed. As with the doors, windows are now 30 years old and although generally in good condition some minor issues exist. They are not so badly defective that replacement is needed but some repairs are. Replacement in softwood would be more appropriate to preserve the character of the building although modern softwood is often poorly seasoned and has a limited life, so there is little advantage in replacement at the present time. Repair is both a more environmentally benign solution and probably more cost effective even in the long run.	



No. 4

	Repair needs	Intact glass could be left or a conservation repair carried out. The bowed item can probably be repaired insitu.	2
		Repair flat windows, replace defective glazing and ironmongery.	2
3.5	External Paintwork		
3.5.1	Description	Doors, windows, soffits, fascias and metalwork are all painted. Fences, sheds, benches and street furniture were stained but most fences are bare of any finish.	
	Condition 	Generally good condition, painted items ought to be redecorated every 4-5 years. Painting fences with a preservative stain will prolong their life. Paint is flaking to the French doors in No. 1. There is some corrosion to the metal handrails to the rear.	
	Repair needs	Touch up doors to No. 1.	1
		Treat corrosion.	2
		Stain fences.	3
		Redecorate woodwork and metalwork.	3

3.6	Paving, Paths, Steps, Ramps, Drives and Parking Areas		
3.6.1	Paths	The forecourt is block paving and other areas are concrete flag paving. There are stone pavings to the rear.	
	Condition   	Generally good although some areas of brick and concrete flag paving to the rear have sunk and are something of a trip hazard.	
	Repair needs	Take up and re-lay uneven flags and paved areas.	1

3.6.2	Steps	There are stone steps to the rear.	
	Condition  	Fair; stone steps are original and show signs of wear. Handrails should not be 'cold to the touch', external metal handrails can become extremely cold. In these circumstances, some people may be reluctant to use the handrail (or involuntary let go of the handrail) if it is uncomfortably cold, representing a safety hazard. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Repair needs	Consider replacing with nylon-coated or hardwood handrails.	4
3.6.3	Ramps	There is a stone ramp with a gentle gradient to the front door.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.6.4	Drives	Small format block paved drive with tarmac parking areas.	
	Condition	Fair.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.6.5	Car parking	Marked out bays to the front of the site including disabled bays.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.6.6	Drying area	Small paved areas with rotary clothes dryers to the side of the building.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.7	Site Features: Boundary Walls, Gates, Fences, etc.		
3.7.1	Walls	Front boundaries consist of brick walls, some with painted steel railings above. Rear boundaries are close boarded timber fences.	
	Condition   	Brickwork is variable; the majority is in good condition although there is some minor missing pointing and spalled bricks to the front.	
	Repair needs	Repoint isolated areas.	1

3.7.2	Railings	Metal spear top railings to the front elevation.	
	Condition	Good. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.7.3	Fences	Fences are close boarded timber on concrete or timber posts. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.7.4	Benches and street furniture	Various wood items.	
	Condition	Good. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
			
	Repair needs	None.	
3.8	Soft Landscaping		
3.8.1	Description	There are lawns with hedges, shrub planting, flowers and trees.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.9	Trees that may have an influence on the building		
3.9.1	Description	There are a number of very large mature trees to the site, mostly to the rear.	
	Condition  	Trees are distant enough to the building that any damage is unlikely. However some of the trees, particularly to the left hand boundary are very large, some work has been carried out but some are still badly overhanging the neighbouring property.	
	Repair needs	Arrange for regular arborist inspections of the mature trees.	2
3.10	Monuments		
3.10.1	Description	There are various stone sculptural items to be the rear.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.11	Outbuildings		
3.11.1	Description	There are two timber sheds.	
	Condition 	Fair. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.11.2	Binstores	Brick binstore area.	
	Condition 	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.12	External signage		
3.12.1	Description	Name and numeral signage to the front.	
	Condition 	Fair, slight chipping or corrosion but nothing needing urgent work.	
	Repair needs	None.	

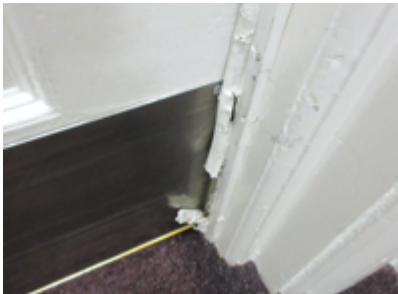
3.13	External Lighting and Associated Cabling		
3.13.1	Description	There are building mounted lighting and bollards around the site.	
	Condition 	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

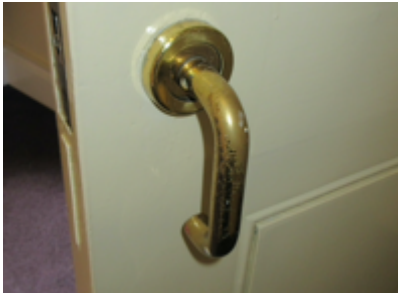
4.0 Interior

4.1	Roof Spaces (including access and insulation)		
4.1.1	Communal	There is access to the pitched roof spaces via a loft hatch on the first floor. There is around 200mm of insulation present. There are hatches on the ground floor to access the void between the ground and first floors.	
	Condition    	Fire compartmentation between the units is compromised in several places and insulation is not present to some vertical elements, see also section 6.3.1. There is the remains of a birds nest to the rear right hand side of the roof. There is a large wasps' nest to the rear right hand side of the roof, see also section 6.5.2. A few areas of underfelt are torn and sagging.	
	Repair needs	Repair underfelt.	3

4.2	Ceilings (including exposed beams)		
4.2.1	Flats	Painted plasterboard.	
	Condition	Fair.	
	Repair needs	None.	
4.2.2	Communal	Painted plasterboard.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
4.3	Walls and Partitions (including lintels)		
4.3.1	Flats	Painted plastered walls.	
	Condition	Fair.	
	Repair needs	None.	
4.3.2	Communal	Painted plastered walls.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
4.4	Fireplaces and Chimney Breasts		
4.4.1	Description	There are chimney breasts in the flats.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

4.5	Floors	
4.5.1	Flats	Solid floors with vinyl or carpet finishes.
Condition  No. 1  No. 3  No. 4		The carpet is rucked and dirty in the hall in No. 1. The floorboards in the bedroom in No. 1 are creaking slightly. There is wear to the carpet floor tiles in the living room in No. 3. The vinyl bathroom floor in No. 4 is stained in two places.
Repair needs		Replace carpets. Take up and relay floor boards. Replace vinyl.
		3 3 3

4.5.2	Communal	Solid floors with vinyl or carpet finishes, there is a concrete floor to the cellar.	
	Condition 	Generally good, there is evidence of water penetration to the cellar but the sump pump appears to be working and most areas are relatively dry.	
	Repair needs	None.	
4.6	Internal Joinery (including doors and ironmongery)		
4.6.1	Flats	Gloss painted woodwork, doors are flush or panelled items.	
	Condition  No. 3	Fair, decorations to the insides of a few windows and French doors are worn. There is damage to the draughtstrip to the front door in No. 3.	
	Repair needs	Decorate isolated areas.	3
		Replace draughtstrip to front door.	2

4.6.2	Communal	Panelled doors with brass ironmongery.	
	Condition 	A few door handles are showing signs of wear and one is broken.	
	Repair needs	Replace defective handles.	2
4.7	Staircases		
4.7.1	Communal	Wooden staircases with carpet proprietary nosings and wood balustrades.	
	Condition   	Carpet has been renewed and the stairs fitted with nosings since the last Quinquennial Inspection. Generally good. There is a split in the carriage piece although this does not appear to be causing any particular problems and has not significantly worsened since the previous Quinquennial Inspection.	
	Repair needs	None.	

4.8	Fittings (including coats of arms)		
4.8.1	Description	None.	
	Condition	Not applicable.	
	Repair needs	Not applicable.	
4.9	Decorations		
4.9.1	Flats	Walls and ceilings are painted, some are papered.	
	Condition	Apart from any stained and cracked areas noted earlier, most decorations are good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
4.9.2	Communal	Walls are painted and/or papered, ceilings are painted, joinery is gloss.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

4.10	Built-in Cupboards, Kitchen Units and Bathroom Fittings		
4.10.1	Flat Kitchens	All flats have fitted kitchens with a reasonable number of cupboards and white goods. Kitchens were installed in 2015	
	Condition  No. 1   No. 4	There is very slight wear to the worktop joints in No.1 but no action is needed. The worktop in No. 4 is worn and scratched.	
	Repair needs	Replace worktops.	3

4.10.2	Flat Bath/shower rooms	Wet rooms are fitted with a WC, grab rails, shower and shower seat.	
	Condition  No. 3  No. 4	The waste to the wash hand basin is tarnished in No. 3. The waste to the wash hand basin is tarnished and corroded in No. 4.	
	Repair needs	Replace wastes.	3
4.11	Signage		
4.11.1	Description	There is fire and directional signage in the common areas.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

5.0 Services and Installations

5.1	Electricity Supply (up to meter)		
5.1.1	Description	The electricity supply enters the building underground, there are individual meters for flats and the landlord's supply.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.2	Electrical Installation (including Safety Assessment)		
5.2.1	Fixed wiring installation	Each flat has its own consumer unit, these are fitted with MCB's and RCD's.	
	Condition	Some of the units are plastic, which is not in accordance with the latest regulations, although this is not specifically a defect. The electrical installations are regularly inspected and tested. We were informed that the date of the last Electrical Installation Condition Report was September 2020, and it is assumed that all of the installations were "Satisfactory" at the time of testing. Electrical Safety First and the Almshouse Association recommend that periodic inspection and testing is carried out at least every 5 years or on the change of occupancy. The numbers of sockets are below current recommendations and multiple adaptors are in use in a few places.	
	Repair needs	Consider increasing number of socket outlets.	4

5.2.2	Lighting	Lighting is a mixture of low energy fluorescent, and LED lights with only a few older, less efficient, incandescent lights remaining.	
	Condition	The number and location of lighting outlets appears to be adequate. Incandescent light bulbs started to be banned from 2009 onwards under energy efficiency regulations. Further bans include all Halogen lights from the 1st September 2021 and high energy fluorescent tubes from the 1st September 2023.	
	Repair needs	Consider replacement with more modern and energy efficient LED lights as the opportunity arises.	3
5.2.3	Portable appliances	Residents provide their own white goods.	
	Condition	Electrical items within the flats belonging to the residents are not subject to HPLC's Electrical Equipment Testing (EET) formerly PAT Testing. Electrical items within the flats belonging to HPLC e.g. fridge-freezers, ovens, cookers & cooker hoods are inspected and tested by HPLC. The current guidance from the Almshouse Association states: "There is always the risk that residents' personal items in common use such as electric irons or vacuum cleaners develop frayed leads. Similarly the microwave oven, with the build-up of food debris on the ceiling panel can arc across the wave generator causing not only over heating but an apparent explosion. Trustees can safeguard themselves from criticism (by families, friends, relatives or the	

		press) by ensuring that Portable Appliance Testing is carried out regularly”. It would be sensible to PAT test appliances at the same time as inspecting and testing the fixed electrical wiring installation. The cost of this needs to be considered but is relatively low and may possibly be recovered through service charges.	
	Repair needs	Consider testing all portable electrical appliances.	3
5.2.4	Television reception	There is a communal system to the flats.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.2.5	Emergency call system	There is hard wired warden call system present.	
	Condition	This was not tested in any way but no concerns were reported	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.2.6	Telephone system	There appear to be landline telephone connections to each flat.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.3	Gas Supply		
5.3.1	Description	There is a gas supply to the building.	
	Condition	The last gas inspection was carried out on 19 th June 2024.	
	Repair needs	None.	

5.4	Gas Installation (including safety assessment)		
5.4.1	Description	There are no individual gas supplies as all heating is communal.	
	Condition	Not applicable.	
	Repair needs	Not applicable.	
5.5	Oil Installation		
5.5.1	Description	There is no oil installation to the property.	
	Condition	Not applicable.	
	Repair needs	Not applicable.	
5.6	Water Supply and Plumbing		
5.6.1	Description	Each flat has its own water supply.	
	Condition	Legionella Risk Assessments are not carried out on the flats. The last Risk Assessment carried out on the communal areas was 10th September 2020. Recent HSE guidance has clarified the need for all water supplies within buildings to be regularly risk assessed and not just areas with stored water. This means that domestic installations will need to be assessed as well. There is further advice and guidance available on the HSE website. This also states "This is especially important in residential buildings, where vulnerable people may be at risk, where the accommodation is provided specifically for a group who may be susceptible to legionellosis."	

		There is regular monitoring of water temperatures.	
	Repair needs	Carry out Legionella Risk Assessments for all flats.	1
5.7	Hot Water and Heating Installation		
5.7.1	Hot water	Hot water to the building is via a calorifier heated by the gas boiler. There are thermostatic mixer valve showers fitted.	
	Condition 	It is understood that a Legionella Risk Assessment is in place for the common areas and there is regular monitoring of water temperatures.	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.7.2	Primary heating	Heating to the building is communal via a Worcester gas boiler in the basement with single panel and double panel radiators.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.7.3	Secondary heating	Some electric fires are present.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

5.8	Above Ground Drainage (including sanitary goods)		
5.8.1	Description	Drainage is mostly concealed within the structure of the building, there are soil pipe outlets passing through the roof.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.9	Below Ground Drainage and Disposal System		
5.9.1	Description	There are various manholes located around the site. These are brick or plastic, below ground drainage is mostly clay and covers are heavy-duty cast iron or light duty pressed steel.	
	Condition	A selection of accessible manhole covers were lifted. There is corrosion to some of the light duty items and they are slightly deformed, particularly the one to the right hand side under a bush. Note that from the 1st October 2011, most sewers (drains shared with two or more properties) are now the responsibility of Severn Trent Water, this includes responsibility for clearing blockages.	
			

			
	Repair needs	Replace corroded light duty manhole cover.	3
5.10	Lightning Conductor Installations		
5.10.1	Description	There is no lightning protection system to the building.	
	Condition	The current British Standard BS EN 62305 includes a risk assessment procedure for determining the degree of need for a lightning protection system. This will almost certainly suggest that one should be installed to a building of this size but note that most insurers <i>will not</i> require a system is installed.	
	Repair needs	Consider whether a system should be installed.	4

5.11	Bells and Bell Frames		
5.11.1	Description	None.	
	Condition	Not Applicable.	
	Repair needs	Not Applicable.	
5.12	Security Installations		
5.12.1	Description	Doors have deadlocks, windows have lockable casement fasteners. There is CCTV and external lighting.	
	Condition	This is an above average level of security.	
			
	Repair needs	None.	

5.13	Lift Installation		
5.13.1	Description	There is an 8 person passenger lift present.	
	Condition   	The lift is serviced every two months. The last inspection was carried out on 4th September 2024. The previous inspection was carried out on 26th June 2024. The finishes to the outside of the lift doors and surround are showing signs of age and the powder coated finish is worn. The lift does not have braille or audible indication of the floors.	
	Repair needs	Touch up powder coating.	3

6.0 Environmental And Other Issues

6.1	Environmental/Humidity Control		
6.1.1	Insulation	There is insulation in the roofspace.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
6.1.2	Ventilation of structure (roofs and floors)	There are airbricks to ventilate floor voids, there are vents to pitched roofspaces.	
	Condition   	This type of roofing felt does hinder the ability of the roof to 'breathe', current practice is to provide ventilation to this type of roof to avoid condensation within the roofspace. The timbers in the roof void have an average moisture content of 12%, which is dry although there is some evidence of mould to many of the timbers, this may be historic or may just occur in winter. Without data logging monitoring or further surveys it is impossible to tell. The best solution is to increase ventilation anyway. Note that this type of felt was often made with asbestos.	
	Repair needs	Consider increasing ventilation to roofspace.	3

6.1.3	Ventilation of rooms (kitchens, shower and bathrooms, habitable rooms)	There are extractor fans in the bathrooms and cooker hoods fitted in the kitchens.	
	Condition	The extractor fan filters in the bathrooms are dusty.	
	Repair needs	Clean filters.	2
6.2	Hazardous and Deleterious Materials		
6.2.1	Description	There are several potential asbestos containing materials as noted elsewhere in this report.	
	Condition	Current legislation (The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012) requires that any asbestos in common areas of properties is recorded and managed. Asbestos fibres were included in many different types of building materials, and may be released when these materials are damaged, disturbed or otherwise exposed. These fibres can cause a hazard to health when inhaled. There is a risk that any work activity that intrudes beyond the surface finish of this building may expose or disturb asbestos fibres and thereby create a potential health hazard. An asbestos register is in place and is reviewed annually by the Building Manager.	
	Repair needs	Continue to review asbestos register.	3

6.3	Fire Safety Installations (including emergency escape)	
6.3.1	General	Flats are fitted with heat and smoke detectors; means of escape are reasonable with all rooms leading to a hallway with an external door.
	Condition    	The last fire alarm service was carried out on 19th July 2024 and the emergency lighting test was carried out on 22nd January 2024. Functional testing of the alarm system on site is carried out weekly. Emergency lighting is subject to a 20-minute test every month. The Automist system is serviced annually. Several flats have more than one smoke/heat detector, some are redundant but this could cause confusion for residents, staff and the emergency services in the event of a problem. Fire compartmentation is compromised in several places. There are fire rated hatches in the roofspace but most of these do not shut fully on the basic spring closers present, meaning that they are open. There are gaps to some of the door frames. There are unsealed holes for service penetrations. In places, rockwool is missing from vertical elements, this may only be a thermal insulation issue but equally may compromise the fire precautions as the fire resistance of such walls, designed in the 1990's often relied on a combination of materials which can only be ascertained by referring back to the original design documentation.



			
	Repair needs	Carry out a full compartmentation survey of all voids. Fill gaps. Replace door closers. Consider an alarm system so fire hatches cannot be left open.	1 2 2 2
6.3.2	Fire risk assessment	A fire risk assessment is needed for the common parts of the building.	
	Condition	The last fire risk assessment was carried out on 30 th April 2023.	
	Repair needs	None.	

6.4	Other Health and Safety Concerns (noise, trips and falls, radon etc.)		
6.4.1	Description	The property is not in a Radon affected area. There is no defibrillator present.	
	Condition	Not applicable.	
	Repair needs	Not applicable.	
6.5	Wildlife		
6.5.1	Bats and other protected species	No evidence of bats, or bat droppings was seen in the building at the time of the inspection.	
	Condition	It is recommended that a visual Bat emergence survey is carried out, particularly if major works are ever undertaken.	
	Repair needs	Carry out a bat survey.	4

6.5.2	Pests	There is the remains of a birds nest to the rear right hand side of the roof. There is a large wasps' nest to the rear right hand side of the roof.	
	Condition 	The age of these are not known. They should be removed to prevent future confusion.	
	Repair needs	Remove nests.	3

7.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Repair items and approximate costs are included in the spreadsheet in Appendix 1

The following headings are used:

Priority 1: Very urgent work requiring immediate action including health and safety issues.

Priority 2: Urgent work not requiring immediate action, but should be addressed and completed in year 1.

Priority 3: Work to be completed within the Quinquennium (5 years).

Priority 4: Likely major repairs beyond the Quinquennium (5 years).

7.1 Areas Requiring to be Monitored

None.

7.2 Suggested Improvements of the Buildings

A programme of electrical inspection and testing is in place. Best practice is to provide a sticker copy of the current certificate adjacent to the consumer unit or boiler.

Testing of the residents' own electrical appliances could also be put into place (see Appendix 4).

7.3 Suggested Improvements in Routine Maintenance

Reactive maintenance appears to be well covered but planned and cyclical maintenance procedures could be improved:

- Rainwater goods should be checked and cleaned out annually in the autumn after leaf fall.
- Gas servicing is annual but it is suggested that a duplicate record be kept on site as well. Best practice in this respect is to provide a copy of the current gas and electrical tests as a sticker at the consumer unit and gas meter.

An excellent maintenance plan is available from the Almshouse Association in Annexe F of "Standards of Almshouse Management" also available on their website. This is in Word format and can be adapted to suit the particular needs of the property.

7.4 Brief Recommendations for Improving Energy Efficiency

See separate report.

APPENDIX 1

Summary of Approximate Costs

APPENDIX 2

HSE GUIDANCE ON LEGIONELLA 2014

Health and Safety
Executive

Shared premises and residential accommodation: Landlords

Residential accommodation: Landlords

2.138 Landlords who provide residential accommodation, as the person in control of the premises or responsible for the water systems in their premises, have a legal duty to ensure that the risk of exposure of tenants to legionella is properly assessed and controlled. This duty extends to residents, guests, tenants and customers. They can carry out a risk assessment themselves if they are competent, or employ somebody who is.

2.139 Where a managing (or letting) agent is used, the management contract should clearly specify who has responsibility for maintenance and safety checks, including managing the risk from legionella. Where there is no contract or agreement in place or it does not specify who has responsibility, the duty is placed on whoever has control of the premises and the water system in it, and in most cases, this will be the landlord themselves.

2.140 All water systems require a risk assessment but not all systems require elaborate control measures. A *simple* risk assessment may show that there are no real risks from legionella, but if there are, implementing appropriate measures will prevent or control these risks. The law requires simple, proportionate and practical actions to be taken, including identifying and assessing sources of risk, managing the risk, preventing or controlling the risk; and periodically checking that any control measures are effective.

2.141 For most residential settings, the risk assessment may show the risks are low, in which case no further action may be necessary, eg housing units with small domestic-type water systems where water turnover is high. If the assessment shows the risks are insignificant and are being properly managed to comply with the law, no further action may be required, but it is important to review the assessment periodically in case anything changes in the system. However, the frequency of inspection and maintenance will depend on the system and the risks it presents.

2.142 Simple control measures can help manage the risk of exposure to legionella and should be maintained, such as:

- flushing out the system before letting the property;
- avoiding debris getting into the system (eg ensure the cold water tanks, where fitted, have a tight-fitting lid);
- setting control parameters (eg setting the temperature of the calorifier to ensure water is stored at 60 °C);
- making sure any redundant pipework identified is removed;
- advising tenants to regularly clean and disinfect showerheads.

2.143 Landlords should inform tenants of the potential risk of exposure to legionella and its consequences and advise on any actions arising from the findings of the risk assessment, where appropriate. Tenants should be advised to inform the landlord if the hot water is not heating properly or if there are any other problems with the system, so that appropriate action can be taken.

2.144 The risk may increase where the property is unoccupied for a short period. It is important that water is not allowed to stagnate within the water system and so

dwellings that are vacant for extended periods should be managed carefully. As a general principle, outlets on hot and cold water systems should be used at least once a week to maintain a degree of water flow and minimise the chances of stagnation. To manage the risks during non-occupancy, consider implementing a suitable flushing regime or other measures, such as draining the system if the dwelling is to remain vacant for long periods.

2.145 Where there are difficulties gaining access to occupied housing units, appropriate checks can be made by carrying out inspections of the water system, eg when undertaking mandatory visits such as gas safety checks or routine maintenance visits.

2.146 It may be impractical to risk assess every individual residential unit, eg where there are a significant number of units under the control of the landlord, such as Housing Associations or Councils. In such cases, a representative proportion of the premises for which they have responsibility should initially be assessed, on the basis of similar design, size, age and water supply, with the entire estate eventually assessed on a rolling programme of work.

APPENDIX 3

SPAB Guidance on cement pointing

Technical Q&A 21: Inappropriate Cement Pointing

The type of mortar that someone proposes for repointing joints in the walls of an old building is a good test of whether they should be working on such buildings at all. Douglas Kent, the SPAB Technical Secretary, explains why - and what you do if an inappropriate cement mortar has been used.

Q. Why is hard cement pointing inappropriate for an old building?

A. Simply because it can disfigure and hasten the decay of historic masonry. Portland cement became particularly popular after the Second World War. Whereas modern buildings rely on such materials to seal walls and exclude moisture, the permeable lime mortars widely used on old buildings allowed them to ‘breathe’ – the ‘raincoat’ versus ‘overcoat’ effect. In some cases, lime mortar pointing weathers back to the stage repointing is needed, but if this is done with impervious cement (a common mistake), erosion of the bricks and stones themselves occurs in preference as they become the most permeable part of the wall and suffer the greatest frost and salt action. Dense, cement-rich mortars also develop hairline cracks from shrinkage or, with old buildings on shallow foundations, from minor structural movement. Lime mortar better accommodates movement and, because it is ‘autogenous’, any minor cracks that do develop will self-heal. Remember too that modern forms of joint finish associated with cement can form ledges, trapping water.

Q. How do I tell whether inappropriate cement pointing has been used?

A. A very hard, smooth and dull grey mortar typically indicates an unsuitable mix rich in ordinary Portland cement, as opposed to the softer, more open-textured and lighter coloured mortar bound with lime that is compatible with old masonry. Furthermore, the latter may contain impurities such as chalk from the lime-burning process. Featheredging along margins is characteristic of cement, as is a weather-struck (angled), bucket-handle (concave) or ribbon pointed (protruding) joint finish. Weathering characteristics differ as well. Unlike lime-based pointing that gradually erodes back, cementitious mortar cracks and drops out in short sections or is left standing proud of decayed bricks or stones.

Q. If my building pre-dates the late 1800s, should all inappropriate cement pointing be removed?

A. Not necessarily. Although remedial action should ideally involve removal, this may cause further damage to the fabric. A small area should therefore be removed as a trial and a pragmatic approach adopted. Where the pointing adheres well, it is probably best to leave it to age naturally, especially if, fortuitously, problems such as damp have not ensued. Sometimes a compromise may be possible, perhaps just by removing selected areas where localised deterioration has occurred, and patch pointing with a more suitable mix. Weathering over time often breaks the bond of the remaining cementitious material, so patience can be rewarded.

Q. What is the best method of removing inappropriate cement mortar?

A. Hard pointing can possibly be cut out with hand tools, such as chisels or quirks and a light club hammer. The use of a hammer and bolster is not recommended. An alternative technique involves the use of a handsaw, particularly for fine joints. Cutting discs, reciprocating blades and air tools with adapted masonry carving chisels can be helpful in removing detrimental cement mortar, but they must be properly used, and only entrusted to highly experienced operatives. Incorrectly used, power tools can cause untold damage to stone or brick surfaces. Regardless of the technique, the importance of trials cannot be overemphasised, and great care must be exercised to avoid damage to the edges, or ‘arrisés’, of bricks and stones.

Q. What should I use to replace inappropriate cement pointing?

A. Generally, a soft and permeable lime mortar that matches the colour, texture and profile of any surviving lime pointing. Where there is none, and it is necessary to design a new mortar, this must be weaker than the bricks or blocks and take into account site exposure. Recently, cement has been added to modify lime mortars, but this is discouraged now that a wider range of limes is obtainable. If in doubt about the joint profile, a flush or nearly flush finish is usually sympathetic or there may be local vernacular precedents to follow. It is important that work is undertaken by someone familiar with lime-based materials. The SPAB may be able to advise on suitable contractors or courses.

APPENDIX 4

Almshouse Association Guidance on Portable Appliance Testing (PAT testing).

The testing of portable appliances or portable equipment needs careful consideration by Trustees.

In meeting their "Duty of Care" towards residents, Trustees have an ill-defined, rather vague responsibility for the overall safety of those beneficiaries of the charity who dwell within the almshouses in their trust. "More generally, legal precedent and good practice means that the duty of care should be considered as applying to all aspects of Trustees' work in making decisions about their charity." (Charity Commission Pamphlet CC3 "The Essential Trustee. What you need to know")

Trustees can safeguard themselves from criticism (by families, friends, relatives, the press!) or from self blame, in the case of a fatal accident, by ensuring Portable Appliance Testing is carried out.

The Risk: There is always the risk that items in common use such as electric irons or vacuum cleaners develop frayed leads with regular usage. These are a real danger since the user very often does not notice the gradual fraying or deterioration in a cable until it has become very dangerous indeed. Similarly the microwave, with the build up of food debris on the ceiling panel, quite apart from the micro-biological hazard, can arc across the wave generator and cause overheating or an apparent explosion. The "once a year" Christmas tree lights are another considerable danger – and one often overlooked or forgotten. These should all be checked once a year by a professional electrician.

Possible Procedures Start as you mean to go on! Several almshouse charities have commended the following as best practice. As part of the interview process, potential future residents will be briefed on the factors of size and storage associated with the dwelling in which they hope to live. It is an opportunity to mention that within a few weeks of taking up residence, all the "new" resident's personal, portable electrical appliances will be checked by the charity's NICEIC Qualified Electrician and safety certificates lodged with the Clerk/Secretary/Warden/Scheme Manager on completion. This is, it would be explained, a requirement of occupancy (covered in the Letter of Appointment) and would be at the new resident's expense. Thus, as part of the discipline of moving into an almshouse, with possibly less general space and storage space, individuals would be more discerning about throwing away old, perhaps unsafe, electrical equipment.

There are obvious benefits. The new resident feels that their safety is very high on the priority list and family members are reassured. The sweetening of the pill is, of course, the later

disclosure that the charity will fund the exercise annually thereafter (with costs subsumed in WMC generally).

If any of the resident's appliances are found to be defective, under the NICEIC Rulings, the electrical engineer must make the appliance unusable. This is usually achieved by cutting off the lead in close proximity to the equipment or appliance (historically they were only required to cut off the plug!). The Clerk/Trustees will very soon get to know of the difficulty! If necessarily, acting charitably, Trustees can very quickly arrange to buy and provide a new toaster or electric blanket out of the charity's funds and once again maintain the very special relationship that exists between the Trustees and the residents.