



Quinquennial Inspections Ltd

Ecclesiastical • Almshouses • Heritage Buildings

Quinquennial Inspection Report

Harborne House,
Tibbets Lane, Harborne,
Birmingham B17 0SX



6th September 2024

Project number: 1253C-01

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Property Address

Harborne House, Tibbets Lane, Harborne, Birmingham B17 0SX.

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

Harborne House comprises 31 one-bedroom flats, including 1 guest flat, and 1 two-bedroom flat. No's. 3, 8, 11, 14, 15, 19, 22 and 28 were surveyed internally.

Previously No's. 4, 5, 11*, 14, 18, 19*, 20, 32 and 35 were surveyed internally in 2018 and No's. 2, 4, 11*, 14*, 16, 18, 23, 27 and 32 were surveyed in 2012.

This means that No. 11 has been surveyed three times and No's 14 & 19 twice each.

The first phase (flats 1-17) was built in 1972 and the second phase (flats 18-36) was added in 1984. The bedsits were later converted into one-bedroomed flats and opened on 16th April 1985.

There are communal corridors, communal toilets, two bathrooms, two laundry rooms, an internal drying area, a bin store, a kitchen, a communal lounge, a scheme manager's office and a garage/scooter store.

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

Carry out further investigations into the extent and type of cross bracing to roof trusses (section 3.1.1).

1.9 Works undertaken since last inspection

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

- Roof repairs, replacement coverings to flat roofs and replacement dry verges
- New tarmac to the front entrance
- Some repointing
- Repairs to brick external walls
- Repairs to windows and boarding
- Repairs to brick retaining walls
- Treatment of horsetail
- Replacement of storage heaters
- Various internal repairs

1.10 Outstanding work from last inspection

- 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

A Legionella risk assessment is required for the flats' hot and cold water systems (section 5.6).

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	Factory made timber roof trusses.
	Condition 	There is no diagonal cross bracing to some of the roof trusses although it is in place to others, some of the end trusses are not strapped to the gable walls. There is insufficient cross bracing in No. 14. This is a relatively common defect and was not required by Building Regulations until 1976. Cross bracing serves to stop the trusses falling sideways during heavy wind or snow loading. There is, however, no evidence of any undue movement of the roof structure. Only carrying out a detailed survey of every roofspace and consequent analysis would reveal whether this is actually a problem warranting further action. The timbers in the roof void have an average moisture content of 12%, which is dry.
	Repair needs	Further investigation needed.
		3

3.1.2	Pitched roof covering	Concrete interlocking tiles with mortar bedded angle hips and ridges and dry verges.	
	Condition 	Fair.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.1.3	Flat roof covering	Built up reinforced bitumen felted flat roofs.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.1.4	Fascias, soffits and bargeboards	Mostly UPVC a few areas of painted softwood boards remain.	
	Condition	Good or fair. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.2	Rainwater Goods		
3.2.1	Gutters and rainwater pipes	UPVC half round gutters and circular rainwater pipes.	
	Condition  	Some of the older gutters are discoloured and faded. Some recent repairs have been carried out but one union to the above No. 15 appears to be leaking. There are other reported problems with gutters but as it was not raining at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm if the rainwater goods are effective. With ever heavier periods of extreme rainfall it is becoming increasingly common for gutters to be inadequate. Replacement with higher capacity elliptical deepflow items is often a solution.	
	Repair needs	Repair gutter union. Observe gutters during heavy rain. Consider replacement with deepflow items.	1 2 3
3.2.2	Gullies	Gullies are clay with metal plastic grids.	
	Condition 	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.3	Walls	
3.3.1	Chimney stacks	The truncated former boiler room chimney stack is still present.
	Condition 	Good.
	Repair needs	None.
3.3.2	Walls - brick	Facing brick in stretcher bond with cement mortar pointing.
	Condition   	Monitoring put in place at the time of the previous Stock Condition Survey in 2012 indicated no further movement and these areas have been repointed. The remains of one tell-tale and a cracked brick are still present. There are also two minor areas of diagonal cracking remaining. There are quite a large number of isolated damaged bricks from careless installation of cables, although other cables have been neatly fitted with grommets (see section . .). To the older part of the building the weep holes in the brickwork have been left open, there is evidence that insects are colonising these openings – cobwebs around the openings, they should be filled using proprietary plastic weep hole inserts to prevent future problems.

			
	Repair needs	Remove remains of tell-tale and repoint isolated areas. Replace cracked bricks. Fit proprietary plastic weep hole inserts.	2 2 2

3.3.2	Walls - boarded	A mixture of UPVC and painted softwood horizontal or diagonal boarding.	
	Condition 	UPVC items are in good condition. Some of the diagonal boarding above the entrance between No. 28 and No. 29 is twisted and cupped slightly. There is no visible sign of rot but water will be able to penetrate between the gaps in the boards. The boards may be capable of being screwed back into position. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Repair needs	Refix loose boards.	2
3.3.3	Damp proof course	A flexible damp proof course is visible to most elevations.	
	Condition	Good, and it is a reasonable distance above the external ground level.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.3.4	Airbricks	There are terracotta and plastic airbricks present, some with hooded covers.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.3.5	Parapet walls	Brick parapet walls with a weathered concrete coping.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.4	Doors, Windows, External Joinery and Metalwork		
3.4.1	Doors	Painted softwood doors in a few places, the majority of doors have been replaced with UPVC or aluminium items.	
	Condition 	Good. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.4.2	Windows	UPVC double glazed casement windows. These appear to mostly date from 2006.	
	Condition  No. 3  No. 8  No. 11  No. 14	Windows are UPVC and have been replaced in phases since 2000, the design of the windows is understood to be the same as those that were replaced. The previous quinquennial inspection report noted that the windows were bowing in places, with quite large gaps to the tops of some of the windows. Remedial works have apparently been carried out and no further problems have been noted apart from minor issues as seen below: There is a hairline crack in the silicone in No. 3 (living room). The window has failed in No. 8 (kitchen). There is a slight crack to the top of the window head and wall joint in the bathroom of No.11, there is some movement when closing the window. The seal to the kitchen window in No. 14 has failed. Minor mould was noted to the bathroom and bedroom windows in No. 22 and to the living room window in No. 28.	

Repair needs   No. 22  No. 28	Further investigation is required to ascertain if there is sufficient fixings to window frame. Repoint silicone to No. 3 (living room) & No. 11 (bathroom). Replace double glazed unit to No. 8 (kitchen) and No.14 (kitchen). Clean mould, remove loose and defective silicone and reapply. Check for any gaps to closing light and adjust hinge if necessary to the bathroom and bedroom windows in No. 22 and to the living room window in No. 28.	2 2 2 2 2
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3.5	External Paintwork		
3.5.1	Description	Gloss paint to woodwork - older fascias, boarding, doors and garden furniture and metalwork; stain to external fences.	
	Condition  	There is minor corrosion to some of the metal items, particularly the pins to the rear where gates have been removed. This should be treated prior to decoration. External woodwork and metalwork should be redecorated on a 5-7 year cycle.	
	Repair needs	Treat corrosion.	2
		Redecorate woodwork and metalwork.	4

3.6	Paving, Paths, Steps, Ramps, Drives and Parking Areas		
3.6.1	General	Tarmac drive and paths with precast concrete kerbs and edgings.	
	Condition 	A few isolated concrete flagstones are cracked.	
	Repair needs	Take up and replace cracked flags.	2
3.6.2	Steps	Brick with concrete flag treads.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.6.3	Ramps	There are brick concrete flag ramps. Handrails are metal.	
	Condition  	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
3.6.4	Drives	Tarmac drives with concrete kerb edgings.	
	Condition  	The front tarmac has been renewed recently. There are two small holes to the tarmac to the rear drive, the situation is likely to deteriorate.	
	Repair needs	Patch repair holes in tarmac.	2

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	Slabbed with rotary clothes dryers.	
	Condition	Good.	
			
	Repair needs	None.	
3.7	Site Features: Boundary Walls, Gates, Fences, etc.		
3.7.1	Walls	There are dwarf brick walls to the front of the building, other boundaries include railings, chain-link fences, security fencing and close boarded wood fences.	
	Condition	The front retaining wall is in reasonable condition. Repairs have been carried out since the previous quinquennial inspection but some of the flashing mortar to the tile creases is missing in isolated areas.	
	Repair needs	Re-point isolated areas.	2

3.7.2	Gates	Wood and metal gates to the side of the site.	
	Condition 	Good. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.7.3	Railings	Metal hoop-top/plain railings,	
	Condition	Railings are in reasonable decorative condition. A few areas of paintwork are flaking but nothing too severe. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.7.4	Fences	Close boarded wood fences.	
	Condition   	Fences are in variable condition; some of the close boarded fences are bare of any decorative finish and are starting to rot at the bottom. Chain-link and security fences are in good condition.	
	Repair needs	Replace minor areas of rotten boards.	3

3.7.5	Benches and street furniture	Various types including metal, wood and rattan.	
	Condition   	Good. External decorations are considered in section 3.5.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.7.6	Flagpole	Painted wood flagpole with an external halyard system.	
	Condition 	Good.	
	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 various mature trees around the site.	
	Condition  	Some of these are closer than the recommended 'safe' distances. There is currently little evidence that they may be causing any damage. The cherry tree to the rear of the link building is still rather large and the roots are close to the surface, leaves and branches are overshadowing the roofs and windows and some reduction in size is desirable. There is no current evidence of any cracking which could be due to these roots, however. Other large trees on the site will also require ongoing work and it would be prudent to arrange for regular arborist inspections.	
	Repair needs	Arrange for regular arborist inspections of the mature trees.	2

3.10	Monuments		
3.10.1	Description	None.	
	Condition	Not applicable.	
	Repair needs	Not applicable.	
3.11	Outbuildings		
3.11.1	Description	There is a greenhouse.	
	Condition	Good.	
			
	Repair needs	None.	
3.11.2	Binstores	Internal.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
3.12	External signage		
3.12.1	Description	Printed informational signs.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

3.13	External Lighting and Associated Cabling		
3.13.1	Description	There are various building mounted light fittings of various ages.	
	Condition 	As the inspection was carried out during daylight it was not possible to check the efficacy of the lighting.	
	Repair needs	Consider replacing the older lights with newer and more efficient LED lighting.	3

4.0 Interior

4.1	Roof Spaces (including access and insulation)		
4.1.1	Flats	There are loft hatches in each first floor flat.	
	Condition     No. 11	Roofspaces are insulated with a variety of materials and thicknesses. The best of these is around 250mm fibreglass insulation. There is no diagonal bracing to trussed rafters in flat No. 11 (see section 3.1.1). Service penetrations in party wall (Compartment wall) without appropriate fire sleeving in flat No. 11. There is disturbed loft insulation to flat No. 11. Water stain marks to some timbers. Stain marks to ceiling below. Further investigation required as the stain marks may be historic. Check for adequate cross flow roof ventilation. Disturbed loft insulation to Flat No.14. Could give rise to condensation and mildew. In No. 14, there is no fire rated vent cover to the party wall, this is a fire risk. and there is insufficient cross bracing. In No. 14, there is a gap to party wall. Investigate if this is a compartment wall. The loft hatch has been painted shut in No. 15. Insufficient cross bracing to flat No. 28 (see section 3.1.1). No fire rated vent cover to party wall.	



No.14



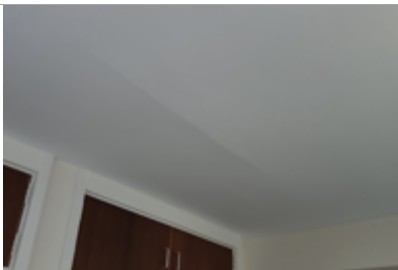
No.15



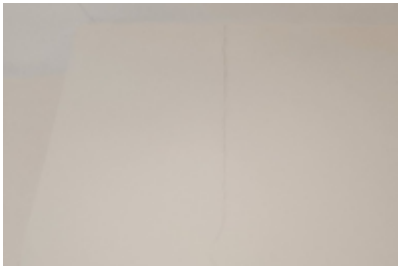
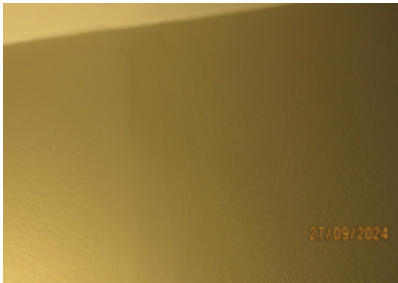
No. 28

	Repair needs	Provide intumescent vent covers.	1
		Seal gaps to service penetrations in party walls.	1
		Ease loft hatch in No. 15.	2
		Further investigation required of all roof spaces to ensure adequate bracing of trussed rafters. And cross flow ventilation of roof void.	1
		Fit cross bracing to trussed roof rafters.	1
		Relay disturbed loft insulation.	3
4.1.2	Communal	The roof is accessed by a loft hatches in various locations.	
	Condition	Roof spaces are insulated with a variety of materials and thicknesses. The best of these is around 250mm fibreglass insulation.	
	Repair needs	None.	

4.2	Ceilings (including exposed beams)		
4.2.1	Flats	Ceilings are plasterboard.	
	Condition   No. 11  No. 15  No. 19	Cracking was noted to No. 11 (hall, living room, kitchen, bedroom), No. 15 (living room, No. 19 (living room), No. 22 (bedroom). The most severe of this is Category 1 cracking and appears to be normal shrinkage to board joints. There is staining to the ceiling in No. 11 (living room), No. 19 (kitchen) and No. 28 (bedroom). Roof voids were inspected, but no obvious signs of water ingress were identified. Some rafters had staining on them. This need to be investigated further as it could be a result of inadequate ventilation or a roof leak.	

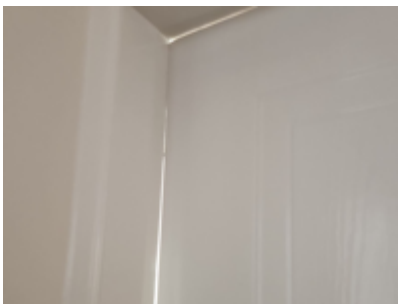
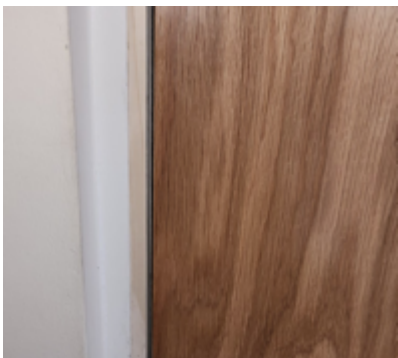
	 No. 22  No. 28		
	Repair needs	Fill cracks when redecorating. Stainblock and redecorate.	3 2
4.2.2	Communal - plastered	The majority of ceilings are plasterboard.	
	Condition  	Generally good, there is minor cracking to the board joints in places. The most severe of this is Category 1 cracking and nothing more than normal shrinkage.	
	Repair needs	Fill cracks when redecorating.	3

4.2.3	Communal - suspended	Some areas have lay-in grid suspended ceilings.	
	Condition     	Generally good, there are a few isolated damaged tiles. In one place the ceiling is too low and the top of the fire door is catching the ceiling tile and leading to wear.	
	Repair needs	Replace damaged tiles. Adjust ceiling grid to avoid it catching on the door.	3 2

4.3	Walls and Partitions (including lintels)		
4.3.1	Flats	Plastered masonry walls.	
	Condition  No. 11	Cracking was noted to No. 11 (hall), No. 22 (hall). The most severe of this is Category 1 cracking and appears to be normal shrinkage.	
	Repair needs	Fill cracks when redecorating.	3
4.3.2	Communal	Plastered masonry walls.	
	Condition    	There is minor vertical cracking to several isolated areas, the most severe of this is Category 1 cracking and appears to be normal shrinkage.	

	Repair needs	Fill cracks when redecorating.	3
4.4	Fireplaces and Chimney Breasts		
4.4.1	Description	None.	
	Condition	Not applicable.	
	Repair needs	Not applicable.	
4.5	Floors		
4.5.1	Flats	Floors are solid or suspended concrete, coverings include carpet and vinyl.	
	Condition    No. 3	There is no floor finish flat No. 3, the grippers and nails are exposed and have been since February 2024. This is a hazard and a risk which could lead to harm.	

 No. 15  No.19   No.22		Possible asbestos floor finish to store of Flat No. 22. Stained vinyl floor finish to kitchen and no silicone seal to perimeter of vinyl floor in kitchen and bathroom. No. 15 & 19 some staining to vinyl sheet floor covering. This isn't a defect but more of an aesthetic appeal. Silicone sealant to perimeter should be checked for deterioration.	
	Repair needs	Fit carpet throughout flat No.3 or remove carpet grippers and lay suitable floor finish. Vinyl sheet flooring cleaned. Apply silicone seal to perimeter of vinyl sheet floor in kitchen and bathrooms. Check asbestos record, if none available then commission asbestos survey of floor tiles.	1 3 2 1

4.5.2	Communal	Floors are solid or suspended concrete or timber, coverings include carpet and vinyl.	
	Condition 	Good. There is an internal ramp to the link block. The gradient at 1 in 12 is steeper than recommended for the configuration although no problems have been reported.	
	Repair needs	None.	
4.6	Internal Joinery (including doors and ironmongery)		
4.6.1	Flats	Doors are painted or veneered flush doors. There are painted softwood skirtings and architraves.	
	Condition  No. 8   No.11	There is no door stop to the front door of No. 3. There is no strike plate to the shower room door in flat No. 14. The door catch plate to the bedroom in No. 19 is incorrect. The viewer to the front door of No. 22 was missing at time of survey, however construction work was in progress and may have been fitted in the following days. Grease dripping from door hinge to flat No.22. Sliding door guide to flat No.22 is loose and is no longer performing as intended. The door will pull away from the wall. No door stop to flat No.8 the door handle could cause damage to wall if door was swung open quickly.	



No. 14



No. 19



No.22

Door to bathroom to flat No. 11 is misaligned and catching on the door frame. Front door was recently replaced. This is a fire door and the gap between the door and frame appears to be greater than the allowable tolerance for fire doors, which would render the fire door ineffective in the event of a fire.

	 No.22		
	Repair needs	Fit door stops generally to all flats. Fit missing strike plate to shower room door of flat No.14. Remove redundant stay and fit correct strike plate to bedroom door of flat No.19. Install door viewer to flat No.22. Replace old and worn-out door hinges to flat No.22. Replace sliding door guide. Adjust hinge and re-align bathroom door to flat No.11. Adjust hinge and re-align door to provide correct gap (less than 4mm to top and sides of door) for fire door.	2 2 2 1 2 1 1 1

4.6.2	Communal	Doors are painted or veneered flush doors. There are painted softwood skirtings and architraves with vinyl skirting in some areas.	
	Condition	Generally good. The face of the door to the communal shower is damaged.	
	Repair needs	Repair face of door.	2
4.7	Staircases		
4.7.1	Flats	Concrete stairs with carpet finish and inset nosings, with handrails.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
4.7.2	Communal	Concrete staircases with a carpet finish	
	Condition	Good. Some of the older balustrades are "ranch" style, these can be a danger although mainly to young children. Ranch style balustrades are a hazard if young children are present, this is not the case at the moment, however. If young children are present, it would constitute a Category 2 Hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.	
	Repair needs	Consider covering or replacing ranch style balustrades to make them non-climbable.	3

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	Apart from any stained and cracked areas noted earlier, most decorations are good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

4.10	Built-in Cupboards, Kitchen Units and Bathroom Fittings		
4.10.1	Flat Kitchens	Kitchens in the new block are relatively modern fitted type with a good number of cupboards. Some of the kitchens in the old block are the original kitchens.	
Condition   No. 8   No. 22		The worktop in No. 8 is pitted and worn. The kitchen doors in No. 22 are loose and the worktop is worn. The unit doors are loose in No. 28. Silicone seal to sink is partly missing.	

 No. 28			
	Repair needs	Replace worktop to flat No. 8. Replace kitchens to No. 22 & 28.	2 3
4.10.2	Flat Bath/shower rooms	Fitted with WC, grab rails, washbasin and showers trays with screens. No. 8 & 14 have a level access wet room with a shower curtain, washbasin and WC.	
	Condition 	The shower door in No. 3 is catching.	
	Repair needs	Adjust shower door.	1

4.10.3	Communal Kitchens	Fitted kitchen with sink, cooker, fridge and other white goods.	
	Condition 	Fair.	
	Repair needs	None.	
4.10.4	Communal Toilets	Ladies and gents and disabled toilets.	
	Condition  	All of the fittings and tiling in the WC are white meaning colour contrast (for visually impaired people) is poor. This could be relatively easily improved by the use of coloured toilet seat and flush handle. Painting or applying transfers to the tiling would also help matters. There is no emergency pull cord alarm in the toilets.	
	Repair needs	Consider improving visual contrast and adding a pull cord alarm.	3

4.10.5	Communal Shower	Shower cubicle with vinyl sheet floor. The communal bathroom has an assisted bath.	
	Condition 	There is some damage to the vinyl flooring.	
	Repair needs	Replace vinyl.	3
4.10.6	Laundry	With Miele commercial washing machines and a Belfast sink.	
	Condition 	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	

4.10.7	Bin store	Internal paladin store.	
	Condition  	Fair.	
	Repair needs	None.	

4.11	Signage	
4.11.1	Description	There is fire and directional signage in the common areas.
	Condition   	Good. Some additional printed paper signage is present.
	Repair needs	Consider replacing printed paper signs with permanent items. 4

5.0 Services and Installations

5.1	Electricity Supply (up to meter)		
5.1.1	Description	Supplies run to each flat. There are various communal meter cupboards.	
	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 places. The double socket in the bedroom in No. 3 is insufficient – there is only 1 double socket, which is located behind the headboard. Two double sockets to lounge to flat No. 3 Additional electric power points required.	
	  No. 3  No. 8		



No. 11



No.14



No.15



No.19



No.22

The number of sockets is insufficient in No. 8 (living room, bedroom), No. 11 (living room), No. 14 (bedroom).

Use of several extension leads to No. 15 & 19.

The number of sockets could be increased at the same time as any other electrical work.

	Repair needs	Increase 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 Alms house 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

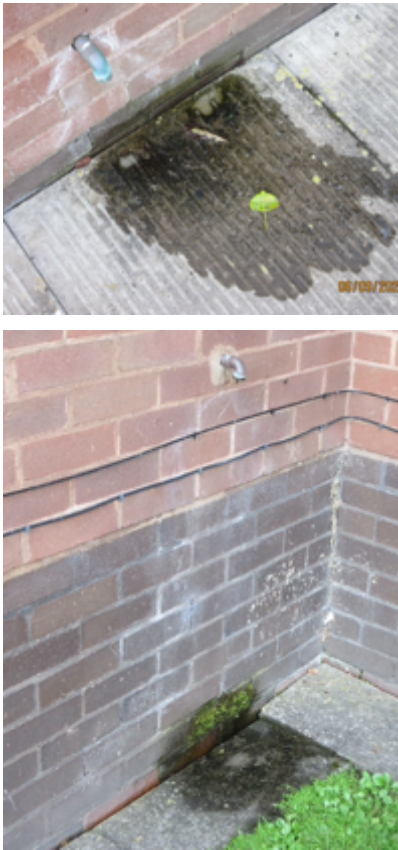
5.2.4	Television reception	There is a communal system to the flats.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.2.5	Emergency call system	There is hard wired warden call system present.	
	Condition	This was not tested in any way but no concerns were reported.	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.2.6	Telephone system	There appear to be landline telephone connections to each flat.	
	Condition 	Installation of external telephone cables is extremely messy and has been done very poorly in places with loose and redundant cables, damaged bricks and pointing and badly repaired bricks. In a few places the installation has been done neatly with holes drilled through joints rather than the middle of the bricks and grommets fitted but this is in the minority.	



	Repair needs	Remove redundant cables, repair bricks and pointing, fit grommets where possible.	2
		Ensure future cables are fitted neatly.	3
5.3	Gas Supply		
5.3.1	Description	None.	
	Condition	Not applicable.	
	Repair needs	Not applicable.	
5.4	Gas Installation (including safety assessment)		
5.4.1	Description	None.	
	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 is electric via immersion heaters from individual hot water cylinders with built-in cold water storage cisterns. There are electric showers.	
	Condition 	These types of cylinder can be something of a legionella risk as the water is often stored at above 20°C. This should be addressed as part of the Legionella Risk Assessments. Several of the hot water cylinders are dripping from the external overflows. The cylinders are a standard size, approximately 115 litres. In the absence of baths, this is rather a large amount of water to heat to just serve a washbasin and kitchen sink for a single person to use. As well as being a legionella risk, if all of the water is not used, it is also wasteful of fuel to heat up large quantities of water only to leave them to cool down again. Latest guidance from the HSE has confirmed that Legionella Risk Assessments are now needed for all non-residential premises whether or not they have stored water. See also Appendix 2.	
	Repair needs	Carry out Legionella Risk Assessments for all flats. Review arrangements for hot water heating.	1 3

5.7.2	Primary heating	There are storage heaters in flats and communal areas. There are fan heaters in the bathrooms.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.7.3	Secondary heating	Some electric fires and heaters are present.	
	Condition	Good.	
	Repair needs	None.	
5.8	Above Ground Drainage (including sanitary goods)		
5.8.1	Description	WC's, washbasins and sinks all drain to external gullies.	
	Condition 	There is no wire balloon or plastic grille to the top of the external soil stack, these stop birds dropping debris down the pipes.	
	Repair needs	Provide wire balloon to the top of the soil stack.	3

5.9	Below Ground Drainage and Disposal System	
5.9.1	Description	There are various manholes located around the site. These are brick, below ground drainage is clay and covers are medium or light duty. The exact line of drainage is unclear.
	Condition     	A selection of accessible manhole covers were lifted. There is surface corrosion to a number of the covers; one of the drain access covers is loose. The surface corrosion has worsened since the last quinquennial inspection. 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	Manhole covers should be lifted, the channels cleaned out and covers set in grease.	2
		Consider painting corroded medium duty covers with a suitable paint.	3
5.10	Lightning Conductor Installations		
5.10.1	Description	None.	
	Condition	The current British Standard BS EN 62305:2011 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 for a building of this size with sleeping accommodation for potentially vulnerable occupants but note that most insurers <i>will not</i> require a system is installed.	
	Repair needs	Consider whether it is appropriate to fit a lightning protection system.	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 espagnolette locking systems.	
	Condition	This is an average level of security.	
	Repair needs	None.	

5.13	Lift Installation		
5.13.1	Description	There are two Stannah lifts, the first was installed in 1985 and the second was installed in 2002.	
	Condition  	The lift is serviced every three months. The last inspection was carried out on 4 th September 2024, the previous inspection was carried out on 26 th June 2024.	
	Repair needs	None.	

Environmental And Other Issues

6.1	Environmental/Humidity Control		
6.1.1	Insulation	There is insulation in the roofspace and cavity walls.	
	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. Note that this type of felt was often made with asbestos. The timbers in the roof void have an average moisture content of 12%, which is dry.	
	Repair needs	None.	

6.1.3	Ventilation of rooms (kitchens, shower and bathrooms, habitable rooms)	There are extractor fans in all kitchens and bathrooms.	
	Condition  No.19	There are no particular or widespread problems with condensation or mould growth apparent. Where individual properties are affected this is noted elsewhere in this report. Mould to ceilings and walls in section 4.2.1 and 4.3.1, floors in section 4.5.1, shower rooms in 4.10.2, The ventilation fan in No. 3 (bathroom) is switched off. The ventilation fan in No. 19 (kitchen) is dirty. There is what appears to be a humidity fan in the bathroom in No. 19, it is unclear if this is working. The bedroom in No. 22 smells of damp. There is a humidity fan in the bathroom, we were unable to check if this was working.	
	Repair needs	Repair or replace defective fans.	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  No.19  No.22	There are possibly asbestos floor tiles in the cupboard in No. 19 & 22. 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 smoke detectors; means of escape are reasonable with all rooms leading to a hallway with an external door. Common areas are fitted with alarm and emergency lighting systems and portable firefighting equipment.	
	Condition 	The last fire alarm test 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. Portable firefighting equipment in common areas is becoming less common as some authorities recommend its removal unless residents are trained in its use. There is a non-fire rated vent to the party walls as noted in section 4.1.1/2 this is a fire risk. The lack of fire breaks in the roof space is a Category 2 Hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.	
	Repair needs	Fill gaps in the party walls/build up party walls. Consider fitting all flats with mains interlinked smoke detectors in living rooms and heat detectors in kitchens.	1 3
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 a defibrillator present.	
	Condition	The defibrillator was not tested in any way but no concerns were reported.	
			
	Repair needs	None.	
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	Not applicable.	
	Repair needs	None.	
6.5.2	Pests	Nothing noted.	
	Condition	Not applicable.	
	Repair needs	None.	

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 3).

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

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.