



## Spring 2020 Newsletter

### The Search Is On ...

Dear Supporter

Welcome to this first newsletter of the new year, and the new decade, which is a good time to reflect on what has passed, and also on plans for the coming year.



Some of our highlights are mentioned overleaf, but we have also been reflecting on the future and what must be done

and what would be the right way forward.

A recent "Which?" Report (January 2020 by Neil Higgins) stated that in 2019 the average cost of a residential care home increased to £33,852 a year, up from £25,012 in 2010, an increase of almost 5%, the largest increase in 10 years. And the average cost of a nursing home in 2018-19 was £46,436 a year - a 4.3% rise on the previous year.

We therefore feel that we should continue with our current policy of building small communities of independent living apartments. The housing industry predicts that 30,000 retirement homes are needed every year for the next 10 years, to meet estimated demand. Our long term aim is to achieve a self-sustaining model which is not totally reliant upon subscriptions and donations.

As you may be aware, we recently undertook a survey to ascertain what potential buyers would be looking for in another development.

Our survey showed that 82% would be looking to purchase, and 18% to rent. The majority, 84%, would prefer a 2 bedroom apartment, and 16% would prefer a 1 bedroom apartment.

We also asked the question, "Where would you like to see a site?" The answers are shown here.

- Along South Coast (within distance) 36%
- Mid Kent 32%
- East/West Midlands 19%/5%
- West Country/Dorset 4%
- East Anglia 4%

The main preferences in a development are as follows -

- Places of worship in the vicinity
- Within walking distance of local amenities
- Garden space
- Access to public transport

Our mission now is to find the next site. An agent has been tasked with looking for potential sites in the South Coast, Mid Kent, Mid Sussex and Surrey. The ideal site size is at least 0.6 acre.



However, we also want to work together with your eyes and ears to find a suitable location. (This is how we found out about the site in Tunbridge Wells.) Please do contact us with any information!

The Trustees really appreciate all the help you have

given so far and thank you for your continued support and prayerful interest.

# 2019 Highlights

The community is thriving at Strawberry Hill House, with 6 new residents joining us in 2019.



Every two weeks coffee mornings are held for the residents only. These are proving popular as a time to get to know your neighbours and relax with a coffee and a biscuit.

In March we held a Coffee Morning at Strawberry Hill House, with small stalls of home made cakes and preserves. This was well attended by friends and supporters, and raised £500.

We were pleased to have friends join us at Mayfield Village Hall for our annual Autumn Fayre in November. Thank you to everyone who came along, and to those who donated their time and talents to help us. We gave an update on 'Lessons Learned & Plans For The Future'. Funds raised totalled £5,707.66 to help with our on-going work.

In December we held a Singing Evening at Strawberry Hill House, where around 70 people gathered to sing some traditional Christmas carols, followed by mince pies and coffee. Mr Jabez Rutt gave a short Christmas address. It was a joy to see a good number of children there as well.

Keep up-to-date with all our news by signing up for our emails at [www.oaktreehomestrust.org](http://www.oaktreehomestrust.org)

# Dates for your diary

Please do make a note of the following events in your diary. We hope you can join us. (G.W.)

- Spring Coffee Morning at Strawberry Hill House on Saturday 25th April 10am – 12pm
- Autumn Fayre at Mayfield Village Hall on Saturday 7th November 10am – 2pm
- Christmas Carol Singing Evening at Strawberry Hill House on Saturday 12th December at 5pm



We would like to thank everyone who buys our greetings cards and Christmas cards. The sales of these are going from strength to strength, with Christmas cards containing an A.V. text proving very popular. This is a valuable source of income for the charity.

The communal lounge at Strawberry Hill House is available to use by friends for celebrations and presentations. Please contact us if you would like to use this area for a function.

Details of available apartments can be found on our website, or contact us on 01797 260589 or email us at [oaktreehomestrust@gmail.com](mailto:oaktreehomestrust@gmail.com)

**"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith"**  
Galatians 6:10