

THE ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF PRINCE EDWARD DUKE OF KENT COURT

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT –27th November 2019 - AGM

As Chairman of the Association of Friends of Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court I witness first-hand the dedicated work carried out by my fellow Trustees, the staff and other volunteers who give of their time in so many ways to create a most happy atmosphere in this wonderful Home here at Stisted.

Michelle Bladen, our former Home Manager, went on to pastures new on 25th October. She will be sorely missed by residents, staff and members of the Association. The new Home Manager, Agnieszka McDonald, will take up her duties in early January 2020. In the meantime Katrina Karolchyk (Deputy Home Manager) will oversee the Home to ensure its continuing smooth running and the continued support given to our residents and their families. The Trustees would like to record our thanks to Michelle for her dedication and hard work during her time with us.

We are very fortunate in having Nigel and Karine Oldacre who know each of the residents personally and spend a great deal of their time at the Home. Nigel is our Vice Chairman and Residents' Activity Organiser and Karine is our House Advisor, which is an office akin to that of Almoner. We owe a great deal of thanks to this dedicated and caring couple.

Karine will be including in her Report the many activities our residents have enjoyed. I would like to mention that the Home continues to welcome children. The Trustees became aware in 2015, through a programme on Channel 4, of this type of activity in other homes and encouraged this to be done at Stisted. Consequently, Michelle contacted Louise Baxter, whose new Home had welcomed children. This led to the first group of children visiting the Home. In May 2019 the Residents welcomed children from the Bo Jingles Children's Group. These visits by children certainly brighten up our residents' lives and they joined in with the children making music, singing various nursery rhymes and even dancing with them.

You will be hearing the Reports from my fellow Trustees and I should like to thank them for their support and for the excellent contributions they make in the interests of the Home and its residents.

Publicity is most helpful to our cause and we have the advantage of having Barry Stedman, our Assistant Secretary, who expertly looks after our website, www.friendsofpedokc.org.uk in association with our Membership Secretary, Lloyd Harris. Barry has spent a lot of time in creating the Archives on our website, which contains numerous photos and a video tour which he has created of the Home.

The 20th Anniversary of the opening of Stisted Hall on 20th January 1999 by the MW the Grand Master, HRH the Duke of Kent, was celebrated on the 20th January 2019 with a Masquerade Ball at the Home. It had been arranged by our former Home Manager, Michelle Bladen. The event was attended by our President and other Trustees who were able to enjoy themselves with residents and guests.

The Association was founded as the result of much hard work and initial financial gifts by our President Alan Garner and our late Vice-President, Brian Procter. They, with others sowed the seeds and we continue to nurture their growth. Alan Garner continues to give much valuable support to our work. To him we owe our grateful thanks.

The Trustees are happy to consider all requests for financial assistance for the benefit of the residents. It will be seen in the Accounts for the year to 30th June 2019 that each month we paid, on average, around £1,500 to an Amenity Fund which enables residents to enjoy events within and outside the Home. Another £2,500 has been spent on residents' gifts throughout the year. The pond work and surrounding area improvements, which included a new bench for contemplation in the grounds, were completed just in time for this year's Summer Fete .The Association paid £17,500 for those works, which provide an improved environment for our Residents.

Our neighbour, the Braintree Golf Club takes great care of their grounds which provide a magnificent panoramic view for our residents. The entrance road to the Home passes through those grounds giving a most welcome scenic experience to our residents and visitors alike. The Club kindly allows us to hold the Annual Stisted Hall Charity Golf Classic and the after-proceedings on their premises. Our residents, too, are welcome to use the social facilities provided by the Club. We are very grateful to the Club for their hospitality and generosity.

The Mauchline House Garden continues to be a place of contentment for those residents who enter the twilight of their lives with dementia and it is a place of beauty where others, too, are able to enjoy a visit.

The Home always has a most happy atmosphere and the Association maintains a close relationship with the members of staff that do such wonderful work for the benefit of the residents. Each resident is made to feel that Stisted Hall is their own Home and that they are an integral part of one happy family. On Sunday 9th December 2018, the Residents' Christmas Party was held when the residents enjoyed festive fayre and entertainment. How quickly time goes by for they are now looking forward to this year's Christmas Party which is to take place on 8th December, where entertainment, fun and a Christmas Lunch will once again be enjoyed by them. Photographs of this and other events will appear on the Association's website in due course.

There is no place like Stisted Hall. There is no place like Home.

Clive Dunnico
Chairman
27th November 2019