

THE ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF PRINCE EDWARD DUKE OF KENT COURT

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT –25th November 2021 - AGM

As Chairman of the Association of Friends of Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court, I witness at 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 our wonderful Home at Stisted.

Because of a recent Covid-19 outbreak at the Home we are unable to meet there this year. I am sure that we all miss the pleasure of our once a year get-together in Stisted Hall. To enable certainty of us being able to meet together at the AGM, it was decided to meet here at the Howard Hall, which is the home of Freemasonry in Braintree. During Lockdown, we were able to have Zoom Meetings due to the professional skills of our President, Barry Stedman, for enabling this to be done. On behalf of the Association I record our grateful thanks to our President who made it possible for us to communicate regularly with each other.

Our Home Manager, Agnieszka McDonald, (who wishes to be referred to as “Aggie”), continues to breathe new life in the Home having encouraged the many new activities she, Jade Gibson, other staff members and volunteers have created for the Residents. The residents' activities have been increased in spite of the Covid problem. Facilities for residents to receive visits from relatives and friends have been made possible due to 'pods' being erected. Basically, these consist of rooms, which have a sealed glass barrier. Residents can see and talk to their visitors, but are kept completely separate to avoid cross contamination. This project has been a boon for the residents and their visitors. Not all Care Homes in the UK have this facility and many of their residents have not had personal contact with their loved ones and friends for a very long time.

It has been a most difficult time since the March 2020 Lockdown was introduced, but Aggie and her staff have worked tirelessly to ensure the safety and happiness of the residents. Times are now improving, but the government has retained powers to reinstall lockdown if necessary. Let us hope that does not have to happen. It is worth going into Facebook to see what happens at the Home. There are regular reports and videos showing very happy residents. The Trustees are happy to consider all requests for financial assistance for the benefit residents in need.

During the year our President has arranged many of the acquisitions in the grounds of the Home that have given much enjoyment and pleasure to the residents. Being able to multi-task, he still expertly looks after our website, www.friendsofpedokc.org.uk in association with our Membership Secretary, Lloyd Harris.

The Association was founded as the result of much hard work and initial financial gifts by our late President Alan Garner and our late Vice-President, Brian Procter. They, with others sowed the seeds and we continue to nurture their growth. Barry Stedman was with them at the time using his skills taking photographs and videos of the newly acquired dilapidated building which, after reconstruction, eventually became the residents' home in 1998. Barry's support has continued since then. The Essex Provincial Grand Lodge has given much support over many years. We now have a new Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro Paul Tarrant, and we wish him well in his new office.

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.

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 other residents, 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. This Christmas Aggie and her staff will ensure that it is another happy one for our residents.

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

Clive Dunnico
Chairman
25th November 2021