



**Bedford Citizens**  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

# CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF BCHA



# LOOKING BACK

**I have served as Chair of BCHA for 5 years, less than 10% of its existence. I have found my time both rewarding and satisfying and it has especially been a real privilege to be Chairman during the time that BCHA has completed its biggest development on the Kimbolton Road site.**

The Board were grateful to Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra for very kindly taking the time to meet residents at Bedford Charter House and to open Oak Way House. It was wonderful to see so many residents (and many friends) enjoying our 60th celebration and also to see people enjoying a party and the company of others.

*“Like those who first formed BCHA we need to innovate and continue to deliver excellent services and value for money so we are able to help more people”*

**Marie Taylor**  
Chief Executive

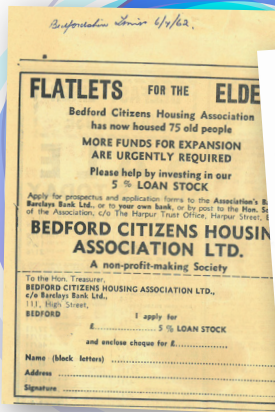
Going forward, the Board has developed a business plan for the next 15 years and, having this clear vision and also a solid history of provision will ensure that we continue to provide homes and care for those in need.

An organisation’s 60th birthday marks it out as one that has passed through different hands at the helm, BCHA however stays true to its fundamental principles of helping to house those in need. The staff show great dedication in delivering a compassionate and caring service to all our residents and I would like to thank all of them for this.

**Dick Wilkinson**  
BCHA Chairman



1962



1968



1968



2012



1958

BCHA opens its first house at 78 Chaucer Road  
Munich air crash kills most of Manchester United FC players

1962

Lansdowne Road opens BCHA's 5th House  
Marilyn Monroe dies

1969

Bedford Charter House completed  
Neil Armstrong walks on the moon

1956

Local Bedfordians discuss forming a housing association specifically to house older people  
Suez war

1957

BCHA registered as a housing association  
Sputnik launched

1960

Shakespeare House opened (subsequently sold)  
Skateboards invented

1964

Linden Road completed  
Nelson Mandela jailed

# LOOKING FORWARD

**BCHA was formed as a not for profit organisation in 1957 by a group of Bedford citizens who wanted to provide good quality rented accommodation for people unable to rent or buy elsewhere. The objectives listed in the archive documents chime well with the objectives today and BCHA's mission to house people in need stays very much the same.**

BCHA Initially purchased existing properties and redeveloped them. Its first flats opened in 1958. Having noticed that many of their older residents needed care the organisation developed a purpose built care home which opened in 1969. In 1980 came a merger with Maydenbury Housing Association

and by 2007 BCHA was keen to develop new schemes which would help older people to age well in accommodation designed to meet their needs. Getting the land took a great deal of effort and time and the new Bedford Charter House was completed in 2015. This has been followed by the completion of Oak Way House, which was opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra on 27th July, this is an extra care housing scheme providing 42 flats for older people.

The £11 million re-development of the Kimbolton Road site over the previous four years has been a major achievement.

Having looked back over the last 60 years I look forward to building on this well-established legacy. BCHA will continue to



give the people of Bedford an opportunity to have a socially motivated landlord who delivers a service second to none and I recognise that like those who first formed BCHA we need to innovate and continue to deliver excellent services and value for money so we are able to help more people.

**Marie Taylor  
Chief Executive**

*“Well done to you all for creating such a lovely environment for our older people”*

**Helen Nellis HM  
Lord-Lieutenant of  
Bedfordshire**



**1979**

Bedford Charter House extended by 14 units

Margaret Thatcher becomes Prime Minister

**1987**

Maydenbury HA transfers to BCHA

Hurricane storm batters the UK

**1990**

Rays Close opens

Nelson Mandela released

**1972**

George Metcalfe investment trust set up to help subsidise residents

Watergate

**1983**

Sir George Young MP opens Bedesmans House

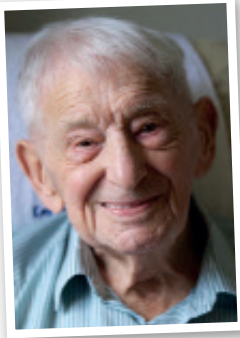
Pound coin introduced

**1988**

Maydenbury House opens

Lockerbie terrorist attack

## BCHA'S OLDEST RESIDENT - STAN HARRIS



"Dad was born in 1915 in Castle Road, Bedford, and won a scholarship to Bedford Modern School. At the outbreak of war he trained as a G.I.O. (Gas Identification Officer) and he married a local Bedford girl. In 1957 Stan became stores supervisor at R.A.E. (Royal Aircraft Establishment) Thurleigh, where he worked until retirement."



First three tenants to move into Oak Way House  
From left to right Hilda Millard, Gwen Taylor, Mollie Harris

## CONDUIT ROAD'S LONGEST SERVING TENANT - MS ROUND



Ms Round has been a tenant since May 1986 and she has always been very happy. She says the rents are very reasonable and any changes over the years have always been for the better.

Of the staff, she says: "They are always friendly and always there to help, in fact they offer to help in any way possible."

## MAYDENBURY HOUSE'S LONGEST SERVING TENANT - MRS DAMON



"I have lived at Maydenbury House since 16th March 1992. I have always been happy and still enjoy being independent. There have been many changes over the years, but feel I get a very good service from BCHA and great support from our scheme manager.

"When I first came to Maydenbury I used to help with coffee mornings and Bingo which I enjoyed."

## LONGEST SERVING EMPLOYEE - GERALDINE RUSSELL



Geraldine has worked for BCHA since January 1981. She thinks the best bit of her work is being able to care for people, and having conversations with residents allowing them to reminisce about their life. Geraldine also enjoys travelling and travels to Florida 5 times a year.

## ALAN MELVILLE - CHEF



Alan shares his birthday with BCHA and turned 60 in July. Alan worked training chefs at the National Bakery School in London for 20 years and was the Chairman of the London division craft guilders of chefs. Due to his background Alan always enjoys making birthday cakes for residents.

**2003**

Supporting people started in 2003

Concorde made it last commercial flight in 2003

**2014**

BCHA sells 2 properties to help fund new development

Prince Harry launches the Invictus games

**2017**

Oak Way House opens

Article 50 triggered

**2007**

BCHA starts its search for land for an extra care scheme

First iPhone released

**2015**

The new Bedford Charter House opens

70th anniversary of VE day

### Bedford Citizens Housing Association

Bedford Charter House, 1B Kimbolton Road, Bedford MK40 2PU  
E: enquiries@bchal.org W: www.bchal.org @BedfordCitizens