



The Mills Charity, Framlingham

Applications open for 14 new Almshouses in Mills Crescent

Information Leaflet

Opening date for applications:	Monday 5 February 2018
<i>Application forms must be requested from the Clerk to the Trustees: they are not available elsewhere</i>	
Closing date for receipt of completed application forms:	Friday 23 February 2018
Successful applicants to be advised	Mon 12 to Fri 16 March 2018
Date Almshouses expected to be ready for occupation:	From Friday 1 June 2018 onwards
<i>(this date may be subject to change if construction is subjected to unforeseen delays or bad weather)</i>	

What is an Almshouse?

Alms are traditionally money or services donated to support the poor. An Almshouse is charitable housing provided to enable people (sometimes elderly people who can no longer work to earn enough to pay rent) to live in a particular community. They are often targeted at the poor of a locality, at those from certain forms of previous employment or their widows and are generally maintained by a charity or the Trustees of a bequest.

Almshouses are thought to have been established in the 10th century in Britain, to provide a place of residence for poor, old and distressed people. Many of the mediæval Almshouses in England were established with the aim of benefiting the soul of the founder or their family, and they usually incorporated a chapel. As a result, most were regarded as chantries and were dissolved during the Reformation under an Act of 1547. Almshouses generally have charitable status and aim to support the continued independence of their residents. There is an important distinction between Almshouses and other forms of sheltered housing insofar as Almshouse residents are not tenants of a

landlord, but Licensees of the administering Trustees and subject to the Trustees' rules of occupancy. Almshouse Licensees have no security of tenure and no right to acquire an interest in the property.

Almshouses are typically multiple small terraced houses or apartments providing accommodation for small numbers of residents. Some 2,600 Almshouse locations continue to be operated in the UK, providing 30,000 dwellings for 36,000 people.

The Almshouse Association, of which The Mills Charity is a member, provides the following "historical note":

"Almshouses trace their history back to monastic times where the terms bedehouse, hospital, maison dieu, Almshouse and others described the provision of accommodation for those in need. The first recorded Almshouse was founded by King Athelstan in York in the 10th Century, and the oldest still in existence is thought to be the Hospital of St. Oswald in Worcester that dates from circa 990. By the middle of 1500s, there

were about 800 mediæval hospitals spread across the country but following the dissolution of the monasteries, only a handful remained, and these were re-founded on secular lines, and rebuilt in the new domestic collegiate style.

“Of the 1,700 groups of Almshouse charities today, over 30% occupy listed buildings and many have celebrated anniversaries of over 400 years. Another feature of this rich heritage is that many Almshouses lie in the heart of towns and villages, ensuring that they remain closely integrated in the local community, with the added benefit of ensuring residents are close to shops and services.”

Thomas Mills and The Mills Charity

In the late 1600s Thomas Mills, a dissenting Baptist, lived and worked in Framlingham. A trained wheelwright and a timber merchant, he became a wealthy man inheriting a timber importing business in Wapping from his wife and a wheelwright's business from his employer. He became the owner of land in Dallinghoo, Dennington, Parham, Ufford, Pettistree, Wickham Market and Framlingham. When in Framlingham, Thomas would meet fellow non-conformists away from prying eyes at Lincoln's Barn. He died in 1703 and, being a dissenter, was not offered an Anglican burial in the churchyard but was buried in a tomb in his garden, where he was later joined by his trusted servant William Mayhew in what is now called Tomb House in Station Road.

Through Thomas Mills' generosity the Charity has helped many organisations and people over the last three centuries. Eight Trustees administer the Scheme, as well as its sister charity, the Mills Educational Foundation, which assists the education of Framlingham children and children at school in the town.

The Mills Almshouses

Under the terms of Thomas' will The Mills Charity was established. The influence of Thomas Mills on Framlingham over the years has been extensive. He funded the building of the Unitarian Meeting House and the adjacent house. He founded The Mills School, which became The Mills Grammar School in the centre of Framlingham and which is now Thomas Mills High School in Saxtead Road.

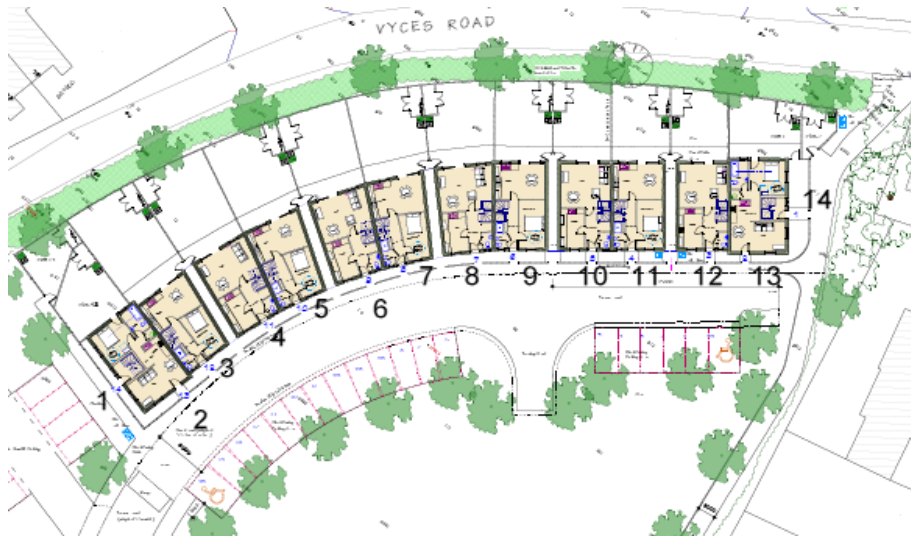
Bequests from both Thomas Mills and William Mayhew provided for the construction of eight Almshouses in Framlingham, which were first occupied in 1704 and remain in use to this day, having been refurbished from time to time.

The eight Mills Almshouses in a terraced block in Station Road, opposite the Railway pub are Grade 2* listed, being a fine example of building work around 1703. Each residence has one bedroom and a WC upstairs and one living room downstairs, together with a small kitchen and a wetroom with shower. Each home has its own little garden at the back; the front garden is for all the residents to enjoy and is kept tidy by the TMC gardener. In Station Road, there is a near-by warden who visits the mostly elderly residents each day, although residents must be able to look after themselves as The Mills Charity cannot provide care services. Residents pay a Weekly Maintenance Charge (“WMC”) to cover the cost of some utilities and to contribute to the management and upkeep.

The new Almshouses in Mills Crescent

The Mills Charity provides Almshouses for people who are in need, hardship or distress and who must be of good character, having also a strong connection with Framlingham or an adjacent village. Such a link might be, for example, their own or a close family member's present or recent residence, a child attending a local school, or a current or recent past employment link. **Residents occupy almshouses under licence as beneficiaries of The Mills Charity, so there is no landlord/tenant relationship established between the Licensee and The Mills Charity.**

In 2014 TMC Trustees decided to respond to the widespread need for more affordable homes, particularly for young families in need, by building a new terrace of three-bedroom houses – something of an innovation in Almshouse provision – and four one-bedroom flats. Mills Crescent, at the corner of Brook Lane and Vyces Road, Framlingham will be completed in late Spring 2018. These dwellings are not restricted to older residents, but offered also to younger persons and local families who are in need at a “weekly maintenance charge” (WMC) of between £500 and £625 per calendar month depending on the size of the dwelling – well below the equivalent market rental value.



Mills Crescent showing house numbers and ground floor layouts (plan not accurate in all details)

There are four types of accommodation available, totalling 14 units, as follows:

Type	Approx area m ²	Numbers	WMC pcm
First floor one bedroom flat	55	1 & 14	£500
Ground floor one bedroom flat	47	2 & 13	£500
3 bedroom 2 storey house Type A with all bedrooms upstairs	G48, F48	4,6,8,10 & 12	£600
3 bedroom house Type B with 1 bedroom & wetroom downstairs	G48, F58	3,5,7,9 & 11	£625

Each Almshouse has:

- Slate roof (except the two ground floor flats)
- A small rear garden, with path to shed, lawn and bin storage area (collections will be made from the front of each dwelling)
- Brick built bicycle/garden shed with an internal light and one power socket
- Double glazed windows; sliding rear patio doors (except flats)
- A shared, TMC-lit side passage to rear gardens (except the flats)
- Outside switchable lights at front and rear
- Kitchen equipped with pre-installed electric oven, hob, cooker hood, fridge/freezer, washing machine and dish washer.
- Gas-fired central heating
- Carpets in all bedrooms, stairs and living areas; non-slip floor tiles in kitchens, non-slip vinyl in bath and shower rooms; composite strip flooring in hallway.
- TV sockets wired to a common Satellite dish (the property of The Mills Charity), providing access to Sky, Freeview and Freesat. Licensees will need their own Sky subscription for Sky services.
- A BT phone point
- Sound insulation in the party walls exceeding building regulations standard
- A numbered private parking space opposite the front of the houses with 2 shared visitors' places and two disabled places for blue badge holders only; eight additional places just outside the pillared entrance to the Mills Crescent housing area
- Level access to all front doors (except the first floor flats, whose doors are on the side of the two blocks at either end)
- A smoke alarm and a carbon monoxide alarm
- A water butt at the rear

There is no vehicle or pedestrian access directly from the houses on to Vyces Road – pedestrian access only is available at the top end of the Crescent. There is a charging point for residents' own electric vehicles in the parking area. Use of the Almshouses is restricted to residential occupation by permitted licensees only. There are restrictions on pets, on parking and on smoking. Other rules are given in a Residents' Handbook, a copy of which will be provided to each licensee on appointment.

The person who intends to be the "Lead Licensee" is invited to complete an application form and return it by post to the Clerk to the Trustees at the PO Box address at the foot of this Notice, to arrive by 17.00 on Friday 23 February 2018 – late applications will not be considered. Under the laws by which The Mills Charity scheme is established, applicants for the Almshouses must be persons of good character who are in need, hardship or distress and who have a close connection to Framlingham or one of the parishes directly adjacent to it (Badingham, Brandeston, Cransford, Dennington, Earl Soham, Easton, Kettleburgh, Parham and Saxtead).

The "Lead Licensee" will normally be the senior person making the application on behalf of all persons who will occupy the Almshouse – that is typically the head of the household, in whose name the Letter of Appointment will be issued and with whom TMC will expect to deal on all matters relating to the Licence and all matters relating to all the

individuals authorised by the Licence to reside in the Almshouse. The Lead Licensee is responsible for paying to TMC the entire maintenance charge (see WMC below) and must make his/her own arrangement for collecting any contributions from other Licensees, under terms that they agree between themselves. In signing the Letter of Appointment, the Lead Licensee accepts responsibility for managing the activities and behaviour of the other licensed residents and for ensuring that they all protect the amenity of the Almshouse for the quiet enjoyment of all the residents of Mills Crescent. The person intending to be the Lead Licensee must include on his/her application form the name, date of birth, relationship, and contact details of every other person (including children) that it is intended should reside in the Almshouse and TMC may request further information about any of them. Only those persons named on the Licence may occupy the Almshouse.

On being granted a Licence, the Lead Licensee must accept the Rules and sign the Letter of Appointment along with all other adults authorised to dwell in the Almshouse.

The spouse or partner of the Lead Licensee must apply as a "Joint Licensee". In the absence of, or in the event of a lack of co-operation from, the Lead Licensee, TMC will expect to deal with the Joint Licensee on all matters relating to the Licence and to all the individuals authorised by the Licence to reside in the Almshouse. In signing the Letter of Appointment, the Joint Licensee accepts joint responsibility for managing the activities and behaviour of the other licensed residents and for ensuring that they all protect the amenity of the Almshouse for the quiet enjoyment of all the residents of Mills Crescent. **A Joint Licensee must make an application in the same format as the Lead Licensee** and must accept the Rules and countersign the joint Letter of Appointment.

Any other person over the age of 18 at the date of the application accepts the role and authority of the Lead Licensee and the Joint Licensee (if any) to deal on their behalf with all matters relating to the Licence and by whose decisions on such matters they are bound. Such a Licensee may be asked to provide additional information to TMC and must accept the Rules and countersign the Letter of Appointment.

Any child under the age of 18 at the time of application, typically a family member and the responsibility of the Lead Licensee or the Joint Licensee or both of them, will be included on the Letter of Appointment as a licensed resident. To remain in the Almshouse after the date of his/her 18th birthday, such a Licensee must accept the Rules and countersign the Letter of Appointment.

All successful applicants must be able to care for themselves, both sustaining and maintaining an independent lifestyle, as The Mills Charity does not provide, nor is it authorised to provide, any form of permanent nursing or care. If residential or nursing care becomes necessary for a Licensee at some time in the future, all Licensees of the Almshouse may be asked to find more suitable accommodation elsewhere.

Residents are required to pay a Weekly Maintenance Contribution ("WMC"), actually paid monthly, currently at the rate shown in the table above. The WMC covers the maintenance of the front strip of garden and all the amenity land and facilities. It must be paid to TMC by the Lead Licensee by bank standing order on the first day of each calendar month. It will be reviewed annually and may be changed by The Mills Charity upon one month's written notice. For benefit purposes the authorities may treat all or part of the WMC in the same way as rent. Licensees must pay their own Council Tax and utility bills, as well as appliance servicing and repair. Other than for the installed central heating boiler, the use of carbon fuels, including gas and oil of any sort, is not permitted.

To request an application form, please send (preferably by email to themillscharity@btconnect.com, otherwise by post to the address below) your full name, address, date of birth and contact telephone numbers to the Clerk of The Mills Charity, together with a note of the full name and date of birth of every person that you would intend to occupy the property, as well as a note of the relationship of each person to you. Unless you advise The Mills Charity otherwise, the person requesting an application form will be assumed to be the prospective Lead Licensee with whom TMC will deal on all issues concerning all prospective residents of the same Almshouse, and, in the event of a Licence being granted, on all matters concerning the Almshouse and its Licensees.

Application forms in response to requests will be issued (by post only) until Wednesday 21 February and must be returned by post to the address below by 17.00 on Friday 23 February 2018. Late, incomplete and unsigned applications will not be valid.

Please contact the Clerk with any queries, preferably by email. If you choose to call by phone, you may have to leave a message.

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