

APPLYING FOR JOB VACANCIES AT THE METHODIST HOMESTEAD

OUR BACKGROUND

The Methodist Homestead Trust was established as a charitable trust in 1929 by a small group of Northampton Methodists to provide homes for long serving Members of the Methodist Church in the Northampton Circuit. Homestead Cottages are operated by the Methodist Homestead Trust.

The original vision was to provide homes in the fullest, truest sense – a place where rest, shelter and warmth that can be truly enjoyed by all who live in them – over the years the Trustees have maintained that vision but brought the homes into the 21st Century. Whilst the Methodist Homestead started by offering homes to members of the Methodist Circuit, as the years have passed it has grown into a truly ecumenical community.

Many friends provided gifts to make the original scheme of fifteen homes around the central green plus two upstairs homes and a small meeting place – the Saxton Memorial Hall a reality. Further gifts enabled two more homes to be built in 1940. In the period 1970-1972 a further eight homes were built to complete the scheme that we have today.

In 1929 the site was described as “being in a delightful location, at the centre of a large fruit orchard – which has long gone – and in a spot so quiet and secluded that it is hard to realise that a large industrial town lies all around”. The Trustees continue to believe that anyone walking through our gates can still find that same peace and serenity away from the bustle of our town.

Since the Homestead opened, the two upstairs homes have been merged to provide the Warden’s accommodation and the Saxton Hall extended into the adjacent home to bring the number of homes available to a total of 24. The Trustees have continued to upgrade and improve the homes and Saxton Hall and have built a small office.

In 2008 the Trustees started a project to redevelop and extend some of the original homes.

In 2013 the Trustees took legal advice about the best governance structure to have in place to support the redevelopment project and at the same time to protect the Trustees, as a result of this advice a private company limited by guarantee was created, and the Trustees became Directors of this Company (Company Number 8295082) and Trustees of the new Methodist Homestead Charity (Charity Number 1150018).

OUR ETHOS

Homestead Cottages aims to provide warm, manageable, comfortable and secure homes for our Residents in a caring Christian environment, supported by our Trustees, a Warden and a Handyman/Gardener.

Homestead Cottages operate as Almshouses and Residents become a beneficiary of the Methodist Homestead Trust and are not tenants.

The Methodist Homestead is a member of the Almshouse Association and has incorporated their good practice within the governance, policies and processes.

We provide a real ecumenical Christian community where our Residents can live independently in a sheltered environment.



WHAT DO WE OFFER OUR RESIDENTS?

Our 24 homes are intended for independent living and therefore Residents are encouraged to live their own lives, within the framework set out in their letter of appointment and the Resident's Handbook.

Prior to the Covid pandemic, the local Methodist Circuit provided a devotional service which was open to all Residents every month and several external groups held meetings in the Saxton Hall – including a ladies fellowship meeting and a men's choir (run jointly with the Bethany Homestead which is next door). Once the pandemic situation allows, we hope for a phased restart of activities. Our Residents have however been able to take advantage of the warmer weather to hold events on the lawns. Residents benefit from an emergency alarm system linked to the Borough Council call centre, free telephone and internet, and are contacted daily by the Warden.



THE CHARITY

The Charity currently operates with 10 Trustees supported by a Clerk and normally meets 4 times in a year. We have a Resident's Sub-Committee which interviews applicants to Homestead Cottages and which meets with Residents 4 times a year. They will also visit Residents from time to time and act as the main link between the Trustees and the Residents.

Financially the Trust has operated in a prudent fashion and has maintained a healthy balance sheet, whilst at the same time funding the refurbishment and improvement of the cottages, the Warden's Flat and the Saxton Hall.



Applying for the role of Warden or Site Supervisor

The Trustees of the Methodist Homestead employ two part time staff to fill the roles of Warden and Site Supervisor and they play a key role in life at Homestead Cottages. The Warden role will be 24 hours a week and the Site Supervisor will average 20 hours a week -although this may vary depending on the season.

In summary, the Warden is expected to:

- contact each Resident daily (unless asked not to do so), usually in the morning (except on Sundays, and when he/she is on Holiday or on Public Holidays), to see if they have any problems;
- call a doctor, emergency services and/or the Resident's contacts, a social worker or district nurse when necessary;
- unlock and go into a home in an emergency;
- keep the Trustees (through the Clerk) informed about the general health of Residents, the general condition of the homes and the security of the site;
- arrange occasional social events for our Residents;
- keep a watch on the general security of Homestead Cottages.

And the Site Supervisor is expected to:

- keep the main lawns and bedded areas of Homestead Cottages tidy and maintain the hedges and trees;
- record any defects or property issues that are raised and report them to the Trustees for attention;
- carry out minor maintenance and repair jobs as requested by the Trustees;
- assist Residents by replacing light bulbs or batteries in smoke detectors when necessary;
- assist Residents if they need help to turn off water or gas, top up the boiler or reset the electrical consumer unit.

Detailed Job Descriptions are available on request

Please apply in writing and to help us please outline how you meet the criteria set out in the job advert, your reasons for applying and explain the benefits you could bring to the role that you have applied for.

Applications should be sent to the Clerk to the Trustees, 14 Methodist Homestead, Homestead Way, Northampton, NN2 6JF or by email to office@homesteadcottages.org.uk

Further information about the Methodist Homestead is available from the same address and email.