



Housing LIN

*Connecting people, ideas and resources*



# Almshouses: a model of community housing

Alison Pooley & Jenny Pannell



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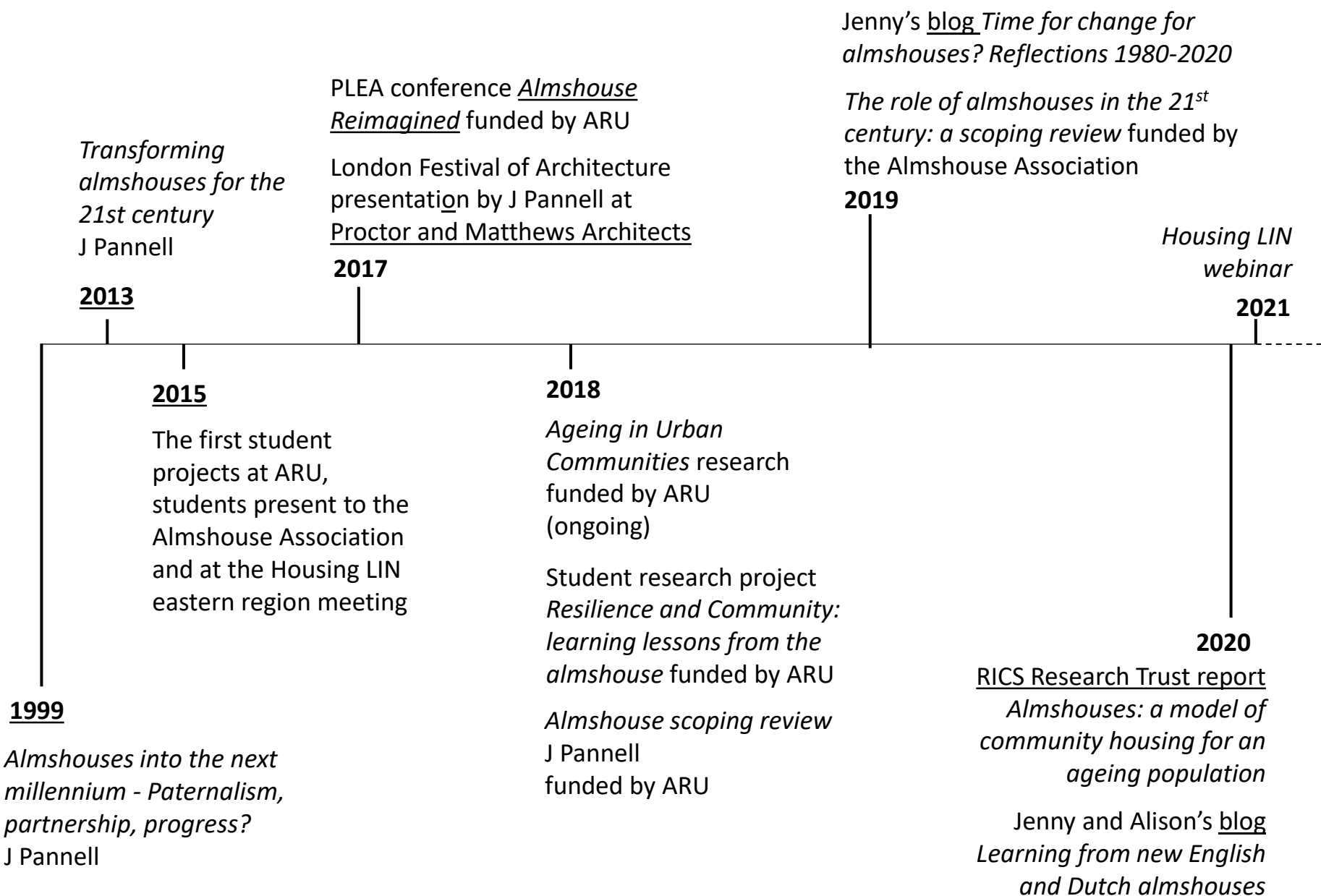
Jenny Pannell has been researching and writing about almshouses and the role they play in meeting housing need for over 40 years. She also has extensive experience researching other critical issues related to housing, as well as working as a housing professional. Her recent almshouse research builds on earlier publications, including reports from 1999 and 2013, which focused on the role of almshouses for 2030 and beyond. Jenny's reflections on her work are in her blog, which is accessible on the Housing LIN web site.



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Alison Pooley started her working life as a housing officer in East London. She went on to retrain in architectural practice and has, for the past 17 years, been teaching architecture; including working with local communities on student projects to design an Almshouse Reimagined. Her passion for equity in housing continues through her research and voluntary work as a trustee for two almshouse charities and her local community land trust.

# Research timeline: the highlights





# Almshouses: a model of community housing for an ageing population

Drawing on detailed case studies and a wealth of photos and images, the report explores what can be learnt from the enduring almshouse model of housing for an ageing population, with a focus on key issues:

- why and how different almshouse charities decided to build new almshouses;
- the approaches they took, the opportunities and barriers they faced;
- the extent to which barriers have been overcome; and
- future lessons for almshouse charities, their advisers and other stakeholders.

The Chair of the RICS Research Trust, Professor Sarah Sayce, commented

*“we are delighted to have been the sponsors of this very pertinent and timely research. Affordable housing and housing for older people have attracted much publicity in the popular press and through academic research; however, the critical and unique role that almshouses play has been largely overlooked. The report provides important insights and assists the Trust in its aim of supporting work which advances knowledge for the public benefit”*



The Mills Charity, Framlingham

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Colman's Cottages, Suffolk, Grade II listed almshouses image: authors

# St Clement Danes and Holborn Estates Charity, London



## Key issues:

- The almshouse typology, highlighting the range of work almshouse charities do and the range of housing they provide.
- The importance of collaboration with Local Authorities.
- The opportunities presented by collaboration with other local housing providers.
- The extent that almshouses are embedded in their local community, with strong local connections, through trustees and others.





## St Clement Danes and Holborn Estates Charity, London

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Johannes Enschede Hof, Haarlem image: authors



Johannes Enschedé Hof, Haarlem image: authors



Johannes Enschedé Hof, Haarlem image: authors



Winnocks and Kendalls Almshouse Charity, Colchester, Essex image: authors



Gravinnehof, Haarlem 1992-2001

image: authors



Gravinnehof, Haarlem 1992-2001

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# Thorngate Churcher Trust, Gosport, Hampshire



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Haberfield House, Bristol image: authors



**Haberfield House, Bristol**  
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- The importance of collaboration with Local Authorities.

The opportunities presented by collaboration with other local housing providers.



Two local charities are working together

We're building

Six new independent-living bungalows for local older people

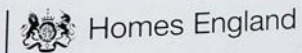
Calder Valley Community Land Trust Ltd

John Eastwood



Information from David Storah (for John Eastwood Homes) 01706 813214

With financial support from



John Eastwood Homes, Todmorden and Calder Valley Community Land Trust, West Yorkshire image used with kind permission of the CLCLT



John Eastwood Homes and Calder Valley Community Land Trust, West Yorkshire:  
bungalows on site, Walsden image used with kind permission of the cvclt



John Eastwood Homes and Calder Valley Community Land Trust, Walsden: local mayors tree planting image used with kind permission of the CVCLT



Winnocks and Kendalls Almshouse Charity, Colchester, Essex image: authors



Outward facing community embedded, need led housing, which we need more of  
The Mills Charity, Framlingham image used with kind permission of **Seamans Building**

RICS key case study outcomes:

almshouse charities may own additional land, and/or contribute charitable resources to make limited public funding go further

some almshouse charities have successfully redeveloped existing sites to provide modern housing (including extra care housing)

others have sold off valuable but unsuitable or poorly located buildings, and built new almshouses elsewhere

some almshouse charities have merged to make better use of resources (land, buildings, and governance arrangements).







The Housing LIN viewpoint, blogs and the RICS report focus on the future of almshouses and in particular:

The critical point of our research is that it is outward facing to reach wider professions, raising the profile and the opportunities of almshouses and housing provision following the model.

‘We had to tell the residents that they would be living on a building site for several years. They said “We don’t care, we just want to stay here”.’

Keith Rea, CEO, Ste Clement Danes Holborn Estates Charity



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In March 2018 Linda moved into a new almshouse. She says “It has changed my life ... I love these people. We gel, we share things, we plan social events together. I don’t have much family especially not locally, so now I feel these are like my older family relatives”

*Case Study – How Moving into the right housing for me has changed my life in 2018.* Internal report for Thorngate Churcher Trust (2018). Unpublished



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