

King Edward VI and Rev Joseph Prime Almshouses, Saffron Walden

Proposed New Building - View from Park Lane



Proposed re-development of 2-8 Primes Close December 2024 Update



About the Almshouses

Saffron Walden Almshouses consist of 47 homes in Abbey Lane, Primes Close and Freshwell Street, centrally located but tucked away from the town's main thoroughfare. We offer housing to applicants on a low income, with limited savings who are either currently living in the former borough of Saffron Walden or can demonstrate strong links with the town.

We welcome applicants of all ages and at different stages of life. The majority of our applicants presently are of working age, making them ineligible to apply for much of the newly built socially affordable housing in Saffron Walden which is targeted at the over-55s.

Project Crocus

Building homes, growing hope in Saffron Walden

Project Crocus is our vision for 16 energy-efficient new homes, replacing the existing seven bungalow units in Primes Close with modern accommodation and providing nine additional, much-needed, almshouse homes. The project, which has the support of UDC Housing, brings a number of public benefits, including:

- Increase in the number of low-cost homes in Saffron Walden;
- Help with the very high demand for almshouse accommodation;
- Retain the unique offer of almshouses, community-led housing for the local community;
- Highly energy efficient homes reducing costs for the residents and carbon generated;
- Reduction in flood risk to the town by replacement of a section of the River Slade culvert;

Additionally, a recent study has shown that almshouse residents live longer than their counterparts in the general population¹.

Almshouse Residents

We provide accommodation to the elderly and retired who cannot afford to rent from a private landlord or buy in Saffron Walden. Residents are beneficiaries of the charity and can stay for as long as they wish provided that they pay the monthly maintenance contribution, behave respectfully and do not have income or savings that would allow them to rent or buy in the town.

We also provide homes to those of working age who are in part time or low paid jobs. For example, council workers, librarians, shop workers, nurses in training, those who work in the town but cannot drive, those from broken relationships.

Over 100 years, the new building will provide a home for at least 200 people.

Commonly asked Questions

Do you have planning permission?

Yes, the planning application was approved on 16th October 2024

What are the next steps?

2025 and 2026 will be devoted to fundraising. We will also start to discharge some of the planning conditions, all of which were expected, in 2025.

1. Benzimra, Rickayzen, Smith & Vikhanova, Bayes Business School, 2023

Proposed New Building View from South-West



When will the build start and finish?

The precise date when we will start to construct the new building depends on the speed of our fundraising. Our current plan is that this will be in 2027 immediately after we have demolished the existing bungalows.

What about the residents of the flats in the existing bungalows?

The flats are empty and the residents have been found alternative accommodation in our flats, with a nearby housing association or with the help of UDC Housing.

Doesn't the River Slade culvert run under the Primes Close bungalows?

Yes, and we propose to replace the length under the bungalows in 2027, which will benefit the town by reducing the risk of collapse of this section and consequent flooding in the town.

What about construction traffic?

We expect construction traffic to access the site via Park Lane and we will be working in with UDC and Essex Highways to minimise inconvenience for local residents.

We are seeking to agree a delivery space in Swan Meadow Car Park to reduce the number of large deliveries along Park Lane. This will allow most deliveries to be smaller and to off-load at the north end of the almshouse site without blocking Park Lane. Occasional off-loading in Park Lane will be communicated in advance to residents and re-scheduled if required.

We will appoint a contractor who is a member of the Considerate Contractor Scheme, or similar. A schematic of our proposed approach is shown on the back page of this document.

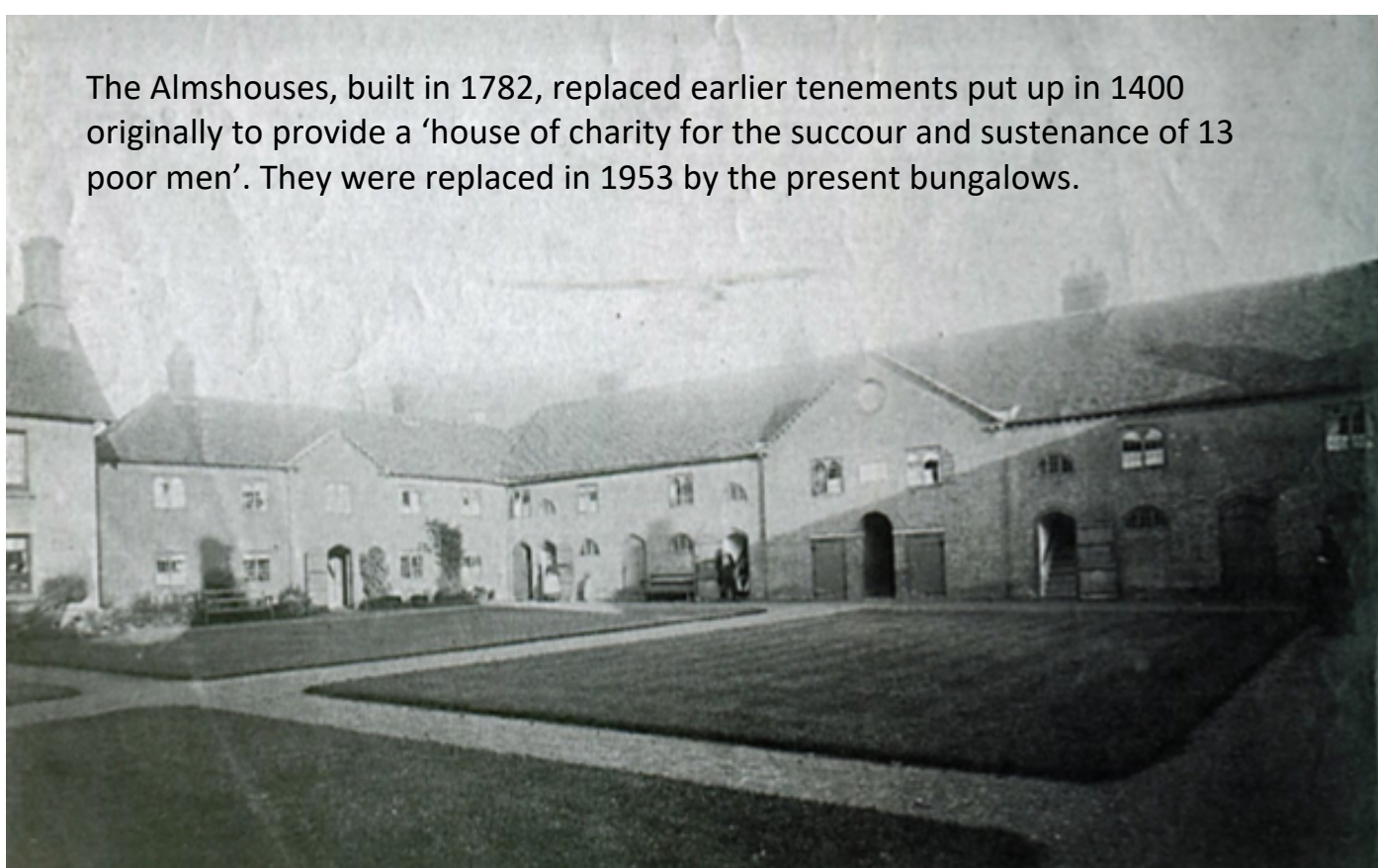
How will you fund the project?

Project Crocus is a multi-million-pound development that will be largely funded from philanthropic sources of income.

Further Information

For more information or if you would like to be kept informed of progress on the project, email us at crocus@swalmshouses.org

The Almshouses, built in 1782, replaced earlier tenements put up in 1400 originally to provide a 'house of charity for the succour and sustenance of 13 poor men'. They were replaced in 1953 by the present bungalows.



(Image above © Saffron Walden Museum, other photographs courtesy of Saffron Walden Camera Club, images of proposed new building © BB&C Architects Ltd.)

