

# 6 The St Pancras Almshouses today



St Pancras Almshouses gardens in full bloom



David Landman with daughter



Patricia King, assistant Manager



Almshouses main office



The 'Scrabble Rabble'



Jean Stone, Trustee



Merrick Howse, Manager



Excerpts from 'The Thunderer' newsletter



The St Pancras Almshouses now have the postal address **Fraser Regnart Court**, but their function has not changed. In an age when the state now accepts responsibility for housing elderly people unable to support themselves, the St Pancras Almshouses are still the choice of many who need a home.

### Garden

The residents of the St Pancras Almshouses take great pride and pleasure in their Victorian homes, now 150 years old, and their beautiful surroundings. At different times of the year dahlias, geraniums, bluebells and roses bloom around a handsome lawn, and a garden committee works with professional gardeners to keep all flourishing.

### Governance

The Almshouses have their origin in Christian charity, but no one is excluded. Admission rules are simple. Would-be residents must be 55 or over, must have lived in the borough of Camden for ten years, and must be in housing need. In addition they must be able to look after themselves and their flats.

The Almshouses are the responsibility of Trustees who give their services voluntarily. The current Chairman is Richard Lindley, and the Vice-Chairman Barbara Thorndick, OBE. Tony Rouse is the Hon Secretary, and John Malpass Hon Treasurer. The other Trustees are Malcolm Haines, Peter Horne, Jean Stone, and Dorothy Hudspeth. Prebendary Paul Hawkins, the Vicar of St Pancras, is an ex-officio Trustee, and Fr Dermot Morrin from the neighbouring Roman Catholic Priory attends as an adviser.

The Trustees employ a part-time Manager, Merrick Howse, and an assistant Manager, Patricia King, to look after the residents and maintain the Almshouses.

150 years after the Almshouse buildings were constructed plans are well advanced to bring them fully up-to-date and make them fit for the next generation of residents.

### The residents

Among the activities organised by residents are a Scrabble evening, the Edna Brown Cinema Club, and a regular Thursday coffee morning. Residents contribute to their own magazine, *The Thunderer*, a mixture of news, verse and anecdotes. Many residents are also active members of the wider Camden community.

**Christopher Nottage** former Verger of St Pancras Church, has an avid interest in model cars, is a member of the Camden History Society, a keen calligrapher, and a founder member of the 'Scrabble Rabble' who meet on Fridays.

**David Landman** has lived in the St Pancras Almshouses for three years. He founded *The Thunderer*, the community publication and the Edna Brown Cinema Club, which meets in the Regnart Room to watch a feature film every Saturday.

**Jean Stone** a former electrical engineer and researcher, who lives nearby, is a Trustee and member of the garden committee. In the early 1960's Jean founded the South End Green Association. Jean is an enthusiast when it comes to the history of the St Pancras Almshouses and with her son Lee has created the Charity's own website.