

The United Charities of Blewbury, Upton and Aston Upthorpe (2022)

The two main functions of The United Charities of the Ancient Parish of Blewbury, Upton and Aston Upthorpe are firstly to help people of all ages, who live in these parishes and who may need financial help and/or may have fallen on hard times and secondly to be responsible for the maintenance of the two alms-houses in Blewbury. The charity has the care and upkeep of the alms-houses in the churchyard and the management contributions from these is one source of the charity's income plus some investments from the sale of land gifted to us over the years. We have undertaken and continue to undertake significant investment and improvements in both alms-houses. We cannot emphasise enough the burdensome cost of maintaining these Grade 2 Listed properties to a reasonable, habitable standard

Whilst the United Charity's origins date from the 1600's, it aims to remain current with the needs of those within the villages who may require assistance and also to make everyone aware of the valuable work it does close to home in the community we all share. Anyone needing help, or who knows of someone in need, should get in touch with the Trustees.

An outcome of the global pandemic is that our financial capacity to help those in need has been seriously eroded. The exponential rising cost of living, including energy costs, has meant that more people have been pushed into poverty and the requests for help have grown significantly in recent months. Any financial support would be greatly appreciated and used wisely in our parishes to help our residents. We have supported and continue to support Upton, Blewbury and Aston residents.

In response to an increase in requests for help, we established a dedicated panel of Trustees to deal with applications for Covid Grant applications and all other applications. All applications are at the trustees' discretion and looked at entirely on a case-by-case basis. Amounts will vary depending on levels of need.

Our funds for helping those in need and maintaining the properties are limited. In order for our work, particularly the financial support for those in need in our parishes, to continue, it would be really appreciated if people/organisations could consider making any type of donation, gift or bequest to the charity. To do this – please contact us - unitedcharities@outlook.com

The trustees are:

Blewbury: Sheila Loy (Chair), Louise Esplin, Rev. Louise Butler, Chris Savage and Jill Willison,

Aston Up Thorpe: Mike Wigg, Tony West. Upton: Carol Walker

Clerk/Treasurer: Hazel Lightowler