



*Under direction of
MIC CLARKE.
(Artist ERIC JAWSON)
1989.*



**AMERSHAM HOUSING
ASSOCIATION LIMITED**
A T H O M E I N T H E C I T Y

An introduction

In October 1982 a house was purchased in South East London. This was to be the starting point for an exciting Christian housing initiative. The house in Amersham Road was chosen as an ideal location for Christian students from nearby Goldsmiths' College. With energy and enthusiasm successive groups made it a home for hospitality and outreach.

A drop in the ocean

This was only the beginning. The need for more quality housing was clear. The next venture set the pattern for later developments. A house in Musgrove Road was bought with

the assistance of a bank loan and, importantly, two loans from Christians wanting to see their savings invested in a vital people-centred project. One loan was interest free and short-term; the other was tied to equity and secured by a Deed of Trust.

The way forward

Up to this point property purchase and management had been achieved by the personal enterprise of one family. The time was right for the experience gained from these two houses to become the foundation for a Christian Housing Association. After consultation, prayer and careful planning, application for registration of the Amersham Housing Association Limited (AHAL) was made. The National Federation of Housing Associations accepted AHAL into membership. Registration under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act was granted in July 1988.



Left:
AHAL's first shared ownership property

Front cover:
The starting point, Amersham Road

People need homes

Many Christians in the inner city are being hindered in their task of evangelism, pastoring or church growth because they do not have adequate accommodation.

There is a great imbalance between the cost of renting or buying a house or flat and the resources available to those wanting to live and work in the inner city.

AHAL has been formed to enable Christians in key city situations to establish a secure home base.

We aim to do this in a number of ways:-

- *Low cost long term rental*
- *Shared ownership*
- *Advice and support*

Partnership

AHAL is a privately funded housing initiative designed to utilise funds from concerned Christians.

This can be by:-

- *Outright gifts*
- *Legacies of money or property*
- *Individually negotiated loans*

We believe that this is the correct method of funding for AHAL. Housing Associations which receive government grants are required to meet local Authority housing priorities. These would not always be in line with our own distinct objectives.

AHAL needs people of commitment and vision to give their support so that Christian mission can continue effectively in our inner cities.





AHAL exists because people need homes

The inner-city needs Christians to live and work there long-term.

Many Christians are desperate to overcome the obstacle of finding adequate housing.

How can this be done without resources being released?

AHAL is committed to act.

We pray that this partnership will establish stable homes and strengthen city communities to the glory of God.

AHAL AMERSHAM HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED
AT HOME IN THE CITY

Registered Office: 18, Sir Isaac's Walk, Colchester CO1 1JL.

A member of the



Registration No. 26192.

JOHN WOODMAN, AHAL'S FINANCIAL CONSULTANT, ANSWERS SOME QUESTIONS

FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK

During the first year of AHAL's operation we have successfully completed one shared ownership scheme and through advice and support seen the completion of three other house purchases in South East London.

As a Christian housing association we set out to help those who are thoroughly committed to the gospel of Christ and serve God in a vital way. Through this partnership, we trust we are significantly furthering the Kingdom of God in inner city areas.

We are currently in touch with people of such commitment who are hindered in their work because they cannot obtain long term adequate housing. Even by stretching every resource to obtain a home of their own, they still fall short - sometimes by a relatively small amount - of being able to purchase even a modest house or flat. This is where a shared ownership scheme is so very suitable. In short:-

We trust God for guidance as we proceed in each scheme, considering each application carefully, taking up references, and prayerfully considering all factors. Then, if we can match the situation with suitable finance for an acceptable proportion of shared ownership, we proceed as follows:-

The applicant selects a modest home, in the vicinity of their ministry and appropriate to their situation.

The property is thoroughly surveyed.

A Deed of Trust is prepared by AHAL's solicitors, safeguarding the rights of both owners of the property.

Modest rental is charged for the part owned by AHAL.

Opportunity is given for the applicant to purchase additional shares of the property as their circumstances permit.

If they are purchased, the money so released can be returned to any lender involved, or be ready for the next scheme!

We are currently in the early stages of the second shared ownership plan and we can see the great potential for multiplying such schemes. At the same time we are aware of the need to act with prudence and to ensure a stable basis for the early years of the Association's work.

The AHAL Committee meets regularly and we are fortunate to have not only the expertise of the National Federation of Housing Associations when needed, but also the professional advice of a Christian financial consultant and a Christian surveyor who share our vision.

During this year we have become aware that for many people any form of house ownership is only a dream, and that their need is for low-cost long-term rental. We have a growing faith that as others cooperate with AHAL we shall see development in this area also.

Those of us on the Committee feel at times like Nehemiah, when he was faced with the tremendous task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. He prayed, he sought favour with the authorities, he asked for resources, he put himself fully into a position of commitment and personal sacrifice and he identified with those who were in need. He was able, under God, to obtain incredible support and co-operation from those who worked with him.

What a challenge!

Dorothy Davies, Secretary,
Amersham Housing Association Ltd.

