

REDDITCH FRIENDS HOUSING ASSOCIATION – HOW IT CAME INTO BEING

During the 1970's, the Society of Friends of Redditch (a Quaker organisation) were keen to play an active, practical part in meeting the social and spiritual needs of the expanding 'New Town'. They identified two areas of particular concern:

- housing for single parent families and
- housing for single people.

A group from the Society of Friends formed the Redditch Friends Housing Association (RFHA) in 1971. As a charitable Housing Association its aim was - and still is - to provide housing to those who are unable to access the mainstream market housing provision of owner occupation or expensive private rent.

In 1974 a Friends Meeting House was built at the Matchborough Centre. At the same time, the first housing development, of 24 flats were built on the adjacent site in Oxhill Close. The Meeting House also provided laundry facilities and a Family Resource centre to the society's tenants and others. The laundry continues to this day but the Family Resource Centre is now run by Worcestershire County Council, who work with families experiencing difficulties.

Our second block of 10 flats, were built in 1987 to satisfy the growing needs of the 'New Town'. This provided accommodation for single homeless people - two for under 18 years olds or disabled people. In 1991 the Resident Warden's house was let to MENCAP to manage as shared accommodation for adults with learning difficulties.

In the late 1990's various changes took place – the needs of people in the town changed to it was decided that the flats should be designated 'general needs' and the original warden's house came back into general use. The Association also added another 9 houses to its stock. This enabled some of the families in the flats at Oxhill Close to move on to family size accommodation.

The Association still maintains its original objectives, to manage and maintain the properties to a high standard and provide a caring service for its residents.