

*The summer is a good time for maintenance on our buildings, but repairs pop up at different times of the year regardless of the weather. Andy Walsh, Property Services Director, is pleased that the repairs to the roof and chimney flashing at Milward House are completed. 'We had a lot of water coming into one of the rooms, so got the scaffolding up and did a good investigation. Part of the roof was repaired, then some lead flashings around the chimney were found to be defective and were replaced and the chimney stack had to be rebuilt. The chimney is the home's main boiler flue, and altogether repairs cost around £12,000.'*

## Taking care of the properties

It's generally agreed that the fabric of a building is good for sixty years, and after that needs more and more money spent on it to keep it in good condition. Our oldest building is the Brighton home, and that has needed to be completely rewired. It was a very big job, and was done in stages over a number of years. 'It meant stripping out the old wiring and distribution boards, installing new and chasing the walls,' said Andy, 'Residents were moved into a vacant flat while work was being done on their room, and the room, or flat was completely redecorated before they moved back in.'

'The main kitchen has been completely refurbished at the Leonora Home in Chippenham. Andy said, 'We installed commercial quality stainless steel units. Open shelves are preferred to cupboards, because you can see instantly how clean they are. We put a layer of hygienic, durable and virtually maintenance free wall cladding over the existing tiles to give the walls a one surface finish.'

It costs around £500,000 a year for repairs and improvements to our buildings. Recently, at Great Finborough, the fuel oil pipe from the tank to the boiler room failed a 'pressure test' and will cost about £5,000 to put right. Repairs are inevitable and can be unpredictable, to an extent, but improvements are part of a plan and include things

such as converting a bathroom to a 'wet room'. A 'wet room' has a shower standing directly on the floor, which is easier for residents because it avoids any chance of tripping over the lip of the traditional shower tray. Converting a bathroom to a wet room means installing new, non-slip waterproof flooring, redoing the walls, changing around the electrics and waterproofing the fittings. It costs around £7,000, but is a boon to frail elderly people and their carers.

In fact, whatever Andy and his team (which includes Steve Mayo and the homes' maintenance officers) do, it's always for one purpose – to provide warm, comfortable and loving homes for the Lord's older pilgrims.

## Northwood Missionary Auctions acts for Pilgrim Homes by auctioning donated items on our behalf.

The auctions are run by a group of Christian volunteers, including a professional auctioneer, so the low expenses of the auction can be met by sales of bric-a-brac.

Items for auction are collected from any part of the country, and all proceeds go to Pilgrim Homes at your request.

**To arrange for collection, contact Ruth Sowton on 01923 836634.**

