

Timeline of Newbury Almshouses

(source: *"The Almshouses of Newbury"*, P Wood & W Berkshire Museum. 2006)

- 1215 King John grants charter to St Bartholomew's Hospital, City area. These became known as **King John's Almshouses**, originally for a priest and poor brothers.
- 1592 **Church Almshouses**, Bartholomew Street (next to St Nic's, where church hall now stands) known to exist – but probably much earlier. "Up to 12 poor souls" in residence in probably only 2 properties
- 1604 Francis Winchcombe gives rent of two houses in Cheap Street as income to support almshouses in **Mary Hill**, which now forms the southern end of that street. These may have originated in 13th century as part of the leper hospital of St Mary Magdalen.
- 1650 Philip Jemmett, London brewer born in Newbury, converted stables next to Bartholomew Manor (Argyll Rd) into 12 almshouses for 6 men and 6 women.
- 1671 Thomas **Pearce** left £400 to set up houses to support "two decayed weavers"
- 1672 two houses in West Mills purchased (for £48) with Pearce bequest and £310 spent on land, rent from which supports the Trust
- 1676 Philip Jemmett gives his grandson Jemmett **Raymond** the almshouses in Argyll Rd. Raymond buys nearby land and uses rent from this and the Globe Inn (now the site of Lloyds Bank) to help pay for upkeep. His mother adds to the endowment. In his will, Raymond bequeaths his almshouses to Corporation of Newbury.
- 1690 Francis **Coxedd's** almshouses (also West Mills) established for "two honest and religious men of Newbury".
- 1698 St Bartholomew's Hospital & King John's Almshouses, Argyll Rd., rebuilt.
- 1727 Thomas Hunt leaves a house and two tenements in West Mills to "provide succor for 3 women".
- 1754 Benjamin **Robinson** endows three cottages in Bartholomew Street as almshouses for "three old weavers". Their precise location is not known.
- 1764 Robinson's charity leases three tenements in Northcroft Lane (where Pembroke Road car park exit now is) to replace those in Bartholomew Street.
- 1793 John Kimber leaves most of his fortune (over £13k plus land at Wash Common) to establish almshouses for 6 men and 6 women, built the following year in Cheap Street (next to Post Office and occupying most of its parking area). **Kimber's Almshouses** are the first to be independent of church and corporation. Kimber's will left nothing to his only surviving child: he had fallen out with his family. He also endowed the Blue Coat School.
- 1796 Raymond's Almshouse Charity builds 12 almshouses in Fair Close, Newtown Road: "Lower Raymonds".
- 1798 Rector of St Nicolas church accepts lease of Raymond's Almshouses in Argyll Rd (recently vacated for new Fair Close properties).
- 1814 St Bartholomew's charity build 10 almshouses known as New Court on site of old Cheese Fair in Newtown Road.
- 1817 **Hunt's Almshouses** in West Mills demolished and new houses built on site, which remain almshouses.

- 1823 John Child, a sailmaker, endowed land and property in Northcroft Lane (still standing, behind Lock Stock & Barrel) for “poor Newbury men”.
- 1824-1840 dispute over disposal of Mary Hill Almshouses caused by its mismanagement by Corporation. Eventually reaches Attorney General.
- 1826 Raymonds Almshouse Charity builds a terrace of 10 almshouses north of Derby Rd: **Upper Raymonds**.
- 1864 St Mary’s Almshouses rebuilt in Cheap Street on site now occupied by Mill Reef House.
- 1882 John Child’s Almshouses sold and proceeds given to church help to build
- 1883 **Church & Child’s Almshouses**, Newtown Road. Former Raymond’s (then Church) Almshouses in Argyll Rd left derelict until sold to Dr Wynter (see below) in 1920.
- 1883 **Coxedd’s & Pearce’s Almshouses** built off Enborne Rd after original properties in West Mills deemed unsuitable for habitation.
- 1919 Dr Walter **Essex Wynter**, upon retiring from Middlesex Hospital London, bought 15th century Bartholomew Manor in Argyll Rd. His father Andrew had collaborated with Charles Dickens and shared his concerns for single women with no homes. He then bought and modernised the nearby Church Almshouses.
- 1921 Robinson’s Almshouses in Northcroft Lane (then owned by St Bart’s Grammar School) sold, proceeds used to support Hunt’s almshouse residents and for land next to school.
- 1926 Dr Wynter bought two cottages and some outbuildings next to his house, converting them to four almshouses for retired nurses from Middlesex Hospital. They form Bartholomew Close, on the corner of Pound Street and Argyll Rd.
- 1928 Mrs **Mabel Luke** of Adbury House, Burghclere purchases land in Mill Lane and builds four houses for local people “in need, hardship and distress” on part of it. She stated a preference for “families”, unlike all other benefactors of almshouses in Newbury.
- 1929 Dr Wynter bought the derelict former Raymonds Almshouses in Argyll Rd, modernizing them with recovered 18th century fixtures including shutters from Eton College.
- 1943 German bombs destroy New Court almshouses, later rebuilt as Fair Close social housing and day centre.
- 1951 **Kimbers Almshouses** built in Kennet Rd., to replace those in Cheap Street that were then demolished.
- 1956 Hunt’s Almshouses replaced with three bungalows in **St Davids Rd** and West Mills property sold as a private house.
- 1962 Lord Astor of Hever donates money to enable Essex Wynter Trust build bungalows as almshouses in Hampton Rd.
- 1970s Two pairs of bungalows built in gardens of Upper Raymonds Almshouses, off Derby Rd. St Mary’s Hill Almshouses demolished soon afterwards.
- 1987 Land owned by Newbury Church & Almshouse Charity off Fifth Road (**Harvest Green**) sold for development on condition that a block of 12 new almshouses in built on part of it.
- 2013 Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke decides to apply for government funds to redevelop its site in Mill Lane.
- 2015 Planning consent given to build three blocks (16 flats) on whole Mill Lane site. Greenham Common Trust (GCT) awards grant of £125k, subject to matched funding from local sources.

Government's Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) awards £420k to The Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke to build 12 additional almshouse units.

- 2016 Contract to build Mabel Luke Place awarded to Feltham Construction Ltd. Mill Lane dwellings demolished. Charity's trustees form Mabel Luke Trustee Ltd., become its directors and Charity Commission certifies the Company as sole Trustee of the Charity.
- 2017 Jan. HCA approves Mabel Luke application to become a Registered Provider of Social Housing, enabling West Berkshire Council to confirm its grant of £238k and securing GCT's grant. HCA grants a further £140k to replace the four demolished almshouses.
- 2018 Mabel Luke Place due completion.