

Christ's Hospital of Abingdon (CHoA)– Review – March 2026

Christ's Hospital of Abingdon is the oldest of Oxfordshire's Charities (Registered No. 205112) and dates back to 1553.

CHoA provide assistance to the people of Abingdon through:

- i) The provision of Almshouses
- ii) Support to those referred to the Charity by professionals and care agencies.
- iii) Educational support to the pupils and schools of Abingdon-on-Thames
- iv) Support to local organisations who benefit the people of Abingdon.

CHoA has thirty two almshouses. Thirty one Almshouses are for the occupation of residents of Abingdon-on-Thames (and Oxfordshire in the case of the eight Almshouses at Tomkins). One of the Charity's Almshouses is used as its Head Office. Residents of the Almshouses are provided with self-contained accommodation and they pay a weekly maintenance contribution to the Charity towards the maintenance and upkeep of the property. The Charity also provides residents with use of a washing machine and each Almshouse has a cooker or hob and oven and a fridge freezer. Heating, electric and water are supplied at no cost. Residents who are eligible also benefit from the Charity concessionary TV licence.

Grants are given to primary, secondary and pre-schools in the town of Abingdon-on-Thames supporting pupil assessments and much needed items such as laptops and play equipment. Grants are also provided to organisations that benefit the people of Abingdon. CHoA also provide household items like washing machines and beds to low income families in need, who are referred to the Charity by suitable professionals such as a Health Visitor, Social Worker, Doctor or organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau. CHoA is unable to deal directly with grant applicants.

The Charity also owns and maintains Albert Park, a private Grade II listed Victorian Park situated near the centre of Abingdon-on-Thames for public use. The Charity also own the immediate surrounding roads, pavements, and verges on Park Road and Park Crescent. Albert Park contains a workstation which is the base for the Park Keeper and any Park Contractors, employed by CHoA. There are also five garages situated next to the workstation for any park maintenance equipment.

The Abingdon Bowling Club is situated within the Park and is responsible for all of the costs relating to the building leased from CHoA, as well as the maintenance of the bowling green.

During the accounting year 1st January 2025 to 31st December 2025 approximately £127,000 was spent on costs relating to Albert Park and the surrounding roads. This cost also includes a portion of the Park Keeper's salary.

Total donations received towards expenses for 2025 total £4,100 and this was received with thanks from Abingdon Town Council. CHoA is extremely grateful for this donation as the costs to maintain the Park have been subject to substantial increases over the last few years.

As in previous years, there have been odd instances of vandalism in Albert Park. High temperatures followed by a very cold and wet winter has also caused damage to the park grass and trees. The Park Keeper performs any in-house repairs to damaged railings, fencing, benches and bins. Damage to trees and any replacement trees are dealt with by a contractor who is familiar with the procedures for a Grade II listed park.

CHoA receive complaints about litter and dog fouling each year. However, we feel that with the Park Keeper in the Park each weekday and with signs already in place regarding both of these things, there is little more we can do other than enforcing dogs are kept on a lead. All of the Albert Park expenses must be very carefully justified, and we are of the opinion that more guidance or prohibitive signs would not make a difference to those who do not act responsibly.

Despite these issues, we feel that the Park is much loved. It is well used by the townsfolk of Abingdon-on-Thames and it is a wonderful resource for the public's well-being. We will continue to maintain the Park to the best of our ability. However, we would still be willing to discuss Abingdon Town Council taking over control of Albert Park and the surrounding roads, pavements, and verges, should they wished to do so.

Mrs Andrea Acott
Clerk to the Governors