



## BHS Trust Fund News

Here's the first of our planned twice yearly news update about our fund

Well, it's now nearly 18 months since BHS closed its doors to the public for the very last time and a lot has happened since then both for our former colleagues and the Trust Fund, so we hope you enjoy reading about some of these activities.



## CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

### New CIO Status/Changes to Fund

As you may be aware, the Trust Fund was set up by Bhs some 66 years ago and our primary objectives have not been changed since then. With changing legislation and the demise of BHS, we've taken the opportunity to move our Fund into a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) status. Whilst the Trust Fund had full charitable status before, the CIO gives our Fund a recognised legal structure approved by the Charities Act 2011. On the website we have attached for your information a copy of the CIO status and details of the new and existing Trustees along with the new Fund Secretary and Administrator. As you may be aware, Helene Hamer took the opportunity to stand down as Fund Secretary last May but we're delighted that she's still very much involved with the Fund both as a Trustee and mentoring the new Fund members. We'd like to thank Helene for all her hard work for the Fund over the past 14 years and look forward to her continued support in the future.

### Applications June 2016 to May 2017

We wanted to share with you what the Fund has been up to over the last financial year ending May 2017. We received 62 applications to the Fund over the 12 month period compared with 67 applications in the previous year. Of the 62 applications received, 31 grants were awarded and other forms of support and guidance were offered to many of the remaining applicants.

The primary reasons for grants being awarded were:

- Financial hardship support
- Salary short fall for a period of time to help support individuals back to work
- Short Breaks for individuals/families facing difficult circumstances – these are in addition to the Annual Holiday offered
- Maintenance / repairs to home
- Help towards funeral costs

Our biggest challenge going forward is ensuring that all ex-employees and pensioners are aware of the Fund and how it can help - something we're focussing on this year.

If you are aware of anyone who worked for BHS and is struggling financially please encourage them to contact the Fund, as we may be able to help them. Remember ..... ***No one should suffer in silence***



### **Christmas Application 2017**

During Christmas, we supported 47 individuals by way of Food Vouchers or Hampers to help them make their Christmas a little easier, with all of them having experienced a difficult year, often facing severe hardship.

### **Outside Agency Support**

As well as supporting our former BHS colleagues, we work with a number of charitable organisations who can also help and support individuals when faced with difficult times-the main ones we're in regular contact with are:

Age UK	Wide ranging issues supporting the elderly, but also benefit claims and carer support
Step Change	Debt management to assist in managing debt problems with creditors
Retail Trust	Offers financial support/advice for those working in retailing, past & present. Also offers Counselling support & many other services to those in need.
Children's Trust	Support for children includes grants for school uniforms

Remember you can call the Fund and we may be able to offer support ourselves and/or put you in contact with some of these organisations who could also support you.

### **Future Plans for our News update**

We hope you've enjoyed getting to know what's been happening with the Fund over what can only be described as a very challenging time for our former colleagues and pensioners of BHS. We plan to post this news update on our website twice a year. If anyone would like a personal copy of this newsletter please provide us with your email address and we will ensure we email you a copy each time one is produced.

### **Our contact details are as follows**

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