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OUR PURPOSE

Vincent House in Notting Hill, London, is owned by Vincent Housing Association (VHA). Originally registered under the Industrial & Provident Societies Acts, following the Co-operatives and Community Benefit Societies Act passed in 2014, VHA is now known as a Registered Society and is regulated by the FCA (Financial Conduct Authority).

Run by a Committee of Management, we aim to be financially, socially and environmentally responsible. As a registered society we have just over 80 members who hold shares in VHA. We have a total of 23,400 shares with a nominal value of £1; no member can hold more than 1,000. After paying members a small annual dividend, we re-invest any surplus in Vincent House or use it to help other charitable/social organisations working with homelessness and its effects.

Providing good value residential accommodation at Vincent House is our primary activity. Many of our employees live in at Vincent House and we are committed to treating them fairly and developing them through training and support. We also own two other properties, Carlisle House and Hope House, which are leased on benevolent terms to charities providing accommodation & services to vulnerable and homeless individuals.

OUR HISTORY



Vincent House was built in the late 1930s. One of its founders, Alice Roughton, was previously involved with Brabazon House and Hopkinson House, two residences for women in Westminster which opened in 1901 and 1902 respectively. Alice's grandmother, Evelyn Hopkinson, was instrumental in the development of both and, inspired by what Evelyn achieved, Alice was determined to develop a new residential club for both men and women. She found the perfect site in three badly dilapidated houses on the corner of Pembroke Gardens and Square. With support from Brabazon House Limited, Vincent House Limited (VHL) was formed and it set about raising the money to demolish the old properties and develop the 160 room residence through the sale of shares and loan finance. The name, Vincent House, came from Vincent Square close to where Brabazon and Hopkinson Houses* were located. (*Both were eventually sold to Westminster Council)

Vincent House opened its doors to its first residents in March 1940. Many were government personnel working on efforts to win the Second World War. In the decades following, the House continued to attract civil servants as well as other professional people. Alice was Chairman of the company; she was ably assisted by fellow Board members and strong managing directors, firstly Henrietta Carlisle and, from 1955, Evelyn Fenwick.

In the early 60s, the success of Vincent House attracted the attention of private investors and, in order to protect it for its original purpose, Vincent Housing Association (VHA) was formed. A friendly take-over was formalised in 1965. Originally registered under the Industrial & Provident Societies Acts, following the Co-operatives and Community Benefit Societies Act passed in 2014, VHA is now known as a Registered Society and is regulated by the FCA (Financial Conduct Authority).

It continues to operate on the same principles as the original founders' and offers good value serviced accommodation to a wide range of individuals, many of whom are coming to live in London from Europe or further afield.

COMMITTEE of MANAGEMENT

The Committee oversees the business of the Association and meets around five times a year. It is also supported by a series of sub-committees that focus on specific issues such as finance, property, catering and strategy. The Committee's main duty is to ensure VHA achieves its mission through its activities and is also meeting its commitment to being financially, socially and environmentally responsible. It also holds an annual meeting attended by its members.

Many members of VHA's current Committee have family links with either the original founders of Vincent House or those involved in the friendly take-over in 1965. In recent years newer members of the Committee have not had a direct family link but have been known by those already on the Committee and invited to join because of the skills and experience they could add.

RORY SILKIN (CHAIRMAN) became the Association's fourth Chairman in 2014. He joined the Committee in 1972 following the death of his grandfather Lewis who was a key figure in setting up Vincent Housing Association and was its first Chairman. Both Lewis and Rory's father, John Silkin, were prominent Labour MPs and his mother, Rosamond John, was a renowned stage and screen actress. Rory studied law and worked in private practice as a solicitor going on to be Assistant Director in the legal department of Royal Mail before retiring. He now works as a legal consultant and is active in various local charities as well as being a local councillor. He lives in Staplehurst, Kent with his wife Mary Shaw (also a Committee Member) and has two daughters, Anna and Natasha who are both shareholders.



JENNY RUGMAN (TREASURER) was co-opted onto the Committee late 2014 and officially elected as a Committee Member and also Treasurer at the AGM in April 2015. Jenny is a Chartered Accountant and has held senior finance roles at HSBC, Deutsche Bank, Cable & Wireless and most recently Willis Group, a Global Insurance Broker where she led a major transformation project. Jenny lives in the New Forest with her partner Roger.



SARA IVES (SECRETARY) joined the Committee in 1993 and succeeded her father Tommy as Secretary to the Association following his death in 1996, a role she still holds. She has a background in media relations and co-ordinated the marketing of Vincent House and development projects for the Association in the past. In addition to being Secretary, she is responsible for relations with the Association's social partners and its heritage activities.



JULIA BINDMAN was elected to the Committee in March 2012 following eighteen months as a co-opted member. She has been a friend of the Roughton family for many years and was nominated by Geoffrey and Rosamond Roughton. She is a Strategy consultant and in the past has worked for Shell and PwC. She also has experience of working with the charitable sector including Anti-Slavery International and has a keen interest in VHA's mission to help those affected by homelessness.



PENNY BOREHAM SABAN was co-opted in 2011 and elected to the Committee in March 2012. Grand-daughter of one of the original board members of Vincent House Limited, Douglas Clarke, her mother Alison Boreham served on the Committee for many years. Her sister, Jane Rae, is also a current member. Penny is a freelance radio producer. She set up the 'Soundaffects' charity using audio to link primary school children in the UK with their peers in Africa and Sri Lanka. She is a Trustee of the Prison Phoenix Trust which encourages prisoners in the development of their spiritual welfare, through the practices of meditation and yoga, working with silence and the breath.



SPENCER CARROLL is a Director of Lighthouse Surveyors and was first introduced to us by one of clients, our charitable partner, Langley House Trust. Spencer led the survey and project management of the significant improvements to Vincent House in 2014/15. He has over 20 years' experience as a chartered Building Surveyor and the Committee were keen to add his valued skills when he joined in 2019.



MIKE FARRAR was co-opted to the Committee in January 2014 and formally elected at the AGM in April 2015. He stepped down from his role as Chief Executive of the NHS Confederation in late 2013 to become an independent management consultant working within the health sector. As well as being a director of Mike Farrar Consulting Limited, he is on the Boards of several organisations including York Health Economics Consortium; Physical Activity @ Work; Huddersfield Community Sporting Trust. Mike lives in Huddersfield with his partner Rosamond Roughton and their two daughters.



FI MCLACHLAN was co-opted in 2011 and elected to the Committee in March 2012. She first became known to the Committee through Yeldall Christian Projects (where she was on the board for over 8 years) and her consultancy work for Stepping Stones Trust. In 2003 Fi facilitated a special meeting for the Committee to identify VHA's long term plans. Fi has immense experience of working with charities in a wide range of issues and was recently involved with setting up a food-bank in her local area of East Sussex. She originally trained as a social worker and gained experience in child protection and psychiatric support, before moving into the charity sector.



JANE RAE joined the Committee in 1993 following the death of her grandfather Douglas Clarke a year earlier. For many years she was on the Committee at the same time as her mother, Alison Boreham, until Alison's retirement in 2015. Jane's sister Penny Boreham Saban joined the Committee in 2012. Jane is married to Dougal Rae, a film and TV producer and they have three grown up children; she is also a partner in Fine Arts Travel which organises cultural tours overseas.



ASHLEY ROUGHTON was co-opted in 2011 and elected to the Committee in 2012. He has a long family connection to Vincent House. Two of its founders, Alice and Jack Roughton, were his grand-parents and father Geoffrey joined the Committee in 1972, going on to be Chairman of VHA for 23 years from 1991-2014. Ashley is a Barrister, a Professor of Law at Queen Mary's and has lectured in economics at City University. He has done Pro-bono work and is particularly interested in the impact of homelessness.



MARY SHAW has worked as a solicitor since the 1980's and, since joining the Committee in 1987, has often provided legal advice to VHA. She now specialises in Private Client Law and is Partner & Team Leader at Warners Solicitors, a top tier law firm based in Kent offers a wide range of legal services to its clients across the South East. Mary is married to Rory Silkin, the Association's current Chairman.

THE VINCENT HOUSE TEAM

Everyone who works at Vincent House is important to the smooth running of the House and we aim to be a fair employer that supports and develops all of its employees. We encourage a friendly yet professional approach whilst serving the needs of our residents. The majority of employees also live at the House. Some have worked at Vincent House for many years, whilst others choose to work at the House for a shorter period. Many originate from abroad and several of our younger employees are in London to study or improve their English, with quite a few combining their work with study, varying from business qualifications to language courses.



RICHARD TOMKINS, GENERAL MANAGER, originates from Nottingham. He first joined Vincent House in 1994, then spent a few years gaining experience elsewhere before returning in 1999 as Deputy General Manager. He was promoted to General Manager in 2005.

OUR PARTNERS

During the late 1990s, having paid off the loan arranged in 1965 to finance the take-over of Vincent House Limited, VHA was making sufficient surpluses to consider acquiring additional properties. The Committee was keen to do more to provide affordable accommodation to those in need and in 1998 it acquired a property in Yeading, Middlesex in partnership with a local charity, Yeldall Homeless Projects



(which later became Trinity Homeless Projects). The property was a supermarket which had lain empty for 3 years; as well as a considerable retail space it offered residential accommodation in three flats above. Yeldall was able to raise the finance to refurbish the shop and flats and VHA agreed a peppercorn rent for a ten year lease. The

lease has since been renewed twice and, Trinity, continues to run a highly successful shop selling recycled furniture offering employment and training in addition to providing accommodation for up to 8 individuals in the flats, who also receive mentoring and support.

In 1999 VHA agreed to acquire a property on behalf of Stepping Stones Trust (SST) to provide a home for ex-offenders. It took over two years to find a suitable property and in 2001 a house previously used as a bed & breakfast was acquired in South Croydon. A low-rent lease was agreed with SST to enable them to focus their resources on providing support and managing the scheme. In 2012 SST merged with Langley House Trust (LHT), a larger organisation providing similar services to ex-offenders. LHT is continuing the scheme at Hope House as part of what it calls the 'Dorado' project.

VHA has also agreed loans on favourable terms to facilitate charitable projects, most recently to The Art House in Sheffield, and made several donations (ranging from £1000 to £25,000) to organisations involved in working in the field of homelessness, including Shelter, The House of St Barnabas, Riverpoint, The Big Issue Foundation and many others. It has also deposited funds in Charity Bank which contributes to the Bank's lending portfolio.

vincenthousingassociation

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