

# VINCENT HOUSING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REVIEW 2013



## VINCENT HOUSING ASSOCIATION Limited

Registered as an Industrial & Provident Society, we aim to be financially, socially and environmentally responsible. We offer good value residential accommodation at VINCENT HOUSE in Notting Hill Gate, London, and we also own two other properties that we lease to charities providing accommodation and services to vulnerable and homeless individuals, VHA's activities are the responsibility of its Committee of Management and VINCENT HOUSE is managed by Richard Tomkins, General Manager.

For further information: [www.vincenthouselondon.com](http://www.vincenthouselondon.com)

## STATEMENT BY G W ROUGHTON (CHAIRMAN) AND COLLEAGUES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2012

AS PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, THURSDAY 21ST MARCH 2013

Vincent Housing Association's 48th Annual General Meeting took place on Thursday 21st March 2013 and, as has become usual, the Committee of Management was joined by several of VHA's shareholders as well as many other guests.

Geoffrey Roughton welcomed everyone and explained that, as shareholders had been sent a written financial review with the notice of the meeting, his statement would feature only the key financial highlights.

“ But before I do so, I would like to comment on Patrick Daly. Sadly he died here in January, but he has left us something quite wonderful. For those of you who didn't know Patrick, he originally came to Vincent House in 1995 and eventually became one of our night porters. But we discovered that his real love was for gardening. So when his health meant he could no longer work as night porter he took on our garden. Not the easiest man to deal with, he loved the garden and has made it into something even more magical than it was. (see page 13)

In the more detailed statement, I reported, among other things, that we had a good year with occupancy at around 95%. Our operating surplus was substantial and we were able to nearly double our expenditure on repairs and renewals. The new boilers are a splendid addition. Together with income from other sources, we returned a profit of £66K. So we remain in good shape financially and are reasonably optimistic, but there are some signs of an easing in the demand for the accommodation we provide.

Now, I am going to hand over first to our Strategic Development Director and Secretary, Sara Ives, to tell you more about developments in the Association. ”

Sara Ives: “ Last year I spoke about how we are a business with a social purpose. In other words we operate in a way that generates a surplus and then use that surplus towards meeting our objectives. These are, first, to provide good value accommodation at Vincent House, along with employment and training and, second, to invest in schemes that help individuals who are homeless or vulnerable to homelessness.

In the past I have mentioned our trinity of responsibilities. This means that not only do we set ourselves financial goals, but environmental and social goals too. To make these three responsibilities more engaging we refer to them internally as the three 'Ps' – prosperity, property and people.

Last year one of our shareholders challenged whether we were making best use of our resources. I thought it was a good question and it certainly generated much debate! In fact, ensuring that we use our resources not only sensibly but in a way that achieves social impact is a key part of my strategic role.

The first priority when using our financial resources is continued investment in the House to ensure it is sustainable and remains successful. When planning for the future it is of course essential that we reflect the needs of the people who live here. To help us know more about what those needs are, we recently commissioned an in depth research project with residents. This has been carried out in the past few weeks and the results are due to

be published in April (highlights of the report are featured on pages 10-11).

As well as investment in the House, we are also maintaining our programme of social investment. We hope to finalise a joint arrangement with Charity Bank to provide a loan to the new St Matthew's Centre in Sheffield. I first mentioned this last year – these things always take longer than expected to complete!

We also continue to work closely with our partners Trinity Homeless Projects and Langley House Trust who lease our properties, Carlisle House and Hope House respectively. Both projects are doing well in achieving their aims despite the current challenges facing charities, although they are yet to feel the full impact of benefit changes.

We are also in ongoing conversations with a number of organisations about developing new initiatives to help vulnerable people into affordable accommodation. What we can do by ourselves is, of course, limited but we hope to act as a catalyst to others through building partnerships. However, bringing ideas to fruition is extremely challenging in the current economic situation and particularly in London with its ever increasing property prices.

Earlier this year we hosted an enjoyable and successful evening at The Brigade in London Bridge, part of the Beyond Food Foundation, a social enterprise working with vulnerable people. The event was in honour of Malcolm Hayday, who retired as CEO of Charity Bank in Autumn 2012 and it was attended by representatives from a wide range of organisations (see page 12 for more).

Connecting with people is an important aspect of everything we do and as part of a programme of new communications activities we have recently set ourselves up on Twitter with the help of our new digital consultant Jeannie Shapiro. And in the next few months we will also be launching a community Facebook page, giving our website a whole new look and also creating content to go on YouTube.

Thank you. I will now hand back to Geoffrey. ”

**Geoffrey Roughton:** “ There are many things Sara is doing. I commented in my written report on a slight easing in demand. The plans for developing social media will keep us up to date and provide a framework to make sure that a wider group of people know about us.

We have been and are fortunate in having a strong Front of House Team under Carla Soares Hester's leadership. Their hard work has served us well for many years; indeed we might have taken them for granted. I was somewhat startled to discover that they are dealing with over 100 emails a week to do with people booking. They are managing a very loyal group of people - people who have stayed in Vincent House before or know about us already. This is our main franchise. It is self-generating; they tell others. The most persuasive promotional medium is “word of mouth”. Everyone who has stayed here is a potential ambassador for us. Indeed most of you in this room can be our ambassadors.

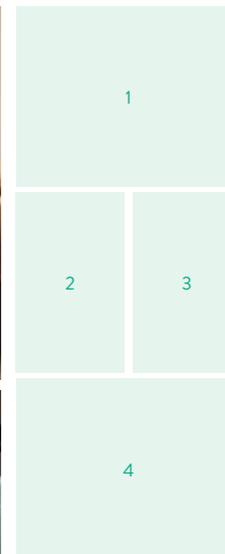
We just need to increase our reach by 2% or 3%. I think we are quite excited by using social media to do so; we are at the start of an interesting journey. Twitter, Facebook and YouTube await us. We are going to be more proactive and more active in putting ourselves about.

But more strategically I think Sara's comments demonstrate how we are becoming more focused in our other activities. So once again, on behalf of you all, thank you Sara.

I often comment on aspects of the House, but in the last couple of years, Richard Tomkins, the House's General Manager has done that. So I'm going to hand over to him now... ”

**Richard Tomkins** explained that, instead of him talking about what had happened at Vincent House in the past year, he had decided to present a short film of the highlights of 2012. Mostly recorded by members of the management team using an iPhone (!) the Vincent House production featured contributions from many of the employees. It was fun and engaging and was also an opportunity to involve many of those who work hard throughout the year to help the House remain so successful and who are also essential to its friendly and welcoming character (see pages 6 & 7 for further information).

**Geoffrey Roughton:** “ Congratulations, Richard. Congratulations to every one of our staff who took part. I am overwhelmed by a sense of pride; pride in Vincent House and in our staff. They are a decent, friendly group of people for many of whom this is their home. Richard may have been too modest to disclose that some of the videos you saw were filmed by his son, Shawn. Thank you very much Shawn. I may add that Shawn is the great grandson of Tommy Ives, one of the key founders in creating Vincent Housing Association. So the family traditions that have characterised our management continue. ”



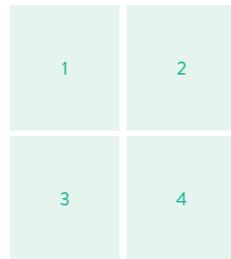
- 1: Shareholders listen to Sara Ives' presentation
- 2: Geoffrey Roughton, Chairman
- 3: Watching the Vincent House 2012 film
- 4: The Jubilee celebrations featured in the film

## THE YEAR AT VINCENT HOUSE

At this year's AGM, Richard Tomkins, GENERAL MANAGER, used a novel approach for his report to the meeting and presented a short film. Combining a mix of photographs and video, the film told the story of the past year at Vincent House focussing on the three 'P's of PROSPERITY (*Financial Responsibility*) PROPERTY (*Environmental responsibility*) & PEOPLE (*Social Responsibility*) – plus a fourth 'P', PARTIES!

The film started with the key FINANCIAL results for the year to 30 September 2012 and a summary of the main PROPERTY improvements, presented by Emilia Malatincova (*Senior Receptionist/Duty Manager*), Valentina Paroni (*Receptionist*), Debra Loynton (*Administration Manager*), Rodrigo Schneider (*Maintenance Supervisor/Duty Manager*) and Lucy Krpelanova (*Receptionist*).

This was followed by a section introduced by Shawn Tomkins (*son of General Manager, Richard Tomkins*) who explained that Vincent House is all about the PEOPLE who live and work there.



- 1: The Vincent House team
- 2: Our friendly receptionists: Emilia, Lucy and Valentina (from left to right)
- 3: Rodrigo Schneider, Maintenance Supervisor
- 4: Shawn Tomkins, The Boss's son!

Firstly the PEOPLE who WORK at Vincent House, many of whom also LIVE there.

We asked them four questions and featured the following in the final version:

### 1. Where are you from?

Viktoria Polakova, **Slovakia**; Dorothy Pickering, **England**; Rahel Michael, **Eritrea**; Mads Ladekarl, **Denmark**; Aldine Clair Rocha, **Brazil**; Duen Watson, **Thailand**; Rocio Gallera Lopez, **Spain**; and Marta Soares, **Brazil**.

### 2. What is your job?

Valentina Paroni, **receptionist**; Viktoria Polakova, **dining room supervisor**; Vicky Abejero, **deputy housekeeper**; Daniel Binelli de Campos, **maintenance assistant**; Asbjorn Kloppenborg, **dining room assistant**; Rocio Gallera Lopez, **kitchen assistant**; Klaudia Rozgonyiova, **housekeeping assistant**; Marta Soares, **kitchen assistant**.

### 3. What do you most like about London?

Valentina Paroni, **pubs**; Ijlil Khurtsbayar, **fish & chips**; Dominik Kardac, **architecture & history**; Mads Ladekarl, **pubs**; Aldine Clair Rocha, **parks**; Asbjorn Kloppenborg, **parks**; Rocio Gallera Lopez **nightclubs**; Daniel Binelli de Campos, **nightlife**.

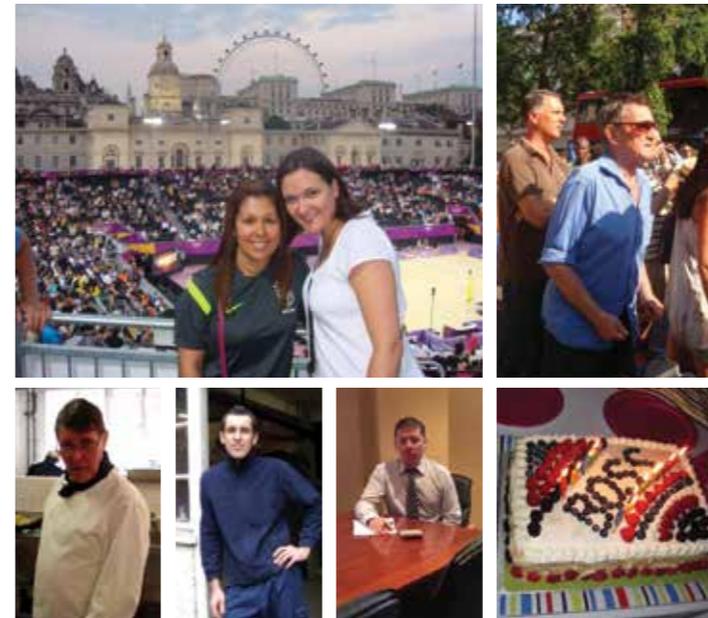
### 4. What do you most dislike?

Viktoria Polakova, **the weather**; Rahel Michael, **the weather**; Mads Ladekarl, **too many cars**; Asbjorn Kloppenborg, **all the people in London**; Petrisha Krpelanova, **the rain**; Rocio Gallera Lopez, **the weather**; Vicky Abejero, **when its freezing cold!**

The film then went on to feature information about Vincent House's RESIDENTS.

Carla Soares Hester, Front of House Manager, told us that "occupancy was higher at 95%. We handled over 500 check ins & departures and had around 200 different residents."

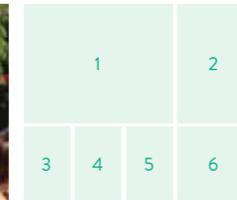
Cleuse Margon, housekeeping assistant, explained that we had residents from over 30 different countries including Cyprus, Spain, Italy, Brazil, Taiwan, Trinidad & Tobago, Israel, Czech Republic, Poland & Kazakhstan. Martin O'Shea, assistant chef, said that many of these are students, although in reality we have an equal mix of residents who work and study. Dominik Kardac from maintenance reported that 45 residents had lived at Vincent House for at least 12 months. Of these, five have been here for over 5 years, four over 10, three for over 20 and four for more than 30 years.



The fourth 'P', PARTIES, highlighted the importance of having fun whether you are living or working at VINCENT HOUSE.

It was illustrated by a series of photographs from events throughout the year including the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, Sunday 3rd June, the London 2012 torch relay (featuring a photo of the late Patrick Daly) and the Olympics in July & August, the residents' Christmas party in December and, not forgetting the Boss's birthday in October.

On the subject of the Boss, Richard Tomkins concluded by saying: "that was pretty much our year and I am pleased to say another very successful one. Vincent House remains a great place to live and a great place to work."



- 1: Carla and Emilia in the thick of the Olympic action in 2012
- 2: Patrick Daly watches the Olympic Torch Relay
- 3: Martin O'Shea
- 4: Dominik Kardac
- 5: Richard Tomkins, General Manager Vincent House - aka The Boss!
- 6: The Boss's birthday cake!

# THE 2013 AGM LUNCH IN PICTURES...



	1	2	3		
4	5	8	9	10	11
6	7	12	13	14	15

**1-7:** Guests enjoying the conversation and aperitifs in the lounge following the meeting.

1. Andrew Lerigo (LHT), Graham Duncan (St Matthews, Sheffield & Ashley Horsey, Commonweal Housing)
2. Arthur Tomkins, Sylvia Ives, Estela Tomkins, Martin Hopkins & Sheila Tomkins
3. Guests Mingling After The Meeting
4. Guests Paul Mander (Harefield Parochial Charities) & Ron Allen (Shareholder)
5. Kitty Wiles (Shareholder), Lyn Hopkins (Father of Vincent House) & Doreen Henry (The Victoria League)
6. Robert Wiles (General Manager Vincent House 1987 - 2004 and Shareholder) & Geoffrey Roughton (Chairman)
7. Rory Silkin (Committee Member), Stuart Barnsdall (PKF) & Trevor Scammell (Guest)

**8-11:** Members of the Management Committee.

8. Julia Bindman
9. Mary Shaw
10. Rory Silkin
11. Penny Boreham Saban & Jane Rae on either side of their Aunt, Shareholder, Bridget Clarke

**12-14:** Members of the Vincent House Management Team.

12. Debra Loynton
13. Emilia Malatincova
14. Richard Tomkins

**15:** The Dining Room.

15. The Dining Room in full flow



16	19	20	21	22	23	24
17	25	26	27	28	29	30
18	32	33	34	35	36	37

**16-18:** The Dining Room (continued).

16. The Dining Room in full flow
17. Gill Smedley (Shareholder) thanks the dining room & kitchen team after a delicious lunch
18. The Dining Room Team

**19-37:** Shareholders & Guests enjoying the occasion.

19. Shareholder - Arthur Tomkins
20. Shareholder - Bridget Clarke
21. Shareholder - George Gray Robins
22. Shareholder - Gill Smedley
23. Guest - Dominic Murphy (The Learning Journey)
24. Guest - Doreen Henry (The Victoria League)
25. Guest - Gemma Parkinson (Dodd Lewis Solicitors)
26. Guest - Graham Duncan (St Marys & St Matthews, Sheffield)
27. Guest - Jeannie Shapiro (Digital Consultant, Think Jeannie)
28. Guest - Jo Gideon (The Knowledge Hive)

**29.** Guest - Lyn Hopkins (Father of Vincent House and The Victoria League)

30. Guest - Paul Mitchell (Trinity Homeless Projects)
31. Shareholder - James Rose
32. Robert Wiles (General Manager Vincent House 1987-2004 and Shareholder)
33. Shareholder - Robin Cunnah
34. Shareholder - Roger Fox
35. Rosemary Summers (Committee Member 1963-2007 and Shareholder)
36. Shareholder - Sheila Tomkins
37. Shareholder - Sylvia Ives

## WHAT OUR RESIDENTS THINK ABOUT US

It is essential that our future plans reflect the needs of the people who live at Vincent House, so, as reported by Sara Ives at the AGM (*see page 3*), we decided to find out what our residents think about us.

Accordingly, we commissioned Mark Yeadon of Public Perspectives to undertake some research during the early part of 2013. A self-completion postal survey was sent to 93 residents. 52 responded and 15 of these also took part in follow-up in-depth interviews.

The main aims of the research were to identify the reasons for living at Vincent House and understand the experience of living at Vincent House, including the importance of services and facilities and the personal and financial benefits of living at Vincent House.

We also wanted to identify the potential to continue residing at Vincent House and the reasons for moving on; understand how Vincent House is perceived by residents and who they think Vincent House is suitable for; and, finally, identify the awareness and value placed on the wider charitable activities of Vincent Housing Association.

The main findings were:

- ◆ Living at Vincent House provides **POSITIVE BENEFITS** for residents and many are happy to recommend it

- ◆ Residents choose to live at Vincent House because it is **WELL LOCATED**, **SAFE** and **HASSLE FREE** accommodation where you can **SOCIALISE** and make **NEW FRIENDS**
- ◆ Vincent House has the right offer for its residents and there is little demand for major or fundamental changes; there is, however, scope to enhance the resident experience through relatively minor **IMPROVEMENTS**
- ◆ The most commonly and strongly mentioned areas for change were improving the speed and reliability of the **INTERNET**, extending **BREAKFAST** and **DINNER** times and improving the variety and healthiness of **FOOD**, and updating the rooms and bathrooms

Overall the research showed us that Vincent House has a great deal to offer and we can be confident that, if we respond to the suggested improvements, it will continue to be attractive and enjoy the high levels of occupancy we have become used to in recent years.

Whilst we need to do some more detailed analysis of our occupancy data, both the research and our observations indicate a trend towards shorter term stays. We are doing further work on this and what it means to our business. The results will feature in our report to the AGM in 2014 and in next year's Review.

Other key points from the research included:

- ◆ Most residents found out about Vincent House through word of mouth
- ◆ Work or education are the main drivers for most people moving to London and Vincent House
- ◆ Renting or student accommodation were considered as alternatives, but were considered expensive or troublesome and lacking in comparable services or facilities
- ◆ All the existing services and facilities were considered important
- ◆ Living at Vincent House is positive and beneficial to residents, helping them settle in London and make new friends. It also makes life simpler, allowing residents more time to do the things they want
- ◆ The all-inclusive rate is an important feature of living at Vincent House, while Vincent House is affordable and value for money
- ◆ The majority of residents have lived at Vincent House for less than a year and plan to stay for under a year longer
- ◆ Vincent House was the first choice for short term accommodation for most residents
- ◆ Most residents see Vincent House as 'practical', 'friendly' and 'safe'.



1

1: Residents enjoying one of our parties

2

2: Residents relaxing at an event in the lounge

## SOCIAL GATHERINGS AND FAREWELL TO AN OLD FRIEND

We like to party as much as we can at Vincent House and indeed some of the events from the past 12 months featured in the film presented at the AGM in March 2013 (see pages 6 & 7). Other recent events included a special party in honour of Malcolm Hayday, who stepped down as Chief Executive of Charity Bank last year, and the Summer 2013 garden party for residents.

**MALCOLM HAYDAY**, was the inspiration and the founding Chief Executive for Charity Bank, which was formed in 2002. He is one of the pioneers of social finance and had joined the Charities Aid Foundation in 1993 to explore the possibility of loan finance as a new resource for the charity sector. In 1995 he started Investors in Society, a successful pilot loan fund, before overseeing its formal incorporation as Charity Bank in 2002.

Since leaving Charity Bank, Malcolm has continued to work in the social finance field as a member of the management team of the Institute for Social Banking and is developing new ideas in the sector.

The party for Malcolm was held on a very snowy evening in January at Brigade, an exciting venue at The Fire Station near London Bridge. Brigade is home to the Beyond Food Foundation, a social enterprise founded by chef Simon Boyle offering catering apprenticeships to vulnerable people. Despite the weather most of the guests made it to the party and they all enjoyed some delicious wines and a variety of tasty canapés prepared by the apprentice chefs in the Brigade kitchen.

CHARITY BANK was launched at a ceremony at 10 Downing Street hosted by Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time. It was the only bank authorised by the Financial Services Authority to be set up to lend depositors' money solely to charities, social enterprises and community organisations. Since it started with assets of around £6million, the Bank has grown to over £100 million and has agreed to lend in excess of £175million to more than 1,000 charities that support people and communities across the UK.

Recent regulatory changes mean that Charity Bank has had to cease to be a charity in order to allow it to grow and meet the increasing demands for its services. It remains committed, however, to its original purpose and its mission has been enshrined in its amended articles of association. The Bank is now being taken forward by Malcolm Hayday's successor Patrick Crawford. VHA is retaining its deposit with the Bank and is also working closely on a joint initiative to provide loan finance for an innovative community scheme at St Matthews in Sheffield.



1	4
2	3

1: Malcolm Hayday enjoying the evening  
 2: Malcolm Hayday addressing the guests  
 3: An apprentice chef preparing canapés  
 4: The kitchen at Brigade

**THE 2013 SUMMER PARTY FOR RESIDENTS** was held in the garden on 19th July. It was a great success and for once the weather was ideal – a beautifully balmy evening during the heatwave that London was enjoying at the time, although there was a welcome cooling breeze.

Marcio Alves, a Brazilian chef, was hired to barbecue a selection of appetising meats including seasoned steaks, kebabs and piquant sausages. Vincent House's kitchen team provided an array of salads and delicious desserts. Lively music was provided by The Roots Acoustic Trio.



1	4		
2	3	5	6

1: Guests enjoy conversation and good company  
 2: Garden party in full swing  
 3: Time to cut more bread!  
 4: The buffet table groans under the weight of some sumptuous food  
 5: Patrick Thomas Daly remembered  
 6: Patrick, the Contented Gardener

**ON A DIFFERENT NOTE...** the House said farewell to one of its familiar faces earlier in 2013 with the sad death of Patrick Daly who had worked at the House since 1995. Patrick was born in 1944 and had lived and worked in Nottingham most of his life before moving to London to join the maintenance team at Vincent House. He subsequently became night porter, a post he held for several years before his health led to a change of roles and he took on responsibility for the House's garden.

Despite his ill health, his death was unexpected and a shock for everyone at the House who knew him, particularly the colleagues who had worked with him for the many years he had been at the House. As well as his love of gardening he enjoyed watching cricket, horse racing and rugby union and spending time with his family including sisters Lydia and Vicky and brother Michael.

Patrick enjoyed living and working at Vincent House, especially since becoming its gardener in recent years, and it seemed appropriate to acquire a distinctive garden bench inscribed with his name in his memory.



## SUPPORTING THE WORK OF OUR PARTNERS AT...

**CARLISLE HOUSE** - our property in Yeading, Middlesex, which is leased to TRINITY HOMELESS PROJECTS.

The flats above the shop at Carlisle House accommodated 12 vulnerable adults with two moving on into independent housing. During the year ten secured employment through Trinity's employment coaching including one who started their own business.

In the past year 52 individuals suffering the effects of homelessness and exclusion received support through voluntary working in the shops that Trinity operates both at Carlisle House in Yeading and also one in Uxbridge. Five trainees were employed on part-time and full time contracts, three of which were Trinity residents.

All received training including Manual Handling, Customer Service and regular job coaching sessions which prepared them for applying for other posts as well as making them aware of employment opportunities available to them.

Trinity provided 250 tonnes of re-used furniture and electrical goods to those in need, collecting items from over 2,000 households in West London during this period it also generated a turnover of 250k which went towards helping Trinity provide support services to homeless people in West London.

**For further information about Trinity visit:**  
[www.trinityhomelessprojects.org.uk](http://www.trinityhomelessprojects.org.uk)

**HOPE HOUSE** - our property in South Croydon, which is leased to LANGLEY HOUSE TRUST (LHT).

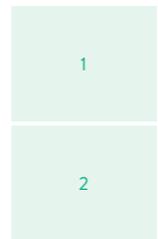
The merger of Stepping Stones Trust with LHT means HOPE HOUSE is now part of the STEPPING STONES PROJECT within LHT, which is one of the country's largest organisations working with ex-offenders.

LHT's mission is to help people lead crime free lives and the aim of its work at HOPE HOUSE is to help the residents, most of whom go there at the end of their prison term, adjust and move on by finding work and eventually their own accommodation.

Following the merger in early 2012 LHT decided to upgrade the bedrooms at the house, which temporarily reduced the number of residents; however, the House has been accommodating up to 7 people since Spring 2013.

Plans to adapt part of the ground floor to provide an additional bedroom suitable for a disabled resident as well as update the kitchen and improve staff facilities are in progress and it is hoped these will be completed by early 2014.

**For further information about LHT visit:**  
[www.langleyhousetrust.org](http://www.langleyhousetrust.org)



1: Carlisle House

2: Hope House



## A CARNIVAL NOTE TO END ON

The Notting Hill Carnival attracts around one million people to the area every August Bank Holiday weekend. The two day event which was first held as an outdoor street festival in 1966, is great fun, but sometimes you just need to take a break from the partying. This year, it seems the front wall of Vincent House provided the perfect perch to check one's phone and take a sip from an appropriately colourful and exotic drink!



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