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Introduction



General

1. Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee of Hammersmith United Charities. It is an exciting time to be joining the charity. Over the past year, the Charity has made many changes, some very painful, but is now on the brink of becoming a larger housing provider and a major grant maker. It has attracted a good deal of positive attention from the local community and has major aspirations to increase the work it does on all fronts.
2. Housing has been a core activity for many decades and is based on the inherited legacy of almshouses operating in the old metropolitan parish of Hammersmith dating to the 18th century. Currently, HUC operates two almshouses providing sheltered accommodation and a total of 68 flats. Major refurbishment work has occurred in the past four years and the service provided by the Charity is much admired.
3. Work should shortly start on building 24 further flats in a new development for which HUC has applied to the HCA for funding.

Context for Recruitment

4. Although substantial progress has been made over the past four years, the trustees are conscious that they have never had the benefit of a colleague with the strategic vision and operational experience of affordable housing that the charity has long needed. Through the development that is imminent, the charity is on the brink of achieving financial sustainability for its housing operations even at the substantially higher level of service that it offers its residents compared to the public sector and other not for profit operators.
5. The board is conscious that the performance of its housing and its former frail care operations, although excellent at the point of delivery, has only been possible as a result of extensive and extended, large scale subsidies from endowment income and capital. The current changes have largely addressed this issue, but trustees are also aware that the Charity's housing operations have to be both relevant and responsive to both local needs and national policies. The Charity currently does not have the knowledge it needs to ensure this is the case.
6. Trustees are also aware that if the housing operation of HUC is to remain excellent and self sustaining, some further expansion of provision might be both desirable and necessary. A key question they would seek to ask their new colleague is if and how this might be achieved.

Recruitment Process

7. The recruitment is a two way process. Acting as a trustee of a charity, particularly one with ambitious goals, substantial resources and in the middle of a process of development is a rewarding but demanding role. We hope through the process to provide all the information you need to allow you to decide if this is something to which you wish to give your energy, experience and effort.
8. A great strength of the current trustee team has been its ability to work together to address the charity's major, inherited issues and steer it towards what proves to be an exciting future. The ability to work with colleagues is therefore a key issue and the process of recruitment will, we hope, permit both applicant and existing trustees to bring this about.
9. This pack provides the basic data for applicants. If you are interested in applying but want further information, HUC's Clerk (the chief executive) would be delighted to provide it or brief you in person. We do ask that you fill in a brief form and also provide a CV. All applications will be reviewed and applicants will be invited to visit the Charity to meet, interview and be interviewed by the Clerk and a trustee.

JOB DESCRIPTION



Title: Housing Trustee, Hammersmith United Charities

Organisational Purpose: To find and support those in need, undergoing hardship, suffering or distressed within the Charity's area of benefit through provision of supported housing and general grant making and such other activities as shall from time to time be decided by the trustees.

Job Purpose: To provide the board with strategic and operational advice on current and future housing operations of Hammersmith United Charities

Background:

A brief history of the charity is attached at Annex A.

Over the past three years, work is nearing completion which has:

- a. Addressed a structural deficit of approximately £350K, the cost of operating its frail elderly unit.
- b. Initiated and is about to commence a 30% increase in sheltered housing provision.
- c. Reorganised the charity's investment portfolio and investment properties to make best use of those assets.
- d. Completed a full strategic review and an in depth study of local social exclusion, identifying priorities.
- e. Developed a coherent and phased plan to increase significantly the benefit to the charity's intended beneficiary groups from its substantial assets.

The trustee responsible for advising on housing matters is intended to play a pivotal role in developing the charity's core activity, the provision of housing.

Key Activities:

- To provide advice on and oversight of all aspects of the housing operation and in particular an informed view on:
 - The relevance of the charity's work in housing.
 - Standards.
 - Financial viability.

- Opportunities relevant to the charity's plans and capacity.
- To be a member of the housing committee, attending some three meetings per year in addition to attending quarterly full trustees' meetings.
- To advise the board on housing strategy and help to develop plans to achieve that strategy.

Person Specification:

Essential:

- In depth knowledge and experience of affordable housing, preferably at senior management or board level.
- Knowledge of housing operations, financing, funding, providers and statutory frameworks.
- Experience of committee work
- Experience of strategic development and change.

Desirable:

- Housing management qualification
- Specific knowledge of housing finance or housing operations
- Experience of board working and working with a chief executive officer in an oversight role
- Knowledge of housing funding streams
- Experience of strategic planning process
- Knowledge of Hammersmith

This job description does not form part of the employment contract and may vary from time to time. Changes will usually take place after some consultation with the post holder and in line with performance review targets and procedures outlined by the post holder and their manager.

SHORT HISTORY OF HUC



In 1618, Dr Thomas Edwards gave £100 - which, according to the Bank of England, is worth about £10,000 in today's money - to the poor of Fulham to buy them lands. Two years later, in 1620, Bishop John King, the then Bishop of London (after whom the main street in Hammersmith is named) donated £20 for a similar purpose. These two sums were added together and Dr. Edwards King's Fulham Charity was established. Much later, in 1834, the hamlet of Hammersmith became a separate parish to Fulham and, in 1863, the Charity Commissioners ordered that the income and assets from the combined Charities of Dr Edwards and Bishop King should be divided equally between a Fulham and Hammersmith branch; the latter being the "root" of Hammersmith United Charities.

Other benefactors in the 17th Century, each of whom established his or her own individual Charity, included Edward Latymer (1624), William Payne (1626), Thomas Iles (1635), Thomas Collop (1645), Nathaniel Dauncer (1656) and Sir Nicholas Crispe (1665). In the 1700's, Charities were established by Sarah Goudge (1759), John Powell (1773) and Henry Webb (1793) and, in the 1800's, by the Waste Land Almshouses (1810), John Brown (1822), Peter Brown (1833), Mrs Harriet Clancy (1844), Dr John Betts (1859) and William Smith (1865). In the early 1900's, bequests were made by Ellen Graves (1932) and Maria Eliza Morris (1948).

Whilst the terms of each of the aforementioned benefactor's wills were different, the general thrust of each was for the care and well-being of the poor of Hammersmith and, in June 1923, the Charity Commissioners decreed that all the then individual Charities should amalgamate, under the title of Hammersmith United Charities. Hammersmith United are the administrators of the various bequests and charitable gifts made by public spirited men and women since 1618 and it is their responsibility to provide homes for some of the poor and less fortunate inhabitants of Hammersmith.

To this end, Sycamore House, in Sycamore Gardens, was built in the 1950's to provide 40 flats on land bought on favourable terms from Hammersmith Borough Council. Sycamore House was officially opened on 9th June, 1955 by H.R.H. The Duchess of Gloucester. Some time later, in the mid 1980's, the 24 bed-sitting room flats (bed-sits) were up-graded to provide a separate bedroom and sitting room, to match the other 16 original flats. Now, in the early 21st Century, Sycamore House has 28 individual flats, plus a smaller Guest flat and a Warden's flat, together with a large Residents' Hall, recently refurbished, and laundry facilities.

During the early 1960's, John Betts' House, in Rylett Road, was constructed as a 2 storey rectangular building around an enclosed garden, as a replacement for 2 large investment properties owned by the Charities. When opened in 1964, John Betts' House provided 35 residential flats of which 11 had separate bedrooms and sitting rooms, with the other 24 being bed-sits. During the late 1990's, the Trustees undertook extensive refurbishment to John Betts' House, at a cost of over £4m, by adding a third floor and converting all but one of the bed-sits into larger units comprising bedroom, sitting room, bathroom and hall, to give a total of 39 flats, with a Guest flat and flats for the Warden and the Relief Warden. The Residents' Lounge was also enlarged to provide a pleasant sunny room, large enough to seat all the residents at the annual Christmas dinner, and a kitchen/office built off it. The refurbished building was opened on 28th September, 1998, again by The Duchess of Gloucester.

During the mid 1980's, Gloucester House, our frail care home, was conceived and constructed as an "in-fill" between the two wings of Sycamore House. After some twenty years of operation during which Gloucester House achieved and maintained a very high reputation for care, it was closed and will now be turned into a new block of 20 high specification sheltered flats. A further four flats will be built on the Sycamore House site in the space currently occupied by the residents lounge and the charity's offices. On completion in 2011, HUC will have some 90 sheltered flats.

In 2009, HUC commissioned a report from the Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion at the London School of Economics. This report was intended to help trustees and other major local and national stakeholders to understand the nature of poverty and social exclusion in the Charity's area of benefit. It also took forward a major aspiration of the current trustees to widen significantly the public benefit that results from the Charity's work. Concurrently with this and the development of Gloucester House, plans exist for the large scale exploitation of the Charity's other investment assets with the aim of achieving a major increase in the value of those assets to the Charity and therefore to its area of benefit, through an expanded grant making programme. The achievement of a self sustaining housing operation is central to that objective.

Who's Who



Trustees

Mrs. Susan GLASS MBE (Chairman)

(Co-opted)

Retired litigation solicitor and local resident. Former chairman of Groundwork.

Cllr Adronie ALFORD

(Council Nominee)

Former cabinet member for housing. Trustee of numerous local organisations.

***Ms. Elaine ASHTON**

(Co-opted Member)

Design background and until recently owned and operated a successful, specialist catering supplies business. Marketing experience.

***Ms Maggie BURGESS**

(Council Nominee)

Long time local resident and former council employee. Substantial knowledge of local history, people and places.

***Mr Stephen BURKE (Deputy Chairman)**

(Council Nominee)

Former leader of LBHF Council. Chief Executive of Council and Care. Retiring Feb 10.

Mrs. Sarah BURRELL

(Co-opted)

Recently retired from BBC's national legal team. Substantial experience of governance issues. Has served three terms as trustee. Chair of governance committee.

***Mrs. Angela CLARKE**

(Council Nominee)

Former councillor. Trustee of a number of local charities. Substantial knowledge of planning process.

The Reverend Simon DOWNHAM

(Ex-Officio)

Former corporate solicitor. Trustee of very many local charities and senior pastor of St Paul's. Retiring March 2010.

***Mr Chris I HAMMOND**

(Latymer Nominee)

Retired deputy head of Latymer Upper. Chair of grants committee.

Mr. Julian HILLMAN

(Council Nominee)

Former councillor. Social science and social service background. Major interest in mental health issues.

Mr John HOWARD

(Council Nominee)

Former president of Shepherd's Bush Rotary. Accountant and businessman.

***Mr John LITTLE**

(Co-opted Member)

Retired human resources expert. Founder member of AFPRB. Former head of personnel at BL. Chair of Housing.

***Mr Michael SMITH**

(Council Nominee)

Head of Leveraged Finance, Asset Management, BofS. Chair of Finance.

Mr William WATES, MA

(Co-opted Member)

Chartered surveyor. Former chair of grants committee, Wates Foundation. Chair designate of Wates Foundation.

Cllr Eugenie WHITE

(Council Nominee)

Former fund manager. Pension fund trustee.

Staff

Clerk to the Trustees: Stuart Sessions – brief CV on HUC web site. Joined 2005.

Finance Officer: Moise Green. Joined 2002.

PA/Office Manager: Diane Amos. Joined 2008. (Four days per week)

Finance and Admin Assistant: Nidia Hall. Joined 2007. (20 hours per week)

Maintenance/Health and Safety Officer: Patrick McGuinness. In post since 2009.

Almshouse Staff

John Betts House Scheme Manager: Jill Hampson. Lives on site. Since 2008.

Sycamore House Scheme Manager: Joy McNamara. 17.5 hours per week. 2008.

Relief Warden: David Murphy. Benefits expert. 140 days per year.

Gardener/Horticultural Activities Organiser: Jackie Thomson. Multiple award winner for gardens. Since 2003.

Role of the Clerk and Organisation



Governance

The Clerk is the principal advisor to the Trustees under the Scheme of the Charity and is responsible for :

- advising the Trustees on how to comply with the Charity's Scheme
- advising the Trustees on the relevant law and any changes in the relevant law or procedures relating the charity's almshouses, the management of residential establishments and the maintenance of property
- servicing the meetings of the Trustees and their sub committees
- ensuring the swift implementation of the Trustee's decisions
- ensuring that proper procedures are followed for the nomination and co-option of trustees; maintaining an accurate record of the Trustees names and addresses, their terms of office and interests; notifying any nominating bodies of any Trustee vacancies that have arisen;
- ensuring that Trustees especially new Trustees are supplied with such information and advice as will enable them to carry out their duties effectively

Financial Management

The Clerk is responsible for :

- Maintaining appropriate financial systems, controls and procedures
- ensuring that proper accounting records are maintained of the Charity's business, that management accounts are presented to the Trustees at their meetings, that annual accounts are prepared to trial balance stage and in particular that;
 - contributions from beneficiaries are collected regularly as required by the Trustees and properly recorded
 - beneficiaries are provided with such information as they may require to claim housing benefit and other benefits to which they may be entitled, and for giving them such support and advice as they may need
 - that outside bodies are invoiced for the provisions of accommodation and services to the beneficiaries appropriately and regularly as required by the Trustees
 - that beneficiary moneys held on their behalf by the Charity are subject to proper financial procedures

- Liaison with the auditors and any external financial accounting advisors in the production of annual audited accounts meeting the requirements of the Charity Commission and the Housing Corporation
- Completion of annual returns required by Charity Commission, Housing Corporation
- Liaison with the investment advisors to ensure optimal yield and efficient cash flow from the investment portfolio is maintained
- Administering HUC's financial affairs in accordance with attached Financial Regulations

Administration

The Clerk is responsible for:

- completion of all statutory returns and compliance with relevant procedures
- overall supervision of the payroll and personnel functions of the Charity including the maintenance of personnel records
- overall supervision of all matters relating the health and safety of beneficiaries employees and volunteers associated with the Charity and keeping records of contracts, risk assessments, fire drills, inspection visits and conducting correspondence arising in these matters
- IT systems and installations at the Charity and the efficient deployment of IT resources
- preparing or overseeing the preparation of advertisements, brochures, handbooks connected with the Charity's business

Property

The Clerk is responsible for:

- developing a comprehensive property strategy for the charity
- compiling and implementing a Rolling Maintenance Programme for all the Charity's properties and obtaining a quinquennial Inspection of the Charity's properties and advising and reporting on the same to the Trustees
- liaising with professional advisors
- ensuring that the rents and leases of all investment properties are reviewed annually and that Trustees are advised of any issues relating to the properties
- ensuring that all licence fees, and charges to resident beneficiaries are reviewed annually and that Trustees are advised of any issues relating levels of charges

- obtaining quotations for any maintenance work undertaken, maintaining a list of contractors, maintaining records of maintenance contracts and reviewing them annually

Beneficiaries

- Seeking, processing, examining and making recommendations to the Trustees on applications for accommodation and grant aid, in liaison with any designated Trustees
- Ensuring that the requirements of the Charity's Scheme are fully met and that no improper partiality is given in awarding of benefit to any beneficiary
- Consulting beneficiaries, where appropriate, and informing them about their weekly maintenance contributions, answering their queries speedily
- Maintaining records for each beneficiary
- Ensuring that the staff have full regard to the need for the beneficiaries to have as full and rounded quality of life as is reasonably possible

Personnel Management

The Clerk is the line manager of the almshouse scheme managers, accounts officer, administration officer, gardener and handyman.

The Clerk is responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining human resources procedures and documentation to comply with statutory and best practice requirements
- Administering the Charity's staff pension scheme in conjunction with the Scheme's managers
- The equal opportunities, health and safety, harassment disciplinary and date protection policies of the charity
- Ensuring that open external advertisement is made for any vacancy on the staff of the Charity save where the Trustees authorise otherwise
- Ensuring that for every vacancy and for every member of staff there are proper records

The Clerk shall not recruit suspend or dismiss any of the senior staff as listed above without consultation with the Trustees. Appointment of the almshouse staff will be made by the Trustees unless they decide otherwise.

Relationships with External Bodies

The Clerk is responsible for:

- The development and maintenance of effective communication with the many statutory and voluntary agencies and organizations with which the Charity is connected, both locally and nationally and with the bodies responsible for nominating trustees to the Charity
- Maintaining and developing relationships with public and private funding bodies and commercial partners.



