

# Wyndham Housing Association

## General Information Pack

### Wyndham House

Plantation Road,  
Oxford,  
OX2 6JJ



### Charles Ponsonby House

Osberton Road,  
Oxford,  
OX2 7PQ



# **Wyndham Housing Association**

## **History**

In the late 1960's the Oxfordshire Branch of the British Red Cross was looking for a practical way of celebrating the centenary of the Society. Miss Edith Climeson, O.B.E., the Director, Mrs Irene Parsons and Miss Phyllis White suggested that a suitable project would be to replace an unsatisfactory home for the elderly, which the Red Cross had in Banbury Road, with accommodation better suited to the needs of the time.

The idea was to provide self-contained flats at a reasonable rent with all services, a meal and light supper each day and a warden in charge who would be available to help in an emergency. It was thought that such a scheme might appeal to people of professional and academic backgrounds living in over-large north Oxford houses and who, having retired on limited pensions, were finding it difficult to maintain a reasonable standard of living.

Wyndham Housing Association was formed under the able chairmanship of Christopher Eastwood and the helpful guidance of Sir Charles Ponsonby, to deal with the multitudinous matters arising with the setting up of such a project. Finance came from various sources including a generous loan from the City Council and another from the British Red Cross. The Duke of Marlborough donated the whole of the takings from the first night of 'Son et Lumière' at Blenheim Palace and other donations came from various Trusts, a sizeable legacy and a number of money raising efforts. The Department of the Environment provided a subsidy and these all gave much valued support in the crucial initial stages. St. John's College offered a suitable site in Plantation Road, and the building eventually cost in the region of £240,000.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother opened Wyndham House, named after the Hon. Mrs Humphrey Wyndham, President of the Oxford Branch of the Red Cross, on 26 June 1973. All formal connection with the Red Cross ceased in 1976 but a number of Red Cross members remained on the Committee, thus maintaining an informal connection with the Society.

Over the years the tenants have come from a much wider area than was envisaged and at one time the waiting list reached three hundred. It was this that eventually led to the building of Charles Ponsonby House. By then no national local government or Housing Corporation money was available and the only way to launch this particular project was to accept the offer of the builder to capitalise the scheme. As a result, the residents at Charles Ponsonby House buy their flats on a 125-year leasehold.

There have been many changes since 1973 but the aim of the Association remains the same as it was then – namely to provide a happy and secure environment for people who wish to relinquish the cares of home ownership but still retain their independence.

## **Company Information**

The Wyndham Housing Association is a Limited company which has its registered address at Wyndham House. It is regulated in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Housing Corporation and its financial reporting is controlled by the requirements of the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965 and 1978. The Association is a Registered Social Landlord. It is a non-profit making organisation run along charitable lines.

## Organisation and Administration

The management of the Association is overseen by the **Board of Trustees**. They meet quarterly and are responsible for ensuring the good governance of the Association. Their responsibilities include ensuring systems of financial control are in place, that proper accounting methods are maintained and providing strategic leadership.

The key management decisions are delegated to the **Management Committee**, which meets every 8-10 weeks. They work in conjunction with the **Chief Executive** and **Administrator** to bring about the effective delivery of services to the tenants and residents. One of the benefits of running a small housing association is that the staff soon get to know every tenant and resident personally.

The Association runs two houses, Charles Ponsonby House in Osberton Road, and Wyndham House in Plantation Road. Each House has a **House Advisory Committee** which meets monthly. Their function is to serve the interests of the residents or tenants. Committee members assist by providing support to the residents or tenants where this is needed. They may visit individual residents or tenants, or run coffee mornings and help at some social events. Each of the two Chairmen of the House Advisory Committees sits as a member of the Board of Trustees and so are able to ensure that the interests of the residents or tenants are voiced.

Each house has a resident **Warden** and a number of Deputy Wardens who provide daily cover for the residents. When they are off duty, cover is provided by the Mobile Warden Service of Oxford City Council.

## Services Provided

A wide range of services are provided as part of an inclusive monthly charge to tenants and residents. These are shown below. Tenants and residents simply need to find the additional cost of their own telephone, Council Tax and incidental expenses.

- The cost of providing a warden service and Mobile Warden Service.
- Controlled entry system.
- Emergency alarms and telephones.
- All heating, lighting and mains services.
- Water rates.
- Cyclical repairs and routine maintenance.
- Provision and maintenance of the lift, gardens, laundry and other facilities.
- Cleaning of communal areas and refuse collection,
- Buildings insurance.
- Catering services to provide lunch and a light supper daily to each resident.
- Contribution to the Property and Services Renewal Fund.
- Central administration (salaries, marketing, professional fees, affiliation fees, office equipment, postage, stationery, etc).

## **What is NOT Provided - Nursing Care of any Sort**

The Wyndham Housing Association provides independent living for retired people. Most people come to the house fit and able to enjoy the carefree environment it offers but it is a sad fact of life that as time moves on, they come to rely more and more on the services offered. It is important that tenants and residents understand that the Association does not provide medical care or nursing services, that the Wardens are not medically trained.

When tenants or residents are no longer able to care for themselves, or where the level of support needed exceeds the ability of the Association to provide, care will be the responsibility of the Resident and their family.

## **Mobile Warden Service**

The Wyndham Housing Association provides 24-hour warden cover. When the Warden or Deputy Wardens are not on duty, cover is switched to a Mobile Warden Service.

The Mobile Warden Service is part of the Oxford City Council. It has been operating since 1986 and although based in Oxford, provides a service for the whole of Oxfordshire. The team of mobile wardens cover a number of houses like ours in both the city and county, and can be contacted in the event of an emergency. A manager is always on call to deal with any situation which develops. They provide all-year round cover 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. In the absence of the House Manager or deputy warden, Central Control provides a lock-up service where they visit the house to ensure that people are fine before securing the house.

## **Catering Services**

Catering services are an integral part of the range of services offered to tenants and residents. The cost of providing this service, including catering management services, the buying of the food, its delivery to the house, preparation, cooking and serving to individuals is covered by an element of the monthly Service Charge levied equally against all tenants or residents. The terms of the tenancy or lease agreements do not permit tenants or residents to opt out of this charge. However, residents may apply to receive reduced catering charges when absent for extended periods.