



## **An overview of Claridge House**

### **Origin and Purpose**

Claridge House was bought in 1953 by a group of Quakers interested in healing. The Trust Deed of that time gave the purpose as *“to provide a home of rest for persons who are under stress or in any condition in which a time of rest and recuperation would be beneficial and who would be thereby helped to attain renewed health and strength and being a Home which shall be conducted in accordance with the principles of the religious body or society called the Society of Friends but so that the benefits of the said home shall be afforded and enjoyed irrespective of the religious belief of the person received there...”*.

Claridge House has operated as a registered charity ( no 228102) since 1953. We became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO no 1167155) in 2017. Our purpose remains much the same.

### **Claridge House today**

**Our publicly stated core purpose and values** are to:

- provide a space where people of any faith or none may stay for a while in peace and stillness before returning, rested and renewed, to their everyday lives.
- embody in our welcome the Quaker understanding that each person is a unique and precious individual.
- provide a friendly, high quality service that nourishes a spirit of well-being in all who cross our threshold.
- be mindful of sustainability in the use of our resources.

#### **Our work:**

We serve the above aims by offering a range of residential short courses of a therapeutic or healing nature, mainly at weekends and by offering weekday periods of individual or group retreats. More information on these may be found on our website.

Having identified a growing national need, we are in discussion with a carer placement agency about a joint venture offering short residential breaks to long term family carers.

#### **The House**

Claridge House is a Victorian building with ten bedrooms. One of the two ground floor bedrooms is wheelchair accessible. A further two single wheelchair accessible bedrooms are located in an annexe to the rear of the house, making twelve bedrooms in all. There are two more rooms in the floor, formerly used as a staff flat, a manager's flat with its own entrance, and a separate bungalow which is commercially let.



There is a Therapy Room on the first floor of the house where massages are offered to guests and non-residents alike. Another first floor room, with adjacent bathroom, is used to accommodate staff overnight when the occasion demands it. A separate flat with its own entrance to the rear of the house and a separate bungalow on a commercial let, constitute the rest of the property.

There are two full time members of staff, the Manager and Assistant Manager. The remaining part time staff consists of Housekeeper, Marketing and Financial Assistants, Vegetarian Cooks and General Assistants. In addition, a gardener and a maintenance man are contracted to work one day a week. Our Course Administrator is currently a voluntary post, and we have other volunteers supporting our work. Our Manager is supported by an unpaid board of Trustees, a proportion of whom are required to be associated with a Quaker meeting.

Historically, the bed take up was deliberately kept low so as to maintain a peaceful atmosphere for retreats. This led to there being insufficient funds for upkeep and over the years the House deteriorated physically. Recent legacies and donations from supporters, earmarked for capital expenditure, enabled us to update the House with ensuite bedrooms and the Trustees decided to close the House for seven months from January 2016 for this work to be done.

During this period we implemented most of the interior recommendations of the accessibility survey we commissioned. We upgraded the kitchen and the small communal room known as the Quiet Room in which twice daily 15 minute quiet times take place. There is more work to be done internally and externally as finances permit.

As no suitable computerised commercial hospitality system was available, we installed a retreat based package which is being tuned to our needs.

We have a strong manager who has recruited a good team who are supportive of our vision and aims and are prepared to work flexibly to help us achieve them.

Although Quaker based and led, we rely on trading income, donations from our users and supporters and on project grants from grant making bodies, receiving no income from any other Quaker organisation.

### **Our vision**

The present trustees' vision is to get Claridge House on a sustainable financial footing, while maintaining the peaceful atmosphere which guests love and frequently comment on.

We hope to achieve this by increasing bed take up while preserving the quiet environment that attracts our guests. When appropriate, therefore, spare bed capacity is now put over to Bed & Breakfast guests. We are mindful that although this is not our core purpose, we offer B&B guests a peaceful stay in a unique and special place, and that some of them too may be in need of rest and renewal.



Our challenge is to manage the differing expectations of our retreatants, course participants and B&B guests. Appreciative comments from all may be found on Trip Advisor: [https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Hotel\\_Review-g2234496-d1158140-Reviews-Claridge\\_House-Lingfield\\_Surrey\\_England.html#REVIEWS](https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Hotel_Review-g2234496-d1158140-Reviews-Claridge_House-Lingfield_Surrey_England.html#REVIEWS)

We wish to continue to offer high quality vegetarian food, locally sourced when possible, and are working towards paying our staff the living wage.

After using professional consultants to determine the best way to market what we have to offer, we have recently recruited a part time Marketing Administrator to put their ideas into action.

If you are interested in joining us, and have the skills we are looking for, please complete the application and eligibility forms and send to Jane Short at [trustees@claridgehousequaker.org.uk](mailto:trustees@claridgehousequaker.org.uk).

Thank you

Jane Short  
Clerk to the Trustees



## **Trustee Role description and person specification**

### **Statutory Duties**

You and your co-trustees must make sure that the charity is carrying out the purposes for which it is set up, and no other purpose. This means you should:

- ensure you understand the charity's purposes as set out in its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- to ensure that Claridge House pursues its objects as defined in its governing document and to be able to explain how all of the activities are intended to further or support its purposes
- to understand how the charity benefits the public by carrying out its purposes
- to contribute actively to the board of trustees' role of giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- to safeguard the good name and values of Claridge House as a Quaker business
- to ensure the effective and efficient administration of Claridge House
- to ensure the financial stability of Claridge House
- to protect and manage the property of Claridge House and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds. Spending charity funds on the wrong purposes is a very serious matter; in some cases trustees may have to reimburse the charity personally.
- To appoint and support the Manager and monitor her/his performance
- to attend Trustee meetings wherever possible. At present Trustees meet every two months, during the day, usually in Claridge House.

### **Other duties**

In addition to the above duties, Trustees should:

- be willing and able to use any specific knowledge or experience he or she may have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This will involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues and providing advice and guidance requested by the board or the Manager in areas where the trustees might add value and insight to deliberations.
- ensure that the decisions and work of Claridge House comply at all times to the best ethical practices
- establish and maintain good relations with the staff team and tutors
- sit on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required
- to offer hands-on assistance if required in the best interests of Claridge House

### **Trustee person specification**

- in sympathy with the Quaker approach to business
- committed to Claridge House and its charitable objectives



- willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- strategic vision
- good, independent judgement
- ability to think creatively
- willingness to speak their mind while working in a spirit of collaboration
- understanding and acceptance of legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- observe Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- live within travelling distance of Claridge House