



## Rockdale celebrates 75 years providing homes for older people in Sevenoaks

Rockdale Housing Association is a not-for-profit charitable housing association in the heart of Sevenoaks town centre. Today it is home to 200 residents in a range of sheltered accommodation - leasehold and rented and also home to residents living in Rockdale House, our modern 48-bed residential care home, built in 2013.

### **How Rockdale began**

The original Rockdale House was built as the home to the Laurie family in 1875. The beautiful three-story ragstone building belonged to Alfred J. St George McAdam Laurie. He had a son, John Dawson Laurie.

Sir John Dawson Laurie, 1st Baronet, TD, JP (12 September 1872 – 20 July 1954) was Lord Mayor of London from 1941 to 1942 and lived at Rockdale House, the three-storey ragstone building on Rockdale Housing Association's site, which is still present with most external original features.

Rockdale House (later renamed Laurie House) was sold to the Sevenoaks and District Old People's Housing Association, founded by Beatrice Wilson in 1948, which became Rockdale Housing Association.

Beatrice was a gifted physiotherapist with a vision to improve the quality of older people's lives. She trained at Guy's Hospital but showed her commitment to Sevenoaks by opening the town's first physiotherapy centre, the Vitasan Clinic in South Park.

Beatrice was also a founding member of the Soroptomists in Sevenoaks. Members were active in supporting Beatrice Wilson to set up Rockdale as a home for the elderly.

Since then, Rockdale Housing Association's site has been developed to offer rent and leasehold supported independent living accommodation for people over 60. It is home to, on average 200 residents, who enjoy peace of mind with 24/7 support on site available.

The original Rockdale House care home (now named Laurie House) has been converted to apartments and a modern 48 bed care home, named Rockdale House, opened in 2013 within the grounds.

**Today, we continue Beatrice Wilson's efforts by developing the site and upholding her values so that Rockdale will always be a wonderful and affordable place to live.**



Laurie House – originally, Rockdale House



Beatrice Wilson, Rockdale's founder, left and above with Queen Mary.