

PANKHURST HOUSE

I am delighted to have been allocated Emmeline Pankhurst as our figure of inspiration for the Green House at Coopers. She was a suffragette – a leading British women's rights activist, who led the movement to win the right for women to vote. She was the leader of the British Suffragette movement who gained a reputation for increasingly militant acts, which included cutting telephone lines, attacking the home of Chancellor David Lloyd George and chaining themselves to railings.

In 1910, Pankhurst led a march on Parliament of more than 300 women. They were met with an aggressive and violent police response - ordered by then-home secretary Winston Churchill - in which officers punched protesters and assaulted the women. The Police raided the WPSU offices and arrested Pankhurst, who was convicted of conspiracy to commit property damage. She was imprisoned in Holloway, where she went on hunger strike and was force-fed by officers.

But through all this militancy, she achieved what was thought an impossible result which we now take for granted: the equality of women to men – and the right to vote. She died aged 69 on June 14th 1928 and the bill giving legal rights to women was passed just four days later on 18th June.

A truly inspirational lady – her fighting spirit will motivate all members of Coopers' new green Pankhurst House to strive for the victory which will be rightly be ours .

"You have to make more noise than anybody else, you have to make yourself more obtrusive than anybody else,"

– Emmeline Pankhurst, November 1913