

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Twentieth Century Society held on Saturday, 14 June 2014 at the University of Liverpool, School of Architecture, Leverhulme Building, Abercromby Square, Liverpool L69 7ZN**

**1. Apologies**

Daren Briggs, John Latham and Eva Ling

**2. Minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting in Swiss Cottage, London NW3**

These were approved by a show of hands and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**4. Chair's address**

4.1 Peter Ruback emphasised casework as the Society's principal function but it is costly, time consuming and sometimes fraught. He cited four cases in 2013 where our lobbying and influence had paid off: successful upgrading to grade II\* of India Buildings in Liverpool which has exceptional interior detail by Herbert Rowse but to which unacceptable alterations were proposed; the former London Colney convent near St Albans where we had succeeded in getting pro-bono architectural advice on the deteriorating state of the chapel by Ninian Comper; the move of Dorothy Annan's murals to the Barbican in the City of London; and working with the architects on a sensitive refurbishment of the Golden Lane Estate nearby. This was valuable work, even if it did not get wide public recognition.

4.2 He has been asked frequently about the forthcoming spilt at English Heritage (EH) between historic sites and the listing and research functions with which C20 Society primarily engages. He said that it's not so much the separation which concerns him as the resources available for research and listing. He is seeking a strong commitment to protecting buildings of our period, not just the exceptional buildings but more everyday post-1914 architecture of listable quality which he is not convinced EH (or DCMS) have so far given.

4.3 PR said that the President, Fiona MacCarthy wishes to stand down and recorded his thanks for her outstanding contribution over the last three years especially her willingness to listen and provide advice. He was delighted to say that the architectural historian and biographer Gillian Darley who was at the AGM had agreed to stand for President. He cited her recent book with David McKie *Ian Nairn, Words in Place*.

## **5. President's address**

5.1 Fiona MacCarthy said that it had been exceptionally stimulating being President of C20 Society. She commended the high standard of recent publications such as the Magazine (2014/2) just out and Journal no. 11 on Oxford and Cambridge.

5.2 She spoke about the William Morris exhibition which she is curating at the National Portrait Gallery in London, opening in October 2014, which will focus on charting his influence on artists, architects, craftsmen and town planners right through to the Festival of Britain in 1951. The conservation movement started with him and he was the first to grasp the psychological importance of iconic early buildings such as Silbury Hill and Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge in Epping Forest. In alliance with others, he founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) in 1877 to protect sacred monuments for whole nation.

5.3 Linking this to the work of the C20 Society, she said that Morris was an advocate of all types of buildings, styles and periods and to all types of people. He was driven by the often philistine treatment of old buildings by his contemporaries. In the same way, C20 Soc's persistence in getting Preston Bus Station listed last year and opposing the crude and ill-conceived proposals for the South Bank Centre was emblematic of this approach.

5.4 Finally, she said that she could not imagine anyone whom she would rather see succeed her than Gillian Darley. She was inspired by her book *Villages of Vision* to write hers about Lethaby.

## **6. Director's address including casework issues**

6.1 Catherine Croft wished to thank volunteers, especially Trustees, without whose support we could not survive. We have exactly the same Office team as last year and introduced the Conservation Advisers, Henrietta Billings and Clare Price, who would be there for the whole AGM weekend if members wished to raise local casework concerns with them. Patric Morley was Co-ordinator in the Cowcross Street office and Susannah Charlton managed the website.

6.2 CC said that we had attracted three sources of outside funding in the last 12 months:

- An HLF funded project worth just under £10,000 to commemorate WW1 by creating a website for notes from C20 war memorial events in France, Belgium and Italy led by or with the involvement of Gavin Stamp with high quality photos and re-creating two war memorial walks (Sites of Memory) in Central London for the public.
- The 100 buildings project of a building for each year since 1914, when our remit starts, and which were nominated by 70 contributing authors including some distinguished figures. This started as a self-funded web resource but

has attracted a commercial book contract with Batsford and which will appear in October. The Royal Academy is proposing to let us have a small exhibition linked to the book, probably in their architecture space, which might also travel to regional venues.

- A small grant of around £3000 from EH for a researcher to update the list of Christian places of worship in our (out of print) Journal no. 3 and to make it searchable on line. Members were being asked for their input to the updating.
- Outside projects seeking to Introduce new audiences to C20 architecture such as a drama group of teenagers and young adults at Kensal House, Ladbrooke Grove, London W10 by Maxwell Fry (1936-37). Alan Baxter has lent a member of staff to collate the material and produce a conservation plan for Kensal House.

6.3 Finally, CC appealed to members for their help in getting copies of the Magazine and other C20 publications into bookshops and museum shops through personal visits with a downloadable form on the C20 website.

### **Casework**

6.4 CC highlighted the South Bank Centre (SBC) where we had opposed an over-scale project. She said that there was pressure for C20 to support the project as it involved restoration of the (unlisted) existing buildings of the 1960's such as the Hayward Gallery. We produced a smaller scale scheme which dealt with the accessibility and facilities issues and working with the skateboarders. This was coupled with our cartoons placing the SBC scheme on top of historic buildings like the Tower of London which would never be treated in this way and had a strong impact. In the event, there appeared to be insufficient funding for the SBC scheme so we await a smaller scale scheme being put forward.

6.5 Whilst our statutory role remains important, many cases still reach us by diverse, less official routes:

- Ongoing problems at the Pilkington Factory canteen (Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, Grade II, 1953) in St Helens, which has art works by Victor Pasmore, were drawn to our attention by the NW Group. On a recent NW Group event, this looked derelict and unprotected and we are putting pressure on the local council to act.
- Another was Sir Jack Zunz's Grade II listed house by Arups in Wimbledon. This was a large proposal, but did not get referred to us because it did not involve demolition. Despite initial concerns, and following a site visit, we were convinced that this deserved our support. The ultimate parameter has to be whether we could defend our line at a Public Enquiry; if not then we need to consider negotiation to improve schemes, rather than simple opposition.
- Lastly, unlisted Cemex House and surrounding landscaping near Egham, Surrey for the Ready Mix Concrete Co. by Ted Cullinan (1990) where the

whole site was threatened with re-development. We had organised an event with Cullinan and Sunand Prasad (ex-President of RIBA) to raise awareness and support a listing request.

## **7. Honorary Treasurer's Report**

7.1 Carolyn Parmeter reported that income in 2013 had been steady with a surplus of £9500 (compared to a 2012 surplus of £24,000) and a high level of reserves. However, the costs of Journal no. 11 (almost £20k) had not been brought to account until January 2014 which meant that in effect we were running a small deficit. Events income at £21.5k was running at the same level as in 2012 and membership income was up by £4k; EH's linked Grant would continue at the same level of about £45k a year until 2016 but it is not index linked and covers less than 50% of casework costs.

7.2 There were also a number of current and future cost pressures, particularly the legal obligation to contribute to staff pensions from 2015-2016 which we do not currently do. Employing the Director for increased hours and retaining staff of high quality with reasonable terms and conditions of employment was an investment in increasing our profile but did bring higher salary costs.

7.3 There was no income from legacies in 2012 but income from two bequests was anticipated in 2014. Trustees had also agreed a policy on drawing down legacy income on a rolling basis. The 2013 Society accounts and report were approved for adoption by a show of hands.

## **8. Honorary Secretary's report and motions to members**

8.1 Robert Drake said the pattern of holding AGMs on Saturdays and alternating them between London and regional centres was now well established with events associated with all of them. He thanked the Head of the School of Architecture, University of Liverpool, Dr Andrew Crompton for allowing use of this building by the former Head of the School, Sir Charles Reilly in 1933 and also Barnabas Calder for practical arrangements today and for the supply of refreshments.

8.2 The following motions were proposed:

### **a. To increase annual subscriptions as follows:**

Carolyn Parmeter explained that Trustees had reviewed the costs of servicing membership and come to the conclusion that the individual concessionary membership rate of £25 in particular was barely covering these costs. In addition inflation had increased 8-10% since the last subscription increase agreed at the 2011 AGM and which came into effect in 2012. Postal, printing and staff/pension costs had also increased at above inflation or were about to come into force.

She thus proposed to increase the individual and concessionary (and household and household concessionary categories) by £10 per annum and other corporate, affiliate and benefactor categories by 10%. Life membership would be unchanged

at £1500. However, to encourage members to switch to paying by direct debit for 2015 only she was proposing a £5 discount for anyone paying or switching to direct debit for the following membership categories:

- individual membership up from £40 to £50 (£45 with discount in 2015);
- individual concession up from £25 to £35 (£30 with discount in 2015);
- household up from £60 to £70 (£65 with discount in 2015); and
- concessionary household up from £50 to £60 (£55 with discount in 2015).

To facilitate payment by Direct Debit it was planned to introduce this online by September 2014. Paying by direct debit was less administratively burdensome for the Society as reminders do not need to be sent out and helped with budget management. The subscription increases were agreed by a show of hands.

**b. To amend the Society's Rules as follows:**

Under paragraph 4 of the Rules of the Twentieth Century Society, categories of membership may be varied at an AGM of the Society by a simple majority of members present and voting. A motion is proposed to amend paragraph 3(7) of the Society's Rules as follows on categories of concessionary membership:

*"Concessionary (those aged under 30 and over 65, full-time students and registered disabled)".*

RD explained that in parallel with the subscription increase Trustees wished to clarify and simplify the concessionary membership categories. They wanted in particular to attract younger members who may not be full-time students but were working in volunteer posts in the conservation sector. They proposed to define the concessionary categories by age limits for simplicity: under 30 and over 65; to continue to include "full-time students"; and to add 'registered disabled' for clarification who are mentioned on C20 membership leaflets but not in the Rules. He stressed that anyone currently paying at concessionary rates because they were a pensioner but under 65 or unemployed could continue to do so.

This change to the Rules was agreed by a show of hands but it was agreed that the lower age limit for concessionary membership should be worded as follows: "65 and over". Thus paragraph 3(7) of the Rules of the Society would read as follows:

*"Concessionary (those aged under 30, 65 and over, full-time students and registered disabled)".*

**c. Re-appointment of auditors** - Nigel Wordingham Ltd were re-appointed auditors by a show of hands.

**d. Election of Directors** - Under Article 24 of the Articles of Association one-third of the Directors must retire from office each year at the AGM. Under Article 27 (1), Ian

McInnes, Timothy Brittain-Catlin and Nicola Rutt were either coming to the end of their 3 year term (Ian McInnes) or had completed 2 years of it and were recommended by Directions for re-election. They were re-elected by a show of hands. Two nominations for new Directors were received under Article 27(2): Barry Arden and Alan Powers and were recommended by Directors for election. They were elected by a show of hands. Daren Briggs was also standing down at this AGM and not standing for re-election and Michelle Banks had resigned as a Director in September 2013.

- e. **Election of President** – Under Article 18 (A) 1 (a) of the Articles of Association members may elect as President someone who has been nominated by the Directors as a candidate for the post and under Article 18A (1) (b) specify the period for which the person is to hold office. The current President, Fiona MacCarthy wishes to stand down after three years and Directors propose the architectural historian and writer Gillian Darley for the post for a three year period. She was elected by a show of hands.

## **9. Honorary Membership Secretary's Report**

9.1 Jane Rosier reported that membership was healthy at 1800 individual or household memberships. Our aim has been to ensure that we have a consistent and high quality offer for all our members, however they experience us, be that through the Magazine, Journal, e-newsletters or social media. We were aiming to increase our profile on social media and to encourage members who have enjoyed an event to write about it on the Society's facebook page and to encourage those on the non-member e-mail newsletter list to join. We are also actively developing links with partner organisations with much wider audiences than our own such as at the RA and Barbican. Finally, we are making a push for our 2000<sup>th</sup> member who will receive a free copy of the Festival of Britain Journal (no. 5).

## **10. Honorary Events Secretary's Report**

10.1 Simon van Heyningen first wanted to pay tribute to his predecessor Nevil Hopkins who helped him enormously with the handover in the first six months after coming into post when he was also moving to London. He would be reviewing how we run events and pricing and ways of improving the online booking system to encourage everyone to use it. A long distance foreign trip had taken place to Miami with a shorter trip imminent to Catalonia and trips to Japan, Dublin, Porto and Eastern France planned. Closer to home there were a wide range of national events and conferences advertised on the website and more planned especially outside London in Newport (S Wales), Fife, Bristol and Somerset to name but a few.

## **11. Publication Committee Chair's report**

11.1 Tim Brittain-Catlin said that Journal no.11 on Oxford and Cambridge (post-1914 architecture) had been very well received and was the first to be peer-reviewed. Journal no. 12 would be entitled 'Cross-Country: architect designed houses' and would appear in early 2015; Journal no.13 would on 'Architecture of the Public Realm' on which articles had been commissioned and would probably appear in early 2016. Trustees had agreed that Journal no.14 would be on commercial architecture. Recent issues of the Magazine had been particularly well-received and he paid tribute to the sub-Editor David Attwood.

11.2 EH had taken over from the RIBA as the lead on the 20<sup>th</sup> century architects' series and six proposals for new monographs had been accepted with future volumes appearing in pairs. Writers had already been commissioned for Patrick Gwynne and Frederick Gibberd and were in the pipeline on the Smithsons, Erno Goldfinger, HKPA and Peter Moro as well as Arup Associates and the church architect, Cachemaille-Day. Other ideas being considered were Xavier Velardé and E. Vincent Harris.

11.3 On conferences and lecture series, which the Publications Committee also covered, a Gropius conference in Cambridge and visit to Impington Village College was planned for 18 October, the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary to the day of his arrival in England. A joint conference with the Victorian Society in the 'shadow of '1914' was planned for 22 November at the V and A. The Autumn lecture series would be on the theme of 20<sup>th</sup> century sculptors and the Spring 2015 series a possible re-run of the 'My Father the Architect' theme.

## **12. Regional Co-ordinator's report**

12.1 Nicola Rutt thanked regional representatives for their continued contribution to the Society and said that we rely on members coming forward and taking a lead. The NE reps are forming a larger group with connections with the Baltic and Tate. Members of the West Midlands group have been organising scouting events which they advertise and report on within the WM regional group page on the website. The NW Group had held a successful church event in South Lancs the previous weekend. A planning meeting for an East of England group was being convened in the Wren Library, Cambridge in June. Stephen Edgar is representing a new Scottish regional group who are meeting in July.

12.2 Meetings of the regional representatives are being held twice a year in venues around the country, the last being in York. Representatives from the London office also attend. Each regional group had its own much more prominent webpage on the C20 website where their local events were advertised.

### **Questions from the floor on Regional Groups**

12.3 In response to a question from the floor, it was explained that regional groups were self-funding through their activities, for example, the NW Group had its own

bank account to pay for coaches for events. However, in the next year, Trustees would be reviewing Regional Group governance arrangements and their status as 'legal entities' so that they might more easily apply for regional grants for example. Trustees were also keen to expand the capacity of regional groups and were interested to hear about proposals from groups, for example on local listing and conservation issues. However, the Director said the Society's casework committee needed to monitor casework and applications for listing nationally. EH (and CADW/Historic Scotland), LPAs and Dioceses were used to dealing with the Society centrally and the casework committee now has considerable credibility in the formulation of its views. Regional Group chairs receive casework papers and can now join meetings on cases in their area by Skype.

### **13. Any other business**

As there was no other business, the meeting was closed at 1335 by the Chair.

Robert Drake

Hon. Secretary

July 2014