

Chair's Report to C20 Southern Region AGM – 28 March 2021

Introduction

At our AGM in February 2020 we were looking forward to another programme of outdoor meetings and events. Things changed so quickly from that date and everything very quickly moved online. I hope members have been able to join the many and varied Zoom events organised by C20 Head Office. More recently our Group has been working with the South West and West Groups to host a series of online events – our first on Seaside Architecture to be followed on 28th March (the day after our AGM) by a session on Ecclesiastical Building. We were pleased to have 65+ people attend the Seaside Architecture session.

Future Programme

We will be guided by C20 Head Office as to when we can resume outdoor events and the format these may need to take including numbers. These were the plans we had for 2020 and would seem to be a good basis to plan our next schedule subject to discussion with the original hosts:

- Hooke Park, near Beaminster and Briantspuddle (model village) with Mike Henderson (access to this event would be by car as no public transport serves these locations)
- Christchurch, Dorset
- Emsworth, West Sussex with Paul Underhill
- Woking, Surrey with Caroline Martin and Pauline Mousley
- Brighton with David Robson
- Potential Event on Hampshire Schools

Others to consider:

- Shute House Garden, Shaftesbury, Wiltshire, 1969 – Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe
- A return to Poundbury – trip to be organised jointly with the South West Region

Expanding the Committee

The existing officers of the committee are proposing that we expand the committee to a total of six that means we have three vacancies to fill. The idea is to share the workload and strengthen our ability to monitor developments and potential casework across the Region. Ideally we would like one of the members to take on the social media officer role but if no one is forthcoming for that post we will fill it with a non-assigned committee member. I already have one name and if any C20 Southern Regional Members would like to be considered please let me know before the meeting. If we have more nominations than places we will need to hold an election during the AGM on Zoom.

Update on Listings, Casework and Buildings at Risk in the Southern Region

While our local events have been cancelled casework has continued:

Listings

Jan 2021 – Grade II Listing - **The Puy de Dome Sculpture, University of Southampton by F.E McWilliam (62/63)** situated in a rectangular pool designed by Basil Spence & Partners adjacent to the Nuffield Theatre, University of Southampton, Highfield Campus. Sadly the theatre itself was turned down for listing on the grounds that the interior had already been extensively modified.

Application for Listing

Knight and Lee, Southsea, Portsmouth – this building (1959) formerly a branch of John Lewis it was closed in 2019 – subsequently plans have been submitted for a hotel and a cinema on the site and C20 with the support of local campaigners has submitted an application for Listing.

Buildings We Lost

Despite the efforts of C20, and an active local campaign, the art deco Solent Flour Mills in Southampton, was turned down for listing in 2019 and was sadly demolished in 2020.

Developments/Refurbishments/Restorations

February 2021, Saltdean Lido, one of only two Grade II* Listed outdoor pools secured funding to undertake historic restoration works.

1930s Regent Centre, Christchurch, Dorset has undergone extensive refurbishment and recreated the original 30s interior.

Up for Sale

Grade II Listed Riviera Hotel, Bowleaze Cove, Weymouth – a major local landmark and a building visited by the Southern Group in 2018 – is up for sale for £5.5 million. C20 is keeping this site under review.

Department Stores – C20 Head Office Project

C20 Head Office is compiling a list of department store buildings that may be of risk - a particular issue in the current climate with the massive changes happening in retail. Each region has been asked to provide information about any C20 buildings (post-1914) that may face closure, have closed, or been identified as a site for redevelopment or major alteration or demolition.

If you know of any in your area please can you provide Pauline Mousley with as much detail as possible about the risk and why the building is of importance (Architect, who built for, any specific features) plus a photo if at all possible. But just a name and address at the minimum is fine and we can look it up. A couple already on the list are: Knight and Lee, Southsea and Debenhams, Guildford. Many thanks for any contributions!

Piers

Boscombe Pier – Neck and Entrance Building – work of Borough Architect, John Burton, 1958-60 – Grade II Listed – a local councillor has tried to start a review of the use of the piers, etc – we will keep a close eye on this.

Worthing Pier – refurbishment of the 1930s buildings on the pier has continued during lockdown.

Fawley Power Station and Theatre

Fawley which we visited in 2017 is now to be the site for a 'smart town' to include 1,380 homes, commercial, civic and employment space. The loss of the buildings and facility has now led to the commissioning of a play written by Off West End and Meyer Whitworth Award-nominated playwright David Lane and Forest Forge Theatre Company.

The writer plans to link heritage, local history and untold community stories connected to the decommissioned Fawley Power Station. The project is being supported by funding from Arts Council England and will also involve partners New Forest Heritage Centre, Waterside Heritage Centre and Creative Histories expert Dr Will Pooley at the University of Bristol. The play will be produced and toured back to the local community in 2022. They are currently in the research and development stage. If you have a story to tell or wish to be involved please contact:

<https://forestforgetheatre.co.uk/fawley-power-station-story/>

Caroline Martin
Chair, C20 Southern Group
8 March 2021