

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OF

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY SOCIETY

held on Saturday 8 July 2023 at 11 am
at St Anselm's Church, 286 Kennington Road, London SE11 5DU

1. **Attendance:** the Meeting was quorate.
2. **Apologies for absence:** a list is available from the Society's office.
3. **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting** held on 11 June 2022 were approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them.
4. **Matters Arising:** The issue of proxy voting had been raised at the 2022 AGM. The Trustees had considered the issue carefully, but did not consider this a top priority and had decided not to make a change. They wish to encourage attendance and discussion in person. The change might also require an amendment to the Society's Memorandum and Articles of Association. On the related issue of notification of the AGM, the date of the 2023 AGM had been announced well in advance and the availability of papers had been improved.
5. **President's Address**

President Catherine Slessor welcomed members to the meeting, and explained that the role of President is largely ceremonial, with the 'heavy lifting' being done by the dedicated Office staff and volunteers. There is still much work to be done in raising awareness among supporters and sceptics. She remarked on the sad passing of Elain Harwood, a great champion of C20 architecture who matched a prodigious mastery of facts with characteristic wit. The Society's work continues, with campaigns, casework and tours, and it punches well above its weight with limited resources.
6. **Chair's Address**
 - 6.1. Chair of Trustees, Ian McInnes, also noted Elain Harwood's passing and emphasised that she will be impossible to replace. Her funeral had been attended by many members, and eloquent eulogies were delivered by the Society's Director and by Duncan Wilson of Historic England. The Director would address the establishment of an Elain Harwood Memorial Casework Fund.
 - 6.2. The Chair observed that part of his remit was to enable Trustees to take a more strategic view of the Society's future. A strategy sub-group had met several times to examine and develop different options for promoting the Society's objectives while widening its public impact, future proofing the Society's finances and encouraging (especially younger) members and volunteers. This involved a strategic review of Casework, Campaigns and Community – the three C's. The

conclusion of this work was that there is no magic bullet for increasing funds and that we must continue to do what we have been doing but 'more and better'. Activities already implemented included charging for some casework, charging RIBA for training, and preparing walk brochures for local authorities. However, the key is to increase individual and corporate memberships.

- 6.3. The Chair also noted that another effective method of fundraising was legacies, which had benefitted the Victorian Society and the Georgian Group substantially. The Chair appealed to members present to consider including the Society in their wills if they had not already done so. A Society member who is a solicitor had offered to answer questions in confidence and draft or amend a member's will free of charge; his contact details are available from the office.
- 6.4. The Chair said that he was stepping down as chair after two years, and that the Society needed a chair who was younger and better connected. Trustees were proposing well-known and respected journalist Hugh Pearman to be elected Director and Trustee at this meeting by members and then to be appointed by Trustees as Chair of Trustees. The Chair expressed the Society's gratitude to retiring trustee Jane Rosier and welcomed Caz Facey, who had been co-opted as a trustee.
- 6.5. The Chair explained that the strategic review had considered how regional groups could be made more effective. There had been a post-Covid decline in participation, with a reluctance to travel and difficulty in finding volunteers to fill positions in formal groups. Insurance requirements (such as the requirement for risk assessments and first aid training for events) also had become more onerous and could not be delegated to regional groups. It is also important to ensure that social media messages are consistent. Regional groups are therefore being replaced by less formal 'Friends of C20' groups without reports or officers, with many of their former activities being brought 'in house'. Local members will now be asked to focus their efforts on increasing recruitment of new members and assisting casework. This will streamline communications and ensure consistency of the message.
- 6.6. The Chair thanked the Director and staff for their work and volunteers for their contributions.

7. Hon Treasurer's Report and presentation of 2022 Accounts

- 7.1. Hon Treasurer, Carolyn Parmeter, presented the 2022 Accounts, which had been published on the Society's website.
- 7.2. Overall income for the year was £332,250, against expenditure of £340,700, leaving a deficit of £8,450, similar to last year. Excluding reserved funds for monographs and journals, the deficit on unrestricted funds was £15,000, up on 2021's £12,000.
- 7.3. Income:
 - 7.3.1. Donations for the year were £15,000, of which £12,800 was unrestricted.
 - 7.3.2. The Historic England annual grant towards casework was £41,000. This has been static for years (a decline in real terms) and is unlikely to increase.
 - 7.3.3. Membership income, the most important income stream, was £164,000, in line with 2021.

7.3.4. Events income was £62,000 and expenses were £20,000, giving a profit of £42,000. This is up on 2021 but still somewhat below the pre-Covid profits in 2019 of nearly £47,000.

7.3.5. Publications saw a profit of £11,500, in addition to previously un-invoiced income of £11,500 from Batsford. The Journal planned for the year was moved to 2023, so expenditure of £11,500 was removed from 2022.

7.4. Expenditure:

7.4.1. Expenditure on the general account was £305,000. Of this, £191,000 was for staff. This was an increase on 2021, reflecting the extra expenditure on more skilled staff. Rent was at a pro bono rate well below market rates thanks to Alan Baxter Associates.

7.4.2. The magazine cost £43,000 (£35,000 net after advertising income). This is a significant cost, but the magazine is an important communications tool.

7.5. Total assets less liabilities was £357,000. Unrestricted cash reserves at the end of 2022 were £303,000. This is modest compared to other amenity societies.

7.6. Looking forward, the Hon Treasurer emphasised that it is important to grow all sources of income and to start to build an endowment fund. Legacies will be key to this.

7.7. In response to a question, the Hon Treasurer said she did not have figures for the impact of a reduced subscription rate for younger members, but the perception was that many more young people were coming to lectures and events.

8. Resolutions

The following Resolutions were proposed and seconded and passed by a show of hands

8.1. **Ordinary Resolution:** to approve and accept the 2022 accounts

8.2. **Ordinary Resolution:** to re-appoint Argents Accountants Ltd as auditors

8.3. **Ordinary Resolution** to elect Hugh Pearman, recommended by the Directors under Article 27 of the Articles of Association, as a Director and Trustee

8.4. **Ordinary Resolution** to re-elect Caz Facey as a Director and Trustee (being a Director and Trustee appointed by Directors and required to retire in accordance with the requirements of Article 29 of the Articles of Association), as recommended by the Directors under Article 27 of the Articles of Association

8.5. **Ordinary Resolution** to re-elect Alan Powers as a Director and Trustee (being one of the one third of existing Directors required to retire in accordance with the rotation requirements of Article 24 of the Articles of Association)

8.6. **Ordinary Resolution** to re-elect Cela Selley as a Director and Trustee (being one of the one third of existing Directors required to retire in accordance with the rotation requirements of Article 24 of the Articles of Association)

8.7. **Ordinary Resolution** to re-elect Mark Eastment as a Director and Trustee (being one of the one third of existing Directors required to retire in accordance with the rotation requirements of Article 24 of the Articles of Association)

8.8. **Ordinary Resolution** to re-elect Ellen Gates as a Director and Trustee (being one of the one third of existing Directors required to retire in accordance with the rotation requirements of Article 24 of the Articles of Association)

9. Director's Report

- 9.1. Staff: The Society now has 4 full time and 2 part time staff.
- 9.2. Elain Harwood: There will be a Remembering Elain Event on 9 September in London. This will be a fun event with music and dancing. Donations are invited to the Elain Harwood C20 Memorial Casework Fund.
- 9.3. Publications: The magazine continues to be a good calling card. One issue was published with two different covers. The Director thanked Philip Sayer, who is stepping down from photographing the Me and My House feature. The Director also thanked the authors of the three monographs published, on Cullinan, Gwynne and Womersley. The Society published two books, on Twentieth Century Houses and Brutalist Britain, and a journal on Holy Houses. Forthcoming publications are on C20 shops and possibly entertainment buildings.
- 9.4. Events: The Society had organised a full programme of UK and international tours. The tour of the Elizabeth line was especially popular. Forthcoming tour destinations include Katowice, Barcelona, Faro and Copenhagen. The Society had organized joint events with Rapha Cycling Club, with the aim of attracting younger members.
- 9.5. Education: Highlights included continuing professional development training for RIBA, participating in Getty Conservation Institute training, and the Director's course on concrete conservation for West Dean College.
- 9.6. Casework and Campaigns: Each of the caseworkers gave a short presentation on a recent case. The Director gave examples of some of the good outcomes during the past year throughout the country, of varying types (including murals, department stores, phone boxes, houses, churches, schools, colleges and leisure facilities). There had been two listings of buildings in Wales. The Society had been pro-active with campaigns for leisure centres and cooling towers, and the Buildings at Risk List is now covering a wider range of building types and locations.
- 9.7. Sustainability: The Building of the Month had focussed on climate and sustainability.
- 9.8. Awards: The Society had nominated two buildings which received Architecture Today Awards for buildings that stand the test of time.
- 9.9. Press coverage: The Society had received good press coverage for its campaigns; the Rupert Street Car Park in Bristol was especially popular. Activity on the Society's key social media accounts was up by more than 25%.

10. Any other business

There being no other business the Chair declared the meeting closed.

..... Date: 2024

Hugh Pearman, Chair