

**HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
The Tower of London, Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

**Minutes**

- Present:** Charles Mackay (Chairman)  
Sir Alan Reid (Deputy Chairman)  
Dawn Austwick (until item 5.2)  
Bridget Cherry  
Sue Farr  
John Hamer  
Sir Adrian Montague  
Sir Trevor McDonald  
Malcolm Reading  
Sir Hugh Roberts  
Sir Roger Wheeler
- In attendance:** Ian Barlow – Chairman of the Campaign Board  
Michael Day - Chief Executive  
John Barnes – Conservation & Learning Director  
Danny Homan – Communications and Development Director  
Sally O’Neill - Finance Director  
Alyson Lawton - Trust and Company Secretary  
For items 1 to 4 only ;  
Adrian Phillips -The Surveyor of the Fabric,  
Terry Gough- The Head of Estates and Gardens,  
Kate Frame - The Head of Conservation and Collections Care;  
Dr Lucy Worsley -The Chief Curator;  
Sebastian Edwards - The Deputy Chief Curator;  
Sally Dixon Smith – Curator (Collections) -The Tower of London  
Alexandra McCulloch – Curator – Kensington Palace

**1. Chairman’s comments**

1.1 The Chairman noted that all Trustees were present for this meeting.

**2. Minutes of the previous meetings**

2.1 The minutes of the meetings held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 were approved.

**3. Matters Arising**

3.1 Further discussions had taken place on the Investment policy.

**4. Strategic Development:**

**4.1 Annual review of Strategic Aim : “Give the Palaces the care they deserve”**

4.1.1 The Board noted the contents of the Conservation report. The Board agreed that the report showed a high standard of delivery, professionalism and breadth of knowledge. Malcolm Reading asked about risks and the greatest challenge. For buildings conservation, the greatest challenge would be a new approach to procurement. For the estates, it was keeping up the momentum of the projects which linked the gardens to the palaces and maintaining the funding for them. For Conservation and Collections Care, the challenge was keeping the complement of skills to enable the projects to be delivered. Our main source of textile conservation training had closed and whilst a funded internship gave a short term solution, there was currently no long term plan for the sector. Sir Hugh Roberts agreed that the national skills base was diminishing and it was important to find a way to transfer knowledge to future generations. The Board asked whether there was more that could be done, for instance engaging with the higher education sector. The Chief Executive explained that a report by Demos commissioned by the Textile Conservation Centre about skills would be launched at the Banqueting

House. Historic Royal Palaces were co-sponsors. The Board asked for more information from the report after its launch.

The Board felt that our conservation work should be more widely known by the public and asked the Chief Executive and the Conservation and Learning Director to reflect on how this might be achieved. The Board noted that the work had won awards and agreed that the conservations projects could inform education work and had the potential to unlock funding.

Sir Alan Reid asked about the impact on tendering from the new procurement arrangements. The Surveyor of the Fabric explained that the new approach was being promoted by government and conclusions from the future review would be reported to the Board in due course.

The Board endorsed the ideas set out in paragraph 5 for further evolving our conservation work.

## **4.2 The Work of the Curators**

**4.2.1** The Chief Curator and three members of the curatorial department gave a presentation to illustrate the diversity of their work at Historic Royal Palaces. The Board were pleased to have this first formal opportunity to talk to the curators about their work and asked that it now be an annual event. The Board noted the range of diverse projects listed in the report and felt that in future it would be informative to adopt a layout similar to that in the Conservation report. The Board asked about the balance of time spent between supporting existing projects and original research. The Chief Curator felt that it was a challenge to find the time for the research. She explained that university partnerships had been formed and that these had helped. Sir Hugh Roberts congratulated the team for their work and emphasised the importance of finding time for original research by the curators themselves and to ensure that this is regularly published, as it would add to our reputation. This view was endorsed by other Trustees. The Board emphasised the importance for curators to attend relevant conferences and groups and also noted the valuable role that Curators played in fundraising. The Board endorsed the proposal to produce an annual report on our research.

## **4.3 Admissions Pricing for 2009/10**

The Board noted the contents of the Communication and Development Director's report on admissions pricing at the Palaces for 2009/10, discussed the detail and endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Team. Noting that it had already been necessary to communicate some prices to the Travel Trade in advance of these discussions, the Board agreed that recommendations on pricing for 2010/11 should be considered at their July meeting.

## **4.4 Kensington Palace**

The Board noted and discussed the contents of the Chief Executive's report and supported the recommendation from the Executive Board.

## **4.5 Henry 500 Update**

The Board noted the contents of the report, which brought together the plans at both the Tower of London and Hampton Court Palace to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Henry VIII's accession to the throne. The Board noted the range of initiatives. Trustees commented on specific elements; the use of robes and gowns by visitors; the setting of the important historic objects on loan and the planned conference. The Chief Executive noted that the challenge was to find ways to encourage more visitors, especially families and this meant adding different approaches. We would be creating opportunities for visitors to engage more fully in the experience. Trustees were encouraged that a pilot this autumn would test some of these ideas.

## **5. Monitoring Performance**

### **5.1 Chief Executive's Written Reviews for August and September**

- 5.1.1 The Board noted the contents of the Chief Executive's Reviews for August and September. The Chief Executive briefed the Board on recent fundraising successes.

The Board noted the update on the investment policy in the report. Given the current financial market, it was proposed that an Investment Committee (The Chairman, Sir Alan Reid, Sir Adrian Montague and Ian Barlow) hold further discussions, take action as necessary and report back to the main Board of Trustees meeting in November.

### **5.2 The Mid Year Financial Review**

- 5.2.1 The Board noted the contents of the Finance Director's report, which provided an early top down view of the likely financial pressures on the current year and agreed to the recommendations in the report.

## **6 Projects and Expenditure**

### **6.1 The Security Contract at the Tower of London**

- 6.1.1 The Board noted the contents of the report and endorsed the contract extension of two years with a view to the contract going out to competitive tender in 2010.

### **6.2 Financial approval for the permanent interpretation of the Tudor Palace at Hampton Court, part of Henry VIII; heads and hearts**

- 6.2.1 The Conservation and Learning Director explained that the expenditure comprised a package of work, no single item itself exceeded the £250,000 limit for approval by Trustees but taken together, the limit was breached and therefore had been brought to Trustees for approval. Since the report had been written, the 3 D designers for the exhibition had resigned and an alternate approach - managing the subcontractors directly was being considered. The Board of Trustees noted the contents of the report and authorised the Investment decision for the project as recommended.

There were two contracts which would be awarded under the single tender action rules. This had been approved by John Barnes and Michael Day after they were satisfied with the cases put.

### **6.3 The Conservation/Repairs of the Lion Gate Piers at Hampton Court Palace**

- 6.3.1 The Board of Trustees noted the contents of the report and authorised the Investment decision for the project as recommended. The Board recognised the power of "before" and "after work" photographs in promoting the conservation message.

## **7. Governance and Organisation**

### **7.1 The Nominations Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2008.**

- 7.1.1 The Board noted the minutes from this meeting.

### **7.2 The Trustees Strategic Planning Meeting – Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September**

- 7.2.1 The Board noted the arrangements for the meeting.

## **8. Any other Business**

- 8.1 The Conservation and Learning Director reported recent developments regarding

- The planning applications for the development of the Jolly Boatman site at

Hampton Court. The Board confirmed their discussions in March 2005 and January 2007 that, as formal application for planning permission had now been made, should it become necessary, Historic Royal Palaces should ask the First Secretary of State to issue an article 14 direction to ensure that the local authority cannot approve the application without proper consideration being given to the national significance of the site.

- Discussions at the recent UNESCO World Heritage Committee Meeting.
- The findings of the recent archaeological work in Base Court, Hampton Court Palace

**9 Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008 at the Kensington Palace**