



CITY HERITAGE SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2011

Last year's report suggested the uncomfortable situation of the economy "poised between emergence from a recession and a possible plunge into something even worse." Recalled a year later, it would appear a wildly optimistic scenario in suggesting the possibility of early recovery: the mounting sovereign debt crisis points to much more daunting possibilities.

But the other opening remarks in last year's report remain valid: the City Heritage Society recognises the essential importance to the country's economy of the prosperity of the City as a leader in world financial services, given its vast contribution to wealth creation and to national revenues. That the prosperity of the City of London, with its long history and international high repute as a world trading centre, is served both by the natural advantage of its geographical position between Tokyo and New York, so that its working day overlaps with both centres and by other structural advantages. It is generally seen as a pleasant place to work and the protection of its character and ambiance ought to be regarded as a priority.

It is with this aspect of the City that the Society is always concerned and we continue our efforts, both through attention to the planning process and through any available means of advocacy, to champion conservation, including protection of the smaller amenities of the City, especially its web of lanes and courtyards between the great highways.

These appear to be much appreciated by the lunchtime crowds in the City, especially around Cornhill and other great highways around Bow Lane and Watling Street (right) and around St Paul's where gardens are being laid east of the Cathedral where the coaches used to wait; a garden has been established east of New Change and the St Lawrence Fountain, an unusual newcomer, has settled down! Overall, there is an impression of the City's increased amenity compared with other times we have known.

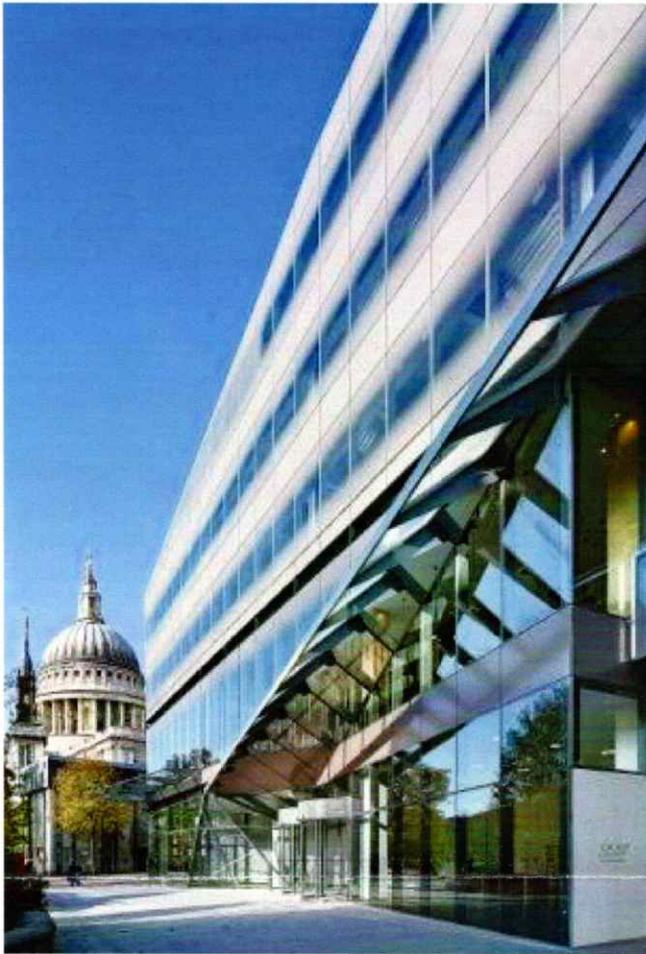
There are some assets which might be better used, particularly the riverside: there is a continuous walkway from Blackfriars almost to the Tower with only a few breaks, such as Brook's Wharf where we hope to see a riverside walkway to Stew Lane and to see some improvement in the surroundings of Queenhithe, at once the City's oldest and only remaining dock.

We have noticed that the Thames path beyond Cannon Street Railway Bridge is frequented to a much greater extent than that between Blackfriars and Southwark Bridge. This may be attributed to the unpleasant character of Upper Thames Street east of the underpass. There are a few uncomfortable elevated crossings and somewhat perilous ways at ground level but many people frequenting the City may not know the way to the riverside, other than at the several river crossings and are so deterred from this valuable amenity! Might some action be taken in this special year to make the incomparable riverside more accessible to the City's daytime population?



Elsewhere, at the heart of the City, there appears to have been no advance in restoring the splendid Lutyens building in Poultry to useful life while nearby, the view of Mansion House and of King William Street is not improved by the top-hammer of the new St Swithin's Court. We are glad that Cheapside appears to be back in business after a long period of re-conditioning and

we hope that One New Change (below) will have the effect of attracting new businesses to the rest of this ancient mart.



East of Gracechurch Street and Bishopsgate, the development of several major projects continues in spite of the continuing economic winter prevailing over so much of Europe. This is particularly noticeable on the Rood Lane-Fenchurch Street site where the core of a tower block is rising. The City Heritage Society has not always liked tower blocks but, if they are started, they must be finished and since this tower and others form part of the “eastern cluster”, they may, it is hoped, appear better in context than individually.

COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Society continues to monitor planning proposals of which some of the most important are as follows:

London Wall Place - St Alphage Church Tower Remains, Abutment Of Highwalk Bridge Link Into Willoughby House, Wallside And St Alphage Church Tower Remains, EC2

This is a major application around London Wall encompassing the remains of St. Alphage Tower and segments of the original London Wall. The settings of

these historic elements will be greatly improved and opened up and will also allow greater public access, which is greatly welcomed. However, the new development, although of good quality, is very similar to all the other new buildings along and around London Wall, which will make the area even more homogenous.

30 Old Bailey & 60 Ludgate Hill, London, EC4

Although on a key route and view of St. Paul's frontage, this scheme improves on the bland existing building's streetscape and is welcomed.

Bream Buildings/ 25 – 32 Chancery Lane

Although we were concerned at the height of the roof extension and that it will be a very strong element along Chancery Lane, planning permission was granted.

London River Park - North Side Of River Thames From Paul's Walk To Three Cranes Walk & From Waterman's Walk To Water Lane, EC3

This is an ongoing application still under consideration. We welcome this project in principle as it utilises the river much more than it has previously been. However, the details and implementation are critical to its success and we will be keeping an eye on its progress.

Broken Wharf House, 2 Broken Wharf, EC4

The proposed new building follows the massing and sight lines of the existing building, due to the St. Paul's heights restrictions. The design is acceptable and fits in with the adjoining buildings. We are pleased that further residential use on the river frontage is being proposed.

Ocean House, 10 Little Trinity Lane

Major scheme of hotel, residential and retail. This scheme is still under consideration and although large, does appear to fit with the area and adjoining buildings. However, further consideration is being given to the application.

101 Moorgate

New office and retail building. This proposal is under consideration and replaces a very bland and ordinary building on the other side of Moor Lane to Moorgate tube station. The new building is an improvement but does not contribute much more to the streetscape and is disappointing. The site adjoins two Conservation Areas and is prominent in its locality and really should be of a higher design quality. Further comments are being prepared.

Cannon St/Queen St/Walbrook

New development and relocation of Temple of Mithras to its original location. This is to be considered and comments submitted but we welcome the restoration of this important archaeological element.

THE CITY HERITAGE PAINTER-STAINERS AWARD 2011



The City Heritage Award, in July 2011, was not quite so dramatic as in 2010, when the restoration of The Monument by the Corporation of London was recognised but the entries for the award were wonderfully “with the grain” of the City, being two separate groups of 18th century houses; a warehouse conversion and a classic office building of 1933, upgraded to 21st century office accommodation standards. The assessors of the Award chose the impressive restoration of three late 18th century houses in New Street, between Bishopsgate and Cutlers Gardens. Various used over the years, they have been restored and are, again, single-occupancy houses: a circle has been completed over two centuries!

The Lord Mayor, Michael Bear, accompanied by Sheriff Wolfe, unveiled the plaque at 6 New Street. The reception which followed was attended by officers and members of the Society and by the Master Painter-Stainer, General Sir Roger Wheeler, and Liverymen of the Company. The Lord Mayor presented certificates to

the supervising architect, Chris Dyson, and to Susie Counsell, representing East Bank Studios as owner and contractor. As always, it seemed a valuable occasion, recognising as it did, the importance of buildings of special character in the City being skilfully restored and brought back to useful life.



Flanked by Desmond FitzPatrick and the Lord Mayor, General Sir Roger Wheeler, Master Painter-Stainers, addressing the reception held in ‘The Magpie’ public house.

The Society is particularly glad of its partnership in this award with The Worshipful Company of Painter-Stainers.

The Assessors in 2011 were:

Desmond FitzPatrick BA FSA (Chairman)
Lady Freeman PhD Dip Cons (AA) FSA
Matthew Saunders ARIBA AADipl
Andrew Hunter Painter-Stainers Company
Roy Millard Painter-Stainers Company
Peter Luscombe RIBA City Heritage Society
Annie Hampson RIBA Corporation of the City of London
Douglas Woodward CBE, President of the Society, attended for the discussions of the Assessors

EVENTS

There was a considerable gathering for this year’s Seminar ‘**The City of London as a great visitor attraction**’ with many strands of the City of London interests represented as well as City Heritage Society members. We covered the City’s history and central position in the transport system and its visible attractions and, with the help of guest speakers, explored the growth of hotels, the resurgence of shopping in the City and its favourable social effects and the place of the arts in the City, being reminded that the Corporation of the City of London is, after the BBC and the Arts Council, the largest patron of the Arts in Great Britain.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held in April in the Aldermen's Court Room.

Other events included a well-attended visit in May to No 2 Temple Place, off the Embankment, an outstanding Arts and Crafts house designed in 1895 by John Loughborough Pearson for Waldorf Astor (below).



In July we viewed the winning entry for the 2011 Award – 6 New Street – and toured the surroundings – the considerable remnant of the East India Company warehouse, Devonshire Square and Devonshire Row. Another house visit, in September, took us to Linley Sambourne House off Kensington High Street, the perfectly preserved late Victorian residence of a popular illustrator. In October we toured the substantial remains of the northern and western parts of the Wall of London and the Blitz still visible in Noble Street and around the Barber-Surgeons' Hall.

The Society's Annual Dinner was held in November at Guildhall Club (below). Peter Luscombe, our Deputy Chairman, proposed the toast to Our Guests and Peter Wynn Rees, the City Planning Officer was Guest of Honour.



In December a number of our members attended the Carol Service of St Botolph Bishopsgate, a splendid occasion in this historic church. By invitation, the Chairman read a Lesson. Events this year will include another visit to 2 Temple Place which will temporarily house the collection of the William Morris Gallery during its refurbishment; a visit to the Bishopsgate Institute's splendid building and to St John's Gate, Clerkenwell. Details will be circulated. Finally, my grateful thanks to our Committee who really keep the show on the road and heartiest congratulations to our president, Douglas Woodward, on the publication in 2011 of his history of the City: "*A Miraculous Survival*".

Desmond FitzPatrick, Chairman

The Society's Executive Committee 2011

C.Douglas Woodward CBE
Desmond FitzPatrick BA FSA
Peter Luscombe RIBA
Marina Nicholson
Patrick Burke
Les Breadmore
Anthony Hemy RIBA

President
Chairman
Deputy Chairman
Hon. Secretary
Membership Secretary
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