

**The City of Durham Trust**  
(Registered charity number 502132)

**MINUTES** of the 80<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Trust in the Assembly Rooms Theatre, North Bailey on Saturday 1 October 2022 commencing at 14.00.

At the start of the meeting the Trust's Architectural Award for 2020/21 was presented to Maya Polenz from Durham Cathedral in recognition of the Cathedral's superb new glazed lobbies.

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chair (John Lowe) welcomed attendees (in person and via Zoom) to the Trust's 2022 AGM in the Assembly Rooms Theatre and pointed out the emergency exits. Apologies were received from Paul Beard, Roberta Blackman-Woods, Roger Cornwell, Kevin Cummings, Francis Pritchard, Martin Roberts, Lionel Stout, Angela Tracy and Mr Woolstenholmes.

**2. MINUTES OF THE 79<sup>th</sup> AGM (27 October 2021)**

The Minutes, already approved by Trustees, were noted.

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising. The Chair thanked Jan Hutchinson for recording the Trust's Minutes and other documents over the last year.

**4. REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND PRESENTATION OF ACCOUNTS OF THE TRUST for the period ended 7 April 2022: presented by the Honorary Treasurer Dr Malcolm Reed**

Malcolm, the Trust's Treasurer since 2015, highlighted items from the Trust's accounts (detailed in the Annual Review). There was a slight loss as there were more in-person meetings over the period, but core membership has remained constant. The end of year balance was £14.3k, so there are sufficient reserves. The 2021-22 Annual Report and Accounts, already approved by Trustees and independently examined, were noted. Malcolm reported that Francis Pritchard has kindly offered to take on the role of Honorary Treasurer now, in addition to his role as Honorary Secretary, so he is very confident that the accounts are in good hands going forward. At the last AGM, Members agreed to remit the appointment of Examiner to Trustees, so Francis will recommend an Examiner to the Trustees. Malcolm thanked everyone for their support during his enjoyable years as Treasurer. The Chair thanked Malcolm for his service, both on managing the accounts and his unrivalled expertise on transport issues.

**5. APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES**

The Chair explained that CIO rules state that one third of Trustees must retire each year but they are eligible for re-election. Dr Malcolm Reed and Dr Lucy Szablewska are retiring and not standing again. The Chair thanked Lucy for her sterling work on local issues and for being Minutes Secretary from 2014-2019. The other two retiring Trustees, Roger Cornwell and Dr Adrian Green, were proposed and re-elected by consensus. The Chair thanked them for their continued service. Lucy proposed Chris Hugill - a retired solicitor who has lived in Durham for 40 years - to become a new Trustee. Chris was elected by consensus. The Chair urged any other Members who were interested in becoming a Trustee to get in touch.

**6. APPOINTMENT OF THE HONORARY OFFICERS OF THE TRUST**

Proposed by the Chair, and carried by acclaim, Francis Pritchard was elected in absentia as both Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. The Chair thanked him. As confirmed at Item 4, Francis will propose the appointment of an Examiner to Trustees.

**7. HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT**

In the Honorary Secretary's absence, the Chair reported that membership numbers are reasonably steady, but we would welcome more recruits, so he urged Members to nudge their acquaintances.

**8. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

It has been an auspicious year for the Trust on our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary, marking the remarkable foundation of the City of Durham Preservation Society in 1942, in the midst of war - just imagine a group of citizens in Kyiv doing the same today! Around that time Thomas Sharp must have started writing his *Cathedral City* (published 1944). The exceptionally good Annual Review, produced by Trustee Prof. Tim Clark, has details of the Trust's work over the last year and how we are marking the anniversary, which

includes two commemorative paintings of Crook Hall (by Member Angela Tracy), a new bench in the Botanic Gardens, and 'asset of the month' posts on our website (by Trustee Sue Childs). Trust publications and cards are available to purchase after the meeting. The Trust has sponsored two local guides: *Coal Stories* (co-authored by Trustee Dr Adrian Green) and the Parish Council's *Durham Seven Hills Trail* (pioneered by Member David Miller). A major event planned is the WHS Conference '*Perspectives on Durham's World Heritage Site*' on 5 November at the Pemberton Rooms on Palace Green - final details for this will be shared electronically. On the actual anniversary, 9 November, we are holding an informal reception in St Nics church, from 19.00 to 21.00, that all Members are invited to attend. We are keen to develop partnerships and now have good working relationships with the National Trust at Crook Hall, Redhills CIO and organisations working to improve the riverbanks including the Wear Rivers Trust. The issue that preoccupies us most at the moment is preparing for the public inquiry regarding the major housing developments at Sniperley Park, with a Statement of Case required by Monday and a Case Management Conference next Thursday. The Chair thanked John Ashby and Matthew Phillips for drafting the Statement of Case regarding the appeals. The inquiry starts on 16 January - we will keep Members informed on proceedings. All these outreach activities raise the profile of the Trust and aim to engage as many people as possible to protect and enhance our natural and historic heritage. I was struck by Thomas Sharp's words on the back cover of *Cathedral City* that planning issues should be the concern of everyone: "*The thing we all have to realise is that planning in a democracy must either be something in the nature of a national pursuit, or nothing at all. For in a democracy government and local authorities can make the really important moves only under the pressure of public opinion.*" So, we hope you will all continue to support Trustees in our efforts to protect our city.

#### 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business. The Chair thanked all attendees and drew the AGM business to a close at 14.40.

After the formal agenda, Prof. John Pendlebury from Newcastle University presented an illustrated talk on Thomas Sharp, town planner and author of *Cathedral City - A Plan for Durham*. The talk '*Thomas Sharp: Urbanist, Modernist, Preservationist, Planner .... and a Durham lad*' was very well received with a number of questions from Members. A vote of thanks was given by Dr Adrian Green, who also invited all attendees to a reception in Durham Museum to view the exhibition: '*How Historic Durham Survived the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*', which includes Thomas Sharp's plaster model of his vision for the city.