

Broomfield House Trust

Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting 5th April 2016

- The Trust has continued to participate in the meetings of the Broomfield House Partnership Board (8 meetings since its inception in October 2014).
- Trustees visited Arundel Museum and Clissold House (recipients of HLF funding) in June 2015, talking to key fund-raisers/managers. Arundel Museum (Sussex), being solely a museum, not in a park, without a café, and entirely new-build, was less relevant, though we were made very aware of the requirement for continual fund-raising to maintain the operation. Clissold House (in Clissold Park, Hackney) is a much closer parallel and is a useful model. The café, run by a company (Caper Green), provided very significant income, and events, including weddings and events (not for huge groups, and no car-parking available) were also important.
- The very comprehensive Conservation Management Plan for the park and its buildings has been completed by Insall Associates (conservation architects), with substantial correcting and amending inputs from trustees and others. A summary of the CMP's findings is available on the LBE website, but the full and final version is still not available.
- Regarding the CMP's findings on the House, it is now clear that the much of the northern end of the house and the stairwell retain heritage significance and could be restored, permitting reinstatement of the staircase and murals, whereas the southern end is very heavily damaged, and could be seen as a blank canvas in respect of repairs, reconstruction and uses. The advice for re-building the south end would be to use (cheaper) modern materials (maximising insulation, fire safety etc., and installing a lift and WCs) and an internal design which optimises flexible use of space;
- Assessment and repair of supporting scaffolding has been carried out (with Historic England grant help), so the surviving house structure has been stabilised.
- The stable block has also been assessed, some works undertaken, and new security for the windows, and for the still extant 1960s housing has been installed.
- The Trust arranged for the recovery of the 1950s model of the house from LBE storage and for its repair by Ralph Hutchings, and for the construction of a new mobile display table for the model (also by Ralph – thanks on both counts). The model, with explanatory banners designed by John Cullen (fabricated by LBE), has been publicly exhibited at a number

of local sites, including shop windows (Scrivens, MultiYork, an estate agent) in Palmers Green, and the Palmers Green Library.

- The Trust has informed the public about the restoration project, by leafletting and word of mouth, at many venues and occasions through the year, including the shop window and library displays, park events (summer music events and orchard and conservatory events), and the Palmers Green Festival.
- In the run-up to the completion of the CMP, the public consultation, and the options appraisal, trustees met with various surveyors and other experts early in the year, and Insall's sub-consultants, PPS and Fourth Street, later on.
- Following on from the completion of the CMP, LBE has undertaken a public consultation (mainly via the internet, ended 30th November, 2015) on the future of the house. Full results are on our website, but the strongest support was for use as a community hub and heritage arts and cultural destination. Most support for funding was for grants and council funding. However we know that this latter isn't going to happen. There was less support for and most opposition to a commercial/business input and to unspecified development in the stable-yard.
- After market research and other investigations, Insall Associates have prepared long and short lists of options for the future of the house and stable yard. Likelihood of a credible business plan and financial viability (generating income for the long term maintenance of the buildings) are key elements in the appraisal of these options, one of which must be selected as the basis of a restoration bid to HLF's Heritage Enterprise Scheme. This bid will require the involvement of one or more commercial partners.
- Insall and LBE are now in detailed discussion and cost evaluation for the currently favoured option that is most in-line with public responses in the consultation that closed last November. Key people in this are Francis Maude, Insall's lead consultant for the House project, and Tony Pierce for LBE (replacement for Joanne Woodward). It seems likely this option could involve commercial/business activity in the renovated stable block, possibly some form of residential development in the stable yard, and a café/restaurant/events organiser in the house; as well as accommodating community activities, some space in the house might also support stable yard business activity, such as a gallery for displaying and selling art and craftwork from the stable yard site.
- A c. £67K bid enquiry to the Our Heritage funding stream of the HLF has been prepared (Ivor Evans). This comprises a digital animation of the house in history, and restoration of exemplar fragments of the murals,

with links to digitised information on the restoration process, Broomfield Estate documents, and oral history provided by local residents.

- The Trust's bank account has been transferred from Barclays to HSBC (Palmers Green), and £235 was collected for the Trust in Palmers Green Waitrose in June 2015. Furthermore, a dormant Trust account (also with HSBC, Enfield Town, has recently been identified, apparently containing significant monies, and Roger Blows (former Trust Secretary) has attempted to transfer the funds to our active account.