

Approved Minutes of a Meeting of the Conservation Committee  
1.00 – 2.30  
24 January 2023  
Godwin Room, Clare College

1. Apologies and Welcome to New Members: Apologies were received from Anne Stillman; Lizzy Conder and Wendy Pullan were welcomed to the Committee. [The MCR member was not present.]
2. Declarations of Interest: There were none.
3. Minutes of Last Meeting (18.10.2022): These were approved.
4. Old Court Donor Plaque: Our Development Director, Toby Wilkinson, presented a paper proposing that a plaque be placed in the Old Court back archway to acknowledge donors to the Old Court restoration project, and perhaps to list earlier College donors as well. Questions were raised: as to whether Historic England would allow placement in the archway, given that Old Court is a Grade I listed building; about how prominent the plaque would be; about whether it would cover the Mellon inscription. However, it was generally agreed that such a plaque was appropriate and that it should include all donors to the College, past and present. An image of the donor plaque at Caius was circulated as one example of how such a plaque had been done, in both a functional and aesthetically pleasing manner.
5. Matters Arising and for Report [taken out of order]:
  - a. Progress on Great Hall, Screen and Small Halls: The Chair reported that representatives of the Old Court Working Party and Conservation had met several times to agree on matters that included a ventilation mechanism for the Great Hall; repainting of the Small Hall and lighting for the Screen Hall. Deborah Hoy reported that she had just learned that the chosen wall sconces for the Screen Hall did not have the correct 'drivers' required and, disappointingly, an alternative would have to be found. The Bursar noted that any lighting fixtures that might provide a temporary solution could be replaced and moved elsewhere in the College. A visual image showing a decision as to how the College crest was to be painted in the Great Hall ceiling was also circulated before the meeting.
  - b. Furnishing of River Room: A colour board of the furnishings and colours selected (again by representatives of the Old Court Working Party and Conservation) was shown to the Committee; Deborah Hoy noted that the suppliers had been changed and it was thought that their version of the dining chairs was an improvement on the previous design. Deborah also provided a timeline for the completion of the North Wing: kitchens, buttery and Small Hall: 18 April; River Room and Great Hall: 31 May; tent due to be removed: 15 May. Deborah also reported that the floor in the Great Hall is nearing the end of its life and will have to be replaced, although this will not be done before the end of May.
6. Fellows' Library, Progress:
  - a. Blinds and Heating Mats: There was no information, at the time of our meeting, on the issue of whether the heating mats could withstand weight, but Deborah Hoy later confirmed (27.01) that the technical department of the company from which we're ordering the mats told us that weight would not be an issue, and that there was 'no real weight limit for us to adhere to'. She also reported that we were still waiting for colour samples for the blinds.
  - b. Furnishings (photograph attached): The Chair reported that, following an online exchange with Luke Hughes, it was felt that some of the decorative wood pieces removed from the Great Hall furniture could be reused as parts of newly made furnishing elsewhere, perhaps in the Fellows' Library (for example, by being made into small tables). The Bursar noted that as Luke Hughes may not continue to work for the College we must make sure to recover these surplus pieces. It was also noted that it is hoped that the books will be returned to the Fellows' Library in August.
7. Discussions with Art Committee:
  - a. Proposed Inventory and Asset Strategy Plan: The Art Committee's plan was outlined, and it was agreed this was a good idea; an audit of art and objects is scheduled to begin in September, at which time all College rooms will be surveyed. Past college records will also be updated.
  - b. Relation of Art and Conservation Committees; Renaming: Some members felt that these two committees should merge, others strongly opposed the idea, noting the potential unwieldiness of

such a group as well as the extra workload for members; it was also noted that each committee required different kinds of knowledge and expertise. However, it was agreed that some form of defined co-ordination should take place. The current reporting structure of the two committees was also noted (Conservation reports to Estates, Art to the Governing Body). The Bursar has proposed a restructuring in which both would report to Finance. No conclusions were reached about a possible new name for our committee.

8. Forward Planning: Our proposed 'Four Year Plan' Once Again: The Chair asked that our plan be given sustained attention and not be allowed to be forgotten. Deborah Hoy reported that the Committee's input would be needed for Phase 2 of the Old Court project, when the Godwin and Latimer rooms (which are to be rewired) will require refurbishment. Whether we should also attempt to raise the question of the Domus Room was again mooted. Donald Hearn suggested putting in a substantial bid for the Domus and the Committee's work on other spaces. Patricia Fara noted that there is much concern among other members of the College about the current state of the Domus. It was agreed that we should approach Howard Griffiths to give a talk about the horticultural designs of the panelling to increase awareness of the room's significance, perhaps to be scheduled in Michaelmas 2023.
9. AOB
10. Date of Lent Term, 2023 Meeting: Tuesday, 9 May 2023.