



Glasgow Conservation Trust West Convenor's Report 2004-2005

This truly has been the most extraordinary year for the Trust. In the spring of 2005, after an external review of Glasgow's conservation bodies, the City Council and Historic Scotland decided that a new, city-wide trust should be established and that funding for GCTW ultimately would be withdrawn. The lack of continued revenue and capital support left the Trust's Board with no other choice than to initiate the orderly winding-up of the company. If the special resolution we are to consider later is adopted, after 16 years of conservation work in the West End, Glasgow Conservation Trust West is set to close down on 31 March, 2006.

The external review commissioned by the City and Historic Scotland assessed GCTW's performance very positively and as such the Board's strategy has been to continue operations for as long as possible. The Board has extended the 2004-05 financial year through to 30 September 2005. This eighteen-month accounting period allowed the auditors to take a wider view of the Trust's financial affairs in the advance of its imminent closure. This extended financial period also coincided with the termination of revenue support from Historic Scotland on 30 September.

Fortunately, the Trust was permitted to continue to make major grant offers until the deadline of 30 September, with the responsibility for any uncompleted schemes ultimately being assigned to Historic Scotland. Thus the Trust was able to approve one final project that it had been progressing for several years: the restoration of the Clevedon Crescent pleasure gardens. At long last, this work is now nearing completion and it makes an appropriate valedictory project for the Trust.

The impending closure of the Trust also led to important staff changes. In September, the Board regretfully agreed to make redundant both the Trust's Director, Dr. John Russell, and Mrs. Lynne Rickards, the Trust's publications editor and office manager. In order to steer the Trust during its final two quarters prior to closure in 2006, Assistant Director Mr Gordon Urquhart was promoted to the post of Acting Director.

Looking back, since the Trust was established in 1990 it has provided over £2.3 million in grant assistance for a wide range of conservation projects, from the restoration of a single stained glass window to major engineering works such as at Ruskin Terrace. Altogether the Trust has co-ordinated funding for nearly three hundred projects ranging in cost from £100 to £250,000.

In addition to the many physical improvements to the West End's historic townscape, the Trust also became an important focal point for the wider community through its publications, masterclasses and lectures, walking tours and exhibitions, its free technical advice service as well as its extensive library and historical archive. Mostly, however, the Trust helped to engender a common cause for the conservation, repair and maintenance of this, the most architecturally important Victorian/Edwardian district in Scotland. Hopefully, its legacy will be remembered as an important part of the illustrious history of the West End of Glasgow.

Professor David Green
Convenor

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