



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2022



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

Charity information

The Hackney Society Limited is a civic and amenity society.

Board of Trustees:

Ray Blackburn
Monica Blake – resigned 22 September 2021
Sue Doe – co-opted 01 November 2021
Laurie Elks – resigned 10 April 2021
Wendy Forrest – resigned 22 October 2021
Tony Gillett
Julia Lafferty
Nick Perry – resigned 22 September 2021
Annette Russell – co-opted 25 January 2022 (resigned 24 April 2022)

Officers:

Chair: Nick Perry – resigned 22 September 2021
Vice Chair: (vacant)
Treasurer: Tony Gillett

Registered office: The Round Chapel
1d Glenarm Road
London E5 0LY

Bankers: The Co-operative Bank PLC
P.O. Box 250
Skelmersdale WN8 6WT

Independent Examiner: David Harris FCMA
36 Malvern Road
London E8 3LP



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022. The company's charitable objects are as follows:

- 1. To promote the highest standards in design and protect Hackney's unique heritage.**
- 2. To encourage positive development of the borough's built and natural environments, through engagement with a broad cross-section of local people and experts.**
- 3. To encourage exemplary new design, regeneration and conservation of our rich heritage.**

The Hackney Society is a membership organisation, a registered charity, and a company limited by guarantee. An elected Board of Trustees, drawn from the membership, manages the work of the Society.

What do we do?

- Organise public events including talks, guided walks, exhibitions and site visits (aimed at members, non-members and new audiences)
- Produce publications which celebrate Hackney's social, cultural and architectural history
- Produce a regular newsletter 'Spaces' to highlight the society's work and important current issues
- Campaign to protect local buildings of historical and/or architectural merit
- Co-ordinate a Planning Group to assess important developments and emerging policy on the built environment
- Promote high standards of design, construction and conservation, including through making comments on selected planning applications in the borough
- Support the six Conservation Areas Advisory Committees (CAAC) made up of local people including publication of their minutes on our website, where required
- Build links between residents, officials and councillors, including being a member of Sustainable Hackney
- Provide advice and support to local groups to help them improve their neighbourhoods



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

Review of activities during year ended 31 March 2022

Introduction

Despite the fact the Society receives no public funding, it continued to deliver a modest programme of projects and events on modest income from activities and donations, whilst maintaining its public profile and its level of engagement with the planning authority on matters of development, and develop future projects.

Crucially, the Society continues to meet its charitable objectives.

Continuing public health measures to mitigate the spread of new Coronavirus-19 variants have ebbed and flowed during the year. The planned project to engage members and the wider public to discuss the future shape of the Society is still on hold and has not resumed.

We continued to print quarterly issues of *Spaces*, and publish them online. Events continued online with their new style and audience, evolved into a “hybrid” form, in which we live-streamed a physical event online, followed by some face-to-face walks and visits. The new book we published, jointly with Hackney History, sold out within a year.

The 2021 AGM saw Nick Perry resign as Chair and trustee, and Monica Blake resign as Chair of the Publications Group and as trustee. Nick continues to act as Secretary of the Planning Group and provides essential support to the committee on admin and IT matters. Nevertheless his experience, energy and expertise left a space which is a challenge to fill. Similarly Monica’s long service, including spells as Acting Chair and Vice-Chair and in particular in leading on the publications front, has yet to be fully replaced, although Sue Doe has picked up the editor role for *Spaces* and the first issue under her management has been successfully produced. Earlier in the year, having edited and impressively marketed the Society’s 50th anniversary book, Laurie Elks resigned as trustee, although he continues to play a valuable role in organising the events programme with Ray Blackburn. From October 2021 Ray Blackburn has acted as Caretaker Chair and we co-opted Sue Doe and Annette Russell to the trustees. The trustees continue to seek new members.

1. Membership

Membership is stable at 258 members of whom 57 are life members, and as a body provides the largest single source of income, albeit generating little to no surplus for general projects. In the wake of our change of bankers in 2017, there has continued to be an encouraging take-up of non-Standing Order renewals.

2. Fundraising and volunteering

The necessary work to continue the activities of The Hackney Society either has been undertaken by volunteers, or, where appropriate and funding has been obtained, outsourced. Work such as organising events, editing the newsletter, book sales, managing the membership and dealing with planning matters continues to be done solely by volunteers including, and especially, the Trustees.



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

3. Programme of events

As the Covid-19 pandemic ebbed and flowed, we continued with online talks and tours, which again attracted large audiences. We also held some “hybrid” events (held live or part-recorded and streamed online). In some cases films were placed on the [Hackney Society YouTube Channel](#) to be viewed by people not able to attend at the time.

These events require the hire of venues and technical resources. To cover the cost of this we offered an optional £4 donation in May and then in October re-introduced the previous charges of £5 for members and £10 for non-members.

As the pandemic worsened, there was a delay in early 2022 in holding events, which re-started in March with a physical visit.

Face-to-face events provide a connection to people and places not possible through a screen. Online events have a wider reach, both on the night and afterwards, if available on YouTube, but are dependent on technical resource. For the future we are considering how to balance in-person, online and hybrid, and how to plan in uncertain public health times.

We ran three online events, two hybrid events, one physical walk with a visit, and one physical visit with a walk during this financial year.

Conservation-led regeneration - Clissold House, Newington Green Unitarian Chapel and Toynbee Hall, an online talk and discussion with Richard Griffiths, chaired by Angela Brady.

Hoxton Square and Surrounds, an online tour led by Carolyn Clark.

Hackney Wick – Changes since the 1980s, an online talk by Chris Dorley Brown, chaired by Cllr Jessica Webb

Mary Wollstonecraft and Newington Green Meeting House, a filmed talk by Professor Anna Birch with a live-streamed Q&A at the Meeting House, followed by the AGM.

Lower Clapton Road and the Round Chapel, a walk led by Julia Lafferty.

“Who wants to go to Hackney?” – a live-streamed talk on railways in Hackney, by Christian Wolmar at Newington Green Meeting House.

Visit to St John at Hackney, newly restored, and churchyard, led by Zac Lloyd and Sean Gubbins, with Susan Doe, Laurie Elks.

The Trustees would like to thank the venues, the walk and talk leaders, Nick Perry for providing the technical platforms plus help and guidance to all who used them, Wendy Forrest, Monica Blake and Sue Doe for publicity, and all who supported our



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

programme by participating or assisting at these events. Their energy and commitment are greatly appreciated.

4. Publications

The Society continues to sell its backlist titles through local bookshops, and online from our website. We ran a bookstall at the De Beauvoir Christmas Fair which was very successful, but ongoing public health measures continued to curtail public events and limited sales opportunities.

Work that began in 2014 on a new version of *Hackney Houses*, a guide to improvement, conservation and maintenance of late Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian houses remains on hold.

Women from Hackney's History published jointly with Hackney History (formerly the Friends of Hackney Archives) in March 2021 completely sold out its initial print run. The book was researched, written, illustrated and designed entirely by women from Hackney – all volunteers and many with close relationships to The Society and/or Hackney History. Considering these significant sales and continuing interest, and the potential of events that tied in with the book, the trustees agreed to a re-print just after the financial year ended.

Initial proposals for a new publication and collaboration are in discussion.

5. Spaces newsletter

The Society produced **four** issues of *Spaces*: 72, 73, 74 and 75. The newsletter is quarterly and is written by voluntary contributors. They cover planning and historic building issues in the borough, topical issues, forthcoming events, buildings at risk and updates on Hackney Society projects and events.

The newsletter continues to be funded piecemeal and by in-kind contribution of the editor and Trustee. Monica Blake produced issues 72-74 and then handed over to Susan Doe as of issue 75. Ray Blackburn continues to help with copy editing. The *Spaces* issues covered The Mole House, the Dalston Peace Mural, the Library House, Dalston Eastern Curve Garden, St Mary's Centre and the Morning Lane People's Space amongst others. The Trustees would like to thank Jim Armstrong, Monica Blake, Alan Denney, Susan Doe, Laurie Elks, Agnes Elvin, Adam Forman, David Grandorge, LB Hackney, Brian Longman, Heiko Prigge and Ed Reeve, for their **articles** and **photographs**. We would also like to thank Glory Hall. Without her generosity, we would not be able to afford the commercial rates for **design**.

6. Websites

The Society continues to maintain our main website <http://hackneysociety.org>. Redeveloping the site continues to be a priority project for the Trustees, but our call outs for a volunteer to manage the project have not produced a response.



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

We maintained one other *micro-site*, mothballed some time ago but still available online for much of the year:

hackneysociety.org/health

A copy of the data previously held on hackneybuildings.org, using technology that had become outdated, is with the Council, with the hope that it will be used to enrich the local list in the future.

The Trustees thank *Community Sites* for their continued provision of services at very modest costs for community and amenity groups such as ours.

7. Social Media

Social media continues to be important and we are indebted to member Rossana Tich who continues to manage the vast majority of our Twitter presence.

As at 31 March 2022 we had around 11,950 Twitter (@HackneySociety) followers, which is little changed from last year. We believe this to be caused by automated clear outs of old data by Twitter. We would expect some increase as a result of the pandemic and our online events programme (as happened between 2019-20 and 2020-21). As we reach a newer and much wider audience than physical events allow, our social media presence should expand to match. Our YouTube channel – on which most of our past online events can still be viewed – has 272 subscribers (from 196 last year). This, along with the Eventbrite platform, proves to be an important way to highlight new events to those who have been to our previous events.

The *Spacelets* email newsletter has 1,557 subscribers, showing hardly any change to last year.

Our Facebook (@theHackneySociety) page is less actively engaged but has a shade under 550 followers.

8. The Hackney Society Planning Group (HSPG)

The Planning Group continued to meet on a monthly basis to review proposals for significant developments within the Borough. Meeting in-person resumed in person briefly in September but reverted to online in November and hybrid in February and March 2022.

Group members submit comments to the Council in response to planning applications, as well as provide advice to developers, their design teams and other interested parties ahead of their submissions for planning approval. Although the Hackney Society is not a statutory consultee, consultation is a matter of the Council's adopted policy and the Planning Group continues to be approached directly by developers, who make presentations to the group ahead of their submissions for planning approval, including the following over the last financial year:

- Telephone House - Brockton Everlast / Piercy & Co / CMA Planning / Kanda
- 3 Mandeville Street - Pocket Living
- Portico - ADP Architecture / LB Hackney / Bidwells - for Lower Clapton Practice



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

Significant schemes upon which we commented during the year include:

- [2021/2491](#) **Haggerston Swimming Pool Whiston Road, E2 8BN** Part demolition of the western extension and erection of part three, five and six storey extension;
- [2022/0085](#) **2 Long Street, E2 8HQ** Erection of a part three-storey, part five-storey building over the existing car parking area to create 4 self-contained residential units
- [2022/0411](#) **Vacant Land/car Parking Spaces Between, 4-6 And 8-10 Long Street, E2 8HS** Erection of a four storey building for use as a single dwellinghouse [REFUSED]
- [2021/2341](#) **3 Mandeville Street, E5 0DH** Demolition of existing building and erection of an 8 storey building comprising commercial floorspace and 46 residential units (Pocket Living)
- [2021/1651](#) and [2021/1653](#) **Portico, 34 Linscott Road, E5 0RD** Change of use of the building from learning and non-residential institutions to health centre. [GRANTED]
- [2021/3489](#) **Beaumont Court Upper Clapton Road, E5 8BG** The erection of two additional storeys on the existing mixed-use building to create 9 residential units. [GRANTED]
- [2021/1181](#) **364 Mare Street, E8 1HR** constructing a part two and part four storey building to create 5 new retail units and 5no. residential units
- [2021/0721](#) **Marks & Spencer, 351 Mare Street, E8 1JB** Advertisement Consent for new signage along Mare Street and Amhurst Road. [GRANTED]
- [2021/3175](#) **Warehouse Rear Of 160 Dalston Lane, E8 1LE** Demolition of existing warehouse to rear of 160 Dalston Lane and erection of four storey building plus basement
- [2021/2518](#) **10 - 22 Lamb Lane, E8 3PL** Demolition of existing building and construction of part six, part seven storey building, with basement, providing 32 residential units.
- [2021/1211](#) **35 London Lane, E8 3PR** Erection of a four-storey building, plus basement level, to provide four self-contained residential units
- [2021/0591](#) **Greek Orthodox Church Of St John The Theologian, 184 Mare Street, E8 3RD** Erection of part 5-, part 4- and part 1-storey building to provide 14 residential units, 2 retail units
- [2020/1461](#) **144 - 148 Homerton High Street, E9 6JA** mixed-use re-development comprising buildings ranging in height from 4 to 17 stories containing 245 residential units
- [2021/0696](#) **6 - 9 Rosina Street, E9 6JH** Demolition of existing commercial building; and erection of a 6 storey mixed-use building
- [2021/0537](#) **Libanese Grill, St Michaels Church Mark Street, EC2A 4ER** Erection of five storey (plus basement) building (Use Class E(g)) on land to north of the former church; [GRANTED]
- [2021/1906](#) **De Beauvoir Estate (phase 1) Downham Road, N1** erection of five buildings of six storeys and a four storey row of ten terraced houses, to provide 189 residential dwellings
- [2021/3301](#) **Unit 7a, Canalside Studios, 2 - 4 Orsman Road, N1 5QJ** Erection of part three- and part four-storey building to provide 526sqm of office



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

- [2020/3839](#) **Lidco Cardiac Sensor Systems, 16 Orsman Road, N1 5QJ** Demolition of existing buildings on site and erection of a part 5, part 6 storey building
- [2021/2547](#) **88, Finn House Bevenden Street, N1 6BL** Single storey roof extension to the existing building to provide nine self-contained residential units
- [2021/0680](#) **48 - 48a Eagle Wharf Road, N1 7ED** mixed use scheme comprising blocks of 2-7 storeys and accommodating a self-storage
- [2017/3511](#) **Holborn Studios, 49 - 50 Eagle Wharf Road, N1 7ED** Partial demolition of existing buildings, mixed use scheme comprising blocks of 2 to 7 storeys [REFUSED]
- [2022/0170](#) **91 Amhurst Park, N16 5DR** Demolition of existing three storey building fronting Amhurst Park and erection of four storey (plus lower ground floor) building
- [2021/2881](#) **6-12 Manor Road, N16 5SA** Demolition and erection of part 3-, part 4-, part 5-, part 6-storey building providing 35no. self-contained residential units and 709.4m2 commercial
- [2021/1178](#) **Annexed, Rear Of 2 To 28 Belfast Road, N16 6UH** Demolition of existing building and erection of a two storey health centre building [GRANTED]
- [2021/1065](#) **Block 48 To 106 Even Frampton Park Road, Hackney** Demolition of Community Hall and depot; demolition of parking; Construction of 69 residential dwellings within two new blocks, one of part 4 and part 7 storeys and one of 8 storeys, [GRANTED]

The group raises questions and concerns but also attempts to provide support to those bringing positive visions and quality of design to the borough.

We previously reported three significant events have had varying degrees of impact on planning in the borough. The pandemic is, of course, on going but there is clearly a 'new normal' so its impact is no longer quite as measurable. Significantly, Hackney's Planning Sub-committee now has to vote in person, but officers may make reports virtually, and the meetings are now always available live on YouTube.

The other two were the Council's new IT system for planning applications and the consequences of a well-reported cyber attack. The impact of these is fairly limited now, though not entirely insignificant.

The group recognises a shared interest with the borough's six CAACs (Conservation Areas Advisory Committees), who comment on applications within conservation areas, and continue to share information, and invite CAACs to relevant presentations, meetings and discussions. We were able to investigate and circumvent further Council issues in consultation and provide a more reliable source of Conservation Area applications for five of the six groups. Whilst procedural and technological constraints prevent comments from the Planning Group being routinely uploaded to the Hackney Society website, four of the CAACs have provided their comments for upload each month. A fifth uses our tools but currently does not upload final comments to our website.

Lisa Shell retains the Chair of the Planning Group, with administrative support from Nick Perry, and a consistent contribution from the following volunteers throughout the



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

financial year: Luke Dewey (Metropolitan Workshop), Dickon Hayward (Material Works), Trevor Horne (Trevor Horne Architects), Jenny Lovell (Director, Allies and Morrison), Robin Mallalieu (Brady Mallalieu Architects), Sarah Mann (Director, Studio Wolsey), Ross Perkin (Director, Emil Eve Architects), and Bernard Tulkens (Tectonics Architects). We were also pleased to add Ronan Murray (Planner), Rik Nys (architect), Mike Samuels (Chartered Surveyor) and Catherine White (interior architect) during the year.

The planning group email discussion list comprises many more members, including the chairs of the CAACs, who receive monthly minutes and are updated of meetings, presentations and planning issues of interest.

9. Partnerships

The Hackney Society works with other organisations in Hackney. In particular, it is represented on the committee of Hackney History (formerly the Friends of Hackney Archives) with whom we have an ever closer working relationship. The Society entered the seventh year of a reciprocal membership exchange with Sustainable Hackney. The Society retains a paid membership of the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies.

10. Plans for 2022/23

We wish to give some priority to a revamp of our websites. This is likely to require at least £3000 of capital funds toward which we have already received a generous one-off donation of £500. Whilst we may be able to support this from our own funds now, the limiting factor is currently the lack of a volunteer to co-ordinate the project.

After *Women from Hackney's History* sold out we have reprinted and copies are now available at £15 (£10 for Hackney Society and Hackney History members). In a collaboration with Tower Theatre and Abney Park we have produced a film in which some *Women from Abney* tell their stories, to be premiered at Tower Theatre on 17th September. Based on this, Abney Park plan to provide a self-guided walk with online links.

A potential involvement in a new book project will require some funds and some time commitment, should this bear fruit.

The standard membership fee of £15 has remained constant for a number of years and is modest considering the benefits that may derive from it. Membership fees no longer provide the Society with any material surplus once the production expenses for *Spaces* and postage costs are deducted. We have resumed charging fees to members and non-members for events as this provides a useful income to cover the costs of staging these events.

We have resumed talks, walks and visits in person as Covid-19 regulations and prudence permit but we wish to mix these with more online events if technical resource allows. We are always interested in members' suggestions for future events.



THE HACKNEY SOCIETY

A charitable company limited by guarantee.

Company registration no. 4574188

Charity no. 1126736

The number of our Twitter followers finally passed 12,000. We plan to look at the use of other social media platforms.

Following a suggestion from Hackney Council, we developed a guided walk based on Springfield House and Park for the Springfield Park Celebration in June. Discussions are being held with the council on a future series of walks. This may be an area of activity for the future. As a sign of other post-pandemic activity, a successful bookstall was held at Springfield Park followed by another at Well Street Common Summer Fair later the same month.

With no expectation of grant funding, and a continued lack of specialist trustee skills in this area, any further plans for the next year continue to be modest and focused on what volunteers can offer. We continue to seek to expand on those skills and apply for funding where appropriate and the return on the investment of time is sufficient.

Whilst Covid-19 gave us pause for thought on major projects it clearly did not have a major negative impact on the Society and created a positive change in some regards – particularly wider engagement. We need to consider how we capitalise on that in the future and engage with a new audience who may no longer be based in Hackney. As mentioned in the introduction, a nascent project to engage members and the wider public in discussions on the future shape of the Society has been on hold since the Covid-19 outbreak. This will need resurrecting in some form though the pandemic experience has provided some informal input into that project.

Having lost several experienced trustees, including our Chair, over the past few years, we co-opted Sue Doe and Annette Russell. Annette has decided that the time is not right for her to be involved, Sue is doing valuable work on publications and as our link to Hackney History. A further change recently has led Tony Gillett, our longstanding Treasurer, Company Secretary, Membership Secretary and Minute Taker to depart, and for Tina Skivington, the new Treasurer, to be co-opted as trustee. Bob Mitchell agreed to be Membership Secretary and we hope to welcome him as trustee after the AGM elections. The Society is still looking to bring new voices and experiences into the committee of Trustees and encourages those with a passion for Hackney to join us and help shape the Society.

We continue to be grateful for all membership contributions and loyalty in these circumstances. Membership fees and donations of all sizes allow us to continue to do what we do on a tight budget.