

CROSS-PARTY GROUP FOR CONSTRUCTION IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT/ BRIEF NOTES

TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER AT CR1: SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, EDINBURGH, EH99 1SP

The meeting had 39 in attendance (details attached) and members were welcomed to the meeting by the Convenor.

Matters Arising

None

However, due to the meeting not being quorate the group was unable to adopt the notes from previous meeting.

Addressing Fuel Poverty in Traditional Buildings

Mr Don introduced Emily Tracy (British Geological Survey), Chiara Ronchini (ICOMOS) and Jamie Baker (East Lothian Council) who presented on the condition of Scotland's traditional buildings (pre 1919) and the need for them to be wind and watertight to be energy efficient.

The presenters reviewed findings of various surveys on the condition of Scotland's traditional buildings which contradicted each other regarding the extent of disrepair but there appeared agreement regarding the incident level of disrepair.

The presenters proposed an in-depth survey of these buildings to determine the true condition of Scotland's traditional buildings and identify common failings to assist property owners in prioritising any funds they might propose to spend on their buildings.

It was noted that £600M was spent each year on Scotland's traditional buildings but the condition did not improve with the general consensus being that funds were spent on interior projects which the building condition continued to deteriorate until it became an urgent disrepair.

Mr Reid highlighted potential conflicts in undertaking extensive refurbishment work and the need for planning permission. He also expressed deep concern regarding minor repairs not being undertaken for such instances of vegetation growth on buildings which would ultimately result in significant damage if not addressed.

Mr Tennant reported that Historic Scotland tried to assist property owners in prioritising repairs via its publications and events. It was currently coordinating the Traditional Building Health Check Scheme pilot being undertaken in Stirling which was a voluntary scheme aimed to assist property owners in undertaking regular maintenance and prioritise repairs.

Ms Johnstone MSP acknowledged the significant challenge the condition of Scotland's traditional buildings had but also saw it as an opportunity.

Prof Buchan said that he was currently working as a consultant with City of Edinburgh Council to develop a new property conservation service. He said that obtaining consensus regarding the work, and who to undertake this, among owners of a tenemented building often proved extremely difficult and resulted in minor repairs not being undertaken until they became serious and property owners wanting assistance from the council to address such instances. He also felt that the Home Report when properties were being sold was not in sufficient depth to highlight the true condition of the properties and this should be addressed to raise the profile of the issue of disrepair among domestic properties.

Mr A McKinney felt that lenders should ensure the properties they lent on were in a good condition.

Mr Lee said that taxation barriers to undertaking repair and maintenance work should be removed and said that VAT should be reduced to 5% for such work.

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Mr Narro said that the Home Report did not go into sufficient detail regarding the condition of buildings and undertaking minor repairs when they arose would often save the property owner from having to undertake larger, and more expensive, repairs in the future.

Mr Narro was also concerned regarding the lack of skills and knowledge across the whole supply chain regarding repairs to traditional buildings.

AOCB

Mr Don reported that he would be speaking at his debate on

Date of Next Meeting

The Convenor said that details of the next meeting would be circulated in due course.

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Attendance

N Don MSP

A Johnstone MSP

R Atkins – Richard Atkins Chartered Architect

J Baker – East Lothian Council

G Barn – CECA Scotland

R Buchan – RICS

C Clarke – NHTG

J Dalton - CIOB

A Davey – Historic Scotland

J Downie - FPDC

K Forbes – ICE Scotland

A Galbraith – SECTT

C Gonzalez-Manich – Strathclyde University

R Groom – CITB

T Haak – Glasgow City Heritage Trust

F Hodgson – SNIPEF

N Huq – Natasha Huq Architects

J Kennan – CITB

J Lee – GGF

E Leith – BEFS

D Mays – Consultant

A McKinney – Retired

J McKinney – NSCC

M Morley – N Don MSP Office

D Narro – I Struct E

G Nelson – FMB Scotland

M Paine – SFGB

J Parry – RIAS

E Pretzlaff – N Don MSP Office

B Reid – I Struct E

J Reid – SPS Envirowall

C Ronchini – ICOMOS

A Serafini – Strathclyde University

I Smith – Changeworks

C Tennant – Historic Scotland

E Tracey – BGS

J Walsh – Consultant

A Waugh – GGF

S Young – Breedon Aggregates