

SPEAKER'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WORKS OF ART**Annual Report to the Finance Committee****Financial year 2020/21**

1. This report covers the financial year 2020/21 and is prepared for submission to the Finance Committee. A Statement of Accounts for the same period is annexed to this report.

Work of the Committee

2. The following Members served on the Speaker's Advisory Committee on Works of Art during the period covered by this report:

Hywel Williams (Chair)	Kim Johnson
Simon Baynes	Barbara Keeley
Sarah Champion	Mr Gagan Mohindra
Theo Clarke	Caroline Nokes
Chris Evans	Dean Russell
Sally-Ann Hart	

3. The Committee held nine committee meetings between April 2020 and March 2021.

Strategy

4. Appointed in May 2020, and meeting for the first time in the new Parliament on 10 June, the Committee oversaw the management of the Parliamentary Works of Art Collection during a period of significant operational and strategic challenges. The financial year 2020/21 began shortly after the first national lockdown to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic came into force and both the new Committee and the Heritage Collections Team quickly adapted to new ways of working under trying circumstances.
5. During this unusual and challenging time, the Heritage Collections Team oversaw the introduction of mitigating measures to care for and manage the Collection. Access to the Estate was severely restricted for much of this period, the onsite work of the Heritage Collections Team was limited to essential projects, though the team ensured that measures were in place to safeguard the Collection remotely and that the checking and monitoring of artworks was undertaken by trained staff in onsite teams.
6. In addition to the care and management of the Collection, one of the Committee's key priorities in this period was how to address issues of inclusivity and a lack of diversity in the subjects and themes represented in the Works of Art Collection. Building on the work of its predecessor in the last Parliament, the Committee recognised that there was still a great need for the Works of Art Collection to tell a more inclusive history of Parliament and the United Kingdom through its collecting policy and priorities. This came at a time when many organisations responsible for the management and preservation of heritage collections were confronting the historic legacy of the slave trade and its role in the acquisition of works in their collections and in the histories of those depicted, while

addressing a lack of representation and recognition of those of Black, Asian or minority ethnic descent, other minority groups and women.

7. The Committee held discussions early on in its programme on ways to address these concerns. In the autumn it approved a package of measures as part of a major review of the Works of Art Collection which included but were not limited to:
 - an audit of artworks in the Collection depicting those of ethnic minorities;
 - the commissioning of an artwork to mark the contributions of those from ethnic minorities;
 - the establishment of a bicameral group to advise on public engagement issues relating to race and ethnicity;
 - the creation of a policy on diversifying representation in the Collection;
 - updating cataloguing terms and conventions for Collection items to ensure they are inclusive and do not discriminate against or include inappropriate or out of date language and terms; and
 - an evaluation on the labelling and interpretation of artworks.
8. In November, to help inform this work, the Committee met with representatives from We Too Built Britain, a group that campaigns for greater representation of the diversity of the United Kingdom and welcomed their input on its priorities in this area.
9. Among the Committee's other priorities, and related to issues of inclusivity and diversity, was its key aim to look at ways to proactively use the Collection for engagement purposes, particularly in widening access through online channels which were ever more important during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee considered the Engagement Strategy and forward plan encompassing five key engagement strategies for the current Parliament together with a forward plan for the year ahead, which included a programme of displays, exhibitions and events. A key element of this work in 2020/21 was the work to develop a new collections website (Heritage Collections Online Services) that will bring together all of Parliament's heritage collections (archives, historic furniture and works of art) for the first time, and a demonstration of a prototype of the new website at the start of this year with further progress reports expected in the coming months.
10. It was also recognised that while capital building projects such as the Northern Estate Programme and Restoration and Renewal presented significant challenges for the care and management of the Collection, they would also provide a significant opportunity to address conservation, documentation and storage needs in the years to come and that a significant proportion of the Committee's future work would therefore be informed by and related to these projects. The Committee was able to gain a better understanding of the impacts and considerations of these types of projects in relation to works of art when it considered the policy for the display of artworks in the newly refurbished 1 Derby Gate building on the Northern Estate earlier this year. With these capital building projects in mind, the Committee also considered the Heritage Vision and Strategy, comprising a set of common priorities that applied to Parliament's heritage collections to promote better collaboration between the teams managing them.

Acquisitions and Commissions

11. The Committee was allocated £75,000 for its general Acquisition Fund during 2020/21, with access to a further £25,000 if required, subject to approval by the Director of Finance. All works of art purchased during the year have been added to the Permanent Collection of Works of Art in the House of Commons.
12. The following works of art were acquired or commissioned during the 2020/21 financial year:
 - **Election Artist 2019 (ongoing)** – Artist Nicky Hurst was commissioned in November 2019 to undertake a residency and produce a permanent artwork in response to the 2019 General Election. Options for the finished artwork are expected to be presented to the Committee in the coming months.
 - **Portrait of Kate Hoey by Tess Barnes** – The Committee accepted this gift from the sitter in September to mark her thirty-year tenure as the Member for Vauxhall and her contributions both as a backbencher and as in various frontbench roles in government and opposition. At the time of her election to the House in 1989, Hoey was just one of 42 women MPs.
 - **A Welsh silver salver** – In October, the Committee acquired a silver salver presented to William Jenkins, the Labour MP for Neath from 1922 to 1944 and an active trade-unionist committed to widening access to education, on his knighthood in 1931. The salver is inscribed with the signatures of the 34 Welsh MPs who presented it to Jenkins, along with a photograph of the salver and the original signatures.
 - **Portrait studies of Baroness Boothroyd when Speaker of the House of Commons** – In December, the Committee accepted the gift of three preparatory studies by the artist Jane Bond for the 1994 portrait commission process for the state portrait of Speaker Boothroyd. While she was not selected for this commission, the artist was commissioned to paint Speaker Boothroyd's informal portrait in 1999. The studies are part of a series of five, of which the other two are also in the Parliamentary Art Collection.
 - **Portcullis House 'Jubilee' prints and 'New Dawn' prints** – In February, the Committee agreed to acquire additional sets of the *Jubilee* and *New Dawn* prints for use in office hangs and to be formally added to the Norman Shaw North print collection. The *Jubilee* series was commissioned to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012 when six artists undertook a short residency in Portcullis House to draw, sketch and photograph their responses. The *New Dawn* series was produced by artist Mary Branson to accompany the light sculpture commissioned for St Stephen's Hall to commemorate the women's suffrage movement.

Loans

13. The Committee agreed to the following loans during the 2020/21 financial year:
 - **Loan to a national collection** – In the last Parliament, the Committee's predecessor approved a loan request from the National Army Museum to borrow the painted sketch 'American soldiers paying silent homage at the tomb of the Unknown Warrior' by Frank O Salisbury (WOA 6555). The sketch was displayed in the exhibition 'Buried Among

Kings: The Story of the Unknown Warrior' which ran from October 2020 to February 2021. This was believed to be the first time that the sketch was displayed outside Parliament

- **Inward loan renewals** – Earlier this year, the Committee reviewed the terms of renewal for artworks on inward loan from private and institutional lenders. Recognising that these works filled several important gaps in the Works of Art Collection and the generosity of the lenders, the Committee approved the renewal periods for all of the works on loan.

Displays, Exhibitions and Events

14. In 2020/21 the Committee supported several displays, exhibitions and events.

- **Art UK** – the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of Art UK's cancelling its 'Art in Schools' programme that would have seen artworks from partner organisations, including Parliament, taken into schools to develop pupils' appreciation and understanding of art. Instead, the curators worked with Art UK to identify opportunities to contribute to their online learning portal and engage with pupils.
- **Victory in Europe and Victory in Japan Day commemorations** – In 2020, the Committee expressed its support for several collection-related activities and events across Parliament to mark the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. While some of these were cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic, every effort was made to deliver them where possible, such as an online gallery of artworks from the Parliamentary Art Collection relating to the Second World War curated by the Heritage Collections Team. In addition, the Committee also approved a display of artworks from the Collection depicting the bomb damage incurred in May 1941 when the Chamber of the House of Commons was destroyed by the Luftwaffe.
- **Launch of the print on demand service** – In the autumn, a print on demand service was launched for the first time in collaboration with the Retail Team. Sixty-five artworks were made available for purchase reflecting a diverse range of sitters and subjects.
- **Display of photographs from the 209 Women exhibition** – Five newly-acquired photographic prints from the 209 Women exhibition, when 209 of the women MPs sitting in the House of Commons in 2018 were photographed to commemorate the centenary of women first being granted the right to vote, went on long-term display on the first floor of Portcullis House (first floor).
- **'Knife Edge Two piece' plaque installation** – in October the new plaque commissioned by the Committee in the last Parliament in memory of former Chair Frank Doran, was installed on the base of the sculpture 'Knife Edge Two piece' by Henry Moore on Abingdon Green.
- **Display of a bust of Sir Edward du Cann (WOA S759)** – In November, the bust of Sir Edward du Cann, a former Chair of the 1922 Committee, acquired by the Committee in 2019, was put on permanent display in a key Members' and staff area on the Estate.
- **Poynter cartoons** – in January, it was announced that eleven oil cartoons by Sir Edward Poynter were to be returned to Parliament, following their long-term loan to the

Victoria and Albert Museum. The cartoons were preparatory studies for the mosaics depicting the patron saints of the United Kingdom in the arches above Central Lobby. The accession was welcomed by the Committee as an opportunity to carry out a full conservation programme and to consider the future display of the cartoons in Parliament.

- **International Women's Day 2021 lecture** – the Committee was pleased to endorse this year's subject for their annual lecture to mark International Women's Day that was held online in March. The lecture, which was held online, was given by Dr Emma Peplow and Dr Priscila Pivatto from the History of Parliament Trust, with an extended introduction by Diane Abbott MP, on the subject '*Decided on by men: oral histories from women MPs*' and was very well attended.
- **Redisplay of a bust of Nelson Mandela** – Earlier this year, the Chairman of Ways and Means agreed the Committee's request for the bust of Nelson Mandela by John Doubleday (WOA S507) to be redisplayed in the Grand Committee Room, given that it was in Westminster Hall where Mandela addressed both Houses of Parliament in 2003.

Conservation and research

15. The Heritage Collections Team has continued to oversee an active programme of collections care throughout the year. The following key projects were undertaken in this area:

- the assessment and conservation of frames and artworks for exhibitions and displays (listed above);
- the continued treatment of artworks at risk due to accidental damage or salvage response to floods and other incidents, which the team was quickly able to respond to;
- an annual maintenance programme of historic and modern easel paintings and frames;
- annual maintenance of Speaker's Coach at Arlington Court (on loan to National Trust), and steps to protect the coach during an incident;
- the creation of a master list of all framed artworks in the Collection to better prioritise collections care;
- Fire Safety Improvement Works in the Speaker's House provided an opportunity for the team to carry out essential conservation work on paintings in the State Dining Room for the first time since the Second World War to ensure their long-term preservation;
- work was carried out to monitor and regulate conditions in the Chapel of St Mary Undercroft when damage was noticed on some of the painted surfaces, and a survey of the Chapel was planned with the intention of carrying out conservation work at a future date.

16. In addition to the work above, Parliament was shortlisted for a Museums and Heritage Conservation award for the project to conserve the large wall paintings of the Battles of Trafalgar and Waterloo by Daniel Maclise in the Royal Gallery, House of Lords.
17. The documentation and research of works in the Collection also continued to be a key element of the work of the Curator's Office and the Heritage Collections Team more widely. The focus of research was on investigating links between the Collection and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, as well as researching the diversity of representation in the Collection with a focus on ethnic diversity. Public engagement and media strategy
18. The House of Commons Media Team continued to work with the Heritage Collections Team to respond to press enquiries related to the work of the Committee and the Collection. The focus in this period has been the review of the Parliamentary Art Collection.
19. A press release, which included links to documentation related to the review, was issued on the 30 September 2020. There was significant pick-up across national and arts press (Daily Mail, Telegraph, Guardian, Mirror, Art Newspaper, Smithsonian Magazine etc) in the months that followed. Politics Home featured an editorial from the Chair, discussing the aims and background to the review, which was published on the 30 October.
20. Other areas of work included responding to enquiries on acquisitions and supporting engagement activities. During the Summer Recess, Mr Speaker visited the Carriage Museum at Arlington Court to view the Speaker's State Coach. Teams from the Speaker's Office, House of Commons Media Team and Participation collaborated to promote both the visit and the coach itself.
21. In the absence of the 'Art in Parliament' website which was archived as part of the www.parliament.uk website upgrade, the Committee sought to maintain public engagement with the collection through its partnership with Art UK.

The year ahead

22. Looking ahead to the new financial year, the Committee looks forward to a return to working under more typical circumstances and a focus on its priority work in the following areas:
 - continuing its work to diversify the Parliamentary Art Collection and provide improved interpretation to better reflect the diverse population of the United Kingdom
 - engagement to make the Collection visible and accessible beyond Westminster;
 - supporting the Speaker's External Affairs programme;
 - improving digital access to the Collection; and
 - raising awareness within Parliament of the importance of the Collection.

*Sean Harris
Committee Secretariat
18 May 2021*

Annex A: Statement of account for the financial year 2020/21 (as at 31 March 2021)

Type	Title	Medium	Artist	2020/21 Spend	2020/21 Commitment	2020/21 Total
Acquisition	209 portrait photo of Mairi Black MP	Photography	Alicia Bruce	£450.00		£450.00
Acquisition	Silver salver & associated photo with signatures	Silver, photography, archive documents	T W Harris Ltd (Silversmiths)	£1,200.00		£1,200.00
Acquisition	16 x New Dawn prints	Works on paper	Mary Branson	£4,800.00		£4,800.00
Acquisition	17 x PCH Jubilee prints	Works on paper	Various	£5,745.00		£5,745.00
Total Expenditure				£12,195.00	£0.00	£12,195.00
Annual Budget				75,000.00		75,000.00
Agreed drawdown from Reserve [max £25,000pa]						0.00
Total available funds						75,000.00
Remaining Budget 2020/21						£62,805.00