

Foundations

Latest news from
Architects Benevolent Society

Autumn 2022

ARCHITECTS
BENEVOLENT
SOCIETY



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ABS helpline 020 3918 8588

www.absnet.org.uk



Editorial

Welcome to this year's edition of Foundations.

As the new President of the Society it is an absolute pleasure to be able to thank you for your interest and support of ABS by subscribing to this newsletter. As ABS continues to be a symbol of hope and support for those within the architectural community, I look forward to being able to promote the important work the charity offers and hope to connect with you in some way over the next few years.

As we face another challenging year, still dealing with the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, everyone will have been affected by the dramatic rise in the cost of living over the last 12 months. The increase to the cost of heating, buying food and travel continues to impact us all and there are many in our community struggling financially and mentally.

The ABS team are working hard to respond to the current needs of our community. We continue to look at how we can expand and adapt our support services to help the most number of people in the most effective ways and have allocated an additional £40,000 this year to see those who need us through this crisis.

In this edition you will find out more on how we are responding to this cost of living crisis and how we can help. You will hear from Harry* who ABS was able

to support financially enabling him to keep his home and business following struggles from the pandemic. We also review our Chicken Run 2022 - it was heart-warming to be able to reunite with so many in our community for our first in-person event in two years – and our annual #Time2Sketch event.

All these wonderful endeavours are raising vital funds so we can continue to be here for those who need us throughout this cost of living crisis.

Finally, on behalf of the team I want to say goodbye to our dear friend and outgoing President Jane Duncan OBE PPRIBA whose dedication and commitment to support the architectural community has been invaluable.

If you feel like you need support please get in touch. Our friendly welfare team are here to listen and offer advice. We're here when you need us.

Please take care and stay safe.

Yours Sincerely,

Eddie Weir
PPCIAT MCIAT,
ABS President



Cost of Living Crisis support

Cost of Living Crisis: How ABS is supporting the architectural community

As the cost of living continues to increase, it is a worrying and stressful time for us all.



Maximising your income

we have a network of independent welfare benefits advisors who can advise and support you to claim any benefits that you might be entitled to. Even if you're working you may be eligible for some support from the government in the form of benefits and whatever your circumstances our experienced advisors will quickly be able to check that you are receiving all the benefits that you should. Claiming benefits can be a daunting prospect and our approachable, supportive advisors can guide you through the process.



Financial help

we may be able to help with a monthly or one-off grant to cover essentials such as bills and food. We'll assess your financial situation and the grants that we give aim to support you to have a reasonable standard of living. As part of this process we have given top-up grants to help mitigate the impact of benefit cuts and domestic fuel price rises.



Supporting your mental health

financial pressure is often associated with higher levels of stress and anxiety. In these uncertain times, when it is difficult to escape media coverage of world events it's important to be able to speak to someone if everything feels overwhelming. Through our welfare partner, AnxietyUK, we offer a range of support including individual therapy (counselling, CBT, hypnotherapy) based on your needs.



This will hopefully help you feel less overwhelmed, more able to deal with practical issues such as finances and more in control of your own wellbeing.



Welfare Team support

all of the above can be accessed by contacting our welfare team. A member of the team will be able to respond quickly and sensitively and are committed to providing a confidential service. If you don't feel that the above support covers your needs or there is something else that you would like help with, please contact us for a chat at **0203 918 8588** or email help@absnet.org.uk.

We all need support sometimes for all kinds of reasons. If you, or someone you know could benefit from a little extra support then our welfare team are here for you.



“Such a relief to get non-judgemental help after struggling with the benefits systems”

- Dee

Harry's Story

Shortly after starting his own business to be closer to his mother, the coronavirus pandemic began and left Harry* struggling to make ends meet and worried he would spiral into debt.

ABS were able to offer financial assistance and now he is hopeful for his future and able to support his mother with the care she needs and deserves.

“In 2019 I made the decision to move from a larger organisation to self-employment. At this time, I had been traveling a lot with work, and I wanted to be closer to my mum who is unwell. I was fully prepared for a tough year or so while I established my business, but I was not prepared for how difficult it would truly be when, less than a year in, the coronavirus pandemic caused the few projects I was working on to disappear.

This was a huge set back. Before I moved to self-employment, I had just paid off debts acquired from years of education and graduating during a recession. I was beginning to save money towards my first house, and was able to help my mum, which meant a lot to me after all her support throughout the years. As I had been self-employed for less than a year, I was not eligible for the first grants so I had to turn to Universal Credit, barely enough to cover my food and bills, let alone the insurance and other costs I was looking at just to maintain my

business. I contacted previous employers to see if they had any work, but the pandemic meant that a lot of companies had many staff on furlough, and no one was hiring.

It was a difficult time, and while I was lucky I would not be made homeless, I was very worried I would spiral back into the debt I had worked so hard to get out of. It is tough to get out once you start going down that hill.

ABS was able to get me the support I hugely needed. They were able to help me financially which means I didn't have to go back into debt. Without that worry it gave me more breathing space to focus on building my portfolio and website. Beyond the financial aspect, the ABS team are lovely, gentle souls and helped me massively with patience and understanding.”

*Stock photograph



Events



Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects (WCCA)

This year, we were delighted for The Birmingham Architectural Association (BAA) to receive the award at the annual WCCA Awards Dinner presented by ABS Chief Executive Robert Ball. The BAA were invaluable during the pandemic through sponsorship of ABS events and raising awareness.

The Awards Dinner was held at Stationers' Hall in London where BAA Past President Marina Strotz and } Past Vice Presiden Amy Francis-Smith attended to receive the award.

We would like to give thanks to Roger Hawkins and his team at Hawkins\ Brown for designing the beautiful award plate as well as the WCCA for their continued support of the charity.

Climbing Mount Olympus

We were very grateful to Christopher Stewart, and Bruce Brebner for their epic hike this year, raising funds for ABS. The challenge involved climbing the three highest peaks in Greece ending with Mount Olympus. Chris says: "None of us know when we might need support and times get tough but ABS is always here to help the architectural community"

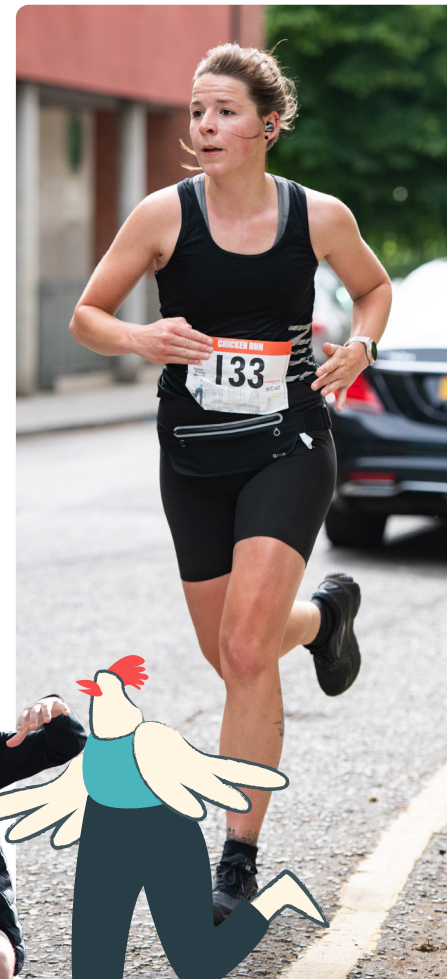
Many thanks to the Highland Walking Society for supporting this hike.



Chicken Run 2022 Review

After two years, we were finally able to hold our first in-person event – Chicken Run 2022! It was such a joy to see those in our community back together again and the day was a big success while raising important funds to support the work of ABS.

Many thanks to Pollard Thomas Edwards for hosting and our headline sponsors: Chartered Institute Architectural Technologists (CIAT), Xtratherm and Bespoke Careers.



#Time2Sketch 2022

#Time2Sketch took place on 8th September. This year, the theme was "Places and Spaces that bring joy" and we had an excellent panel of judges including LionHeart, Amy Francis-Smith and David Gilhooley. Prizes included vouchers for art supplies and were kindly donated by Green & Stone of Chelsea.

This is always a fun and engaging event intended as a wellbeing break to get participants away from their desks for an hour to sketch. All proceeds will go towards our Cost of Living Crisis Appeal.

Many thanks to our headline sponsors.

**ALLFORD
HALL
MONAGHAN
MORRIS**

GRIMSHAW



ABS Welcomes Eddie Weir as President

We're very pleased to welcome **Eddie Weir PPCIAT MCIAT** as the **new ABS President**. Eddie will succeed **Jane Duncan OBE PPRIBA**.

As an ABS Ambassador since 2017, Eddie has played a pivotal role in raising awareness and fundraising within the architectural community. He was the Society's first CIAT Ambassador in Northern Ireland and now becomes the Society's first Architectural Technologist in the role of President in the charity's 173-year history.

Robert Ball, ABS Chief Executive says: "We are delighted to welcome Eddie Weir as our new President. Eddie genuinely cares about the welfare of people who have fallen on difficult times and is a strong advocate for the support ABS can offer. The team and I at ABS admire him greatly and it is clearly evident that so do his colleagues and peers in our community. We look forward to working together to make a difference to the lives of those who need us."



Eddie is committed to helping people within the architectural community and we look forward to working with him as our new President.



Thank you Jane

ABS has said goodbye to outgoing President **Jane Duncan OBE PPRIBA**. Jane has been ABS President for four years and has helped significantly raise the profile of the Society in many ways, from raising awareness of the Mental Health & Wellbeing partnership with Anxiety UK, to helping fundraise thousands of pounds in support of the Emergency Covid-19 Appeal. Jane's dedication and commitment to supporting the architectural community has been incredibly valuable.



Welcome and Farewell ABS Trustees

Thank you Trustees

Thank you and goodbye to **Lelia Dunlea-Jones** (Welfare Committee Chair), **Bill Evans**, **Angus Kerr**, **Hugh Woodeson** and **ABS Chair, Geoffrey Purves** who have now retired.

Their outstanding contributions to the Society have spanned over two decades, and their time, insight and experiences have been invaluable in furthering the support ABS is able to offer to the architectural community.

future of the Society and how we can provide the best possible support for our beneficiaries. We welcome him to his new role.

Welcome to our new Trustees



We are very pleased to announce the appointment of three new Trustees: **Rick McCluggage**, **Sangeeta Shenoy** and **Andy McLeish**.

Together, the new Trustees bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to their Board positions. We know they will bring a fresh perspective, and alongside our current Board members will help guide and form ABS' future strategy.

Welcome **Mark Grzegorzczuk** as ABS Chair



Mark Grzegorzczuk will be taking over the role as **ABS Chair** from **Geoffrey Purves**. Mark is a Chartered Architect with over 30 years of experience running his own practice. He has been an ABS trustee since 2015 and is well placed to take on the role of Chair, having held an Honorary Officer role, chaired a committee and been closely involved in the ABS strategic review. Mark feels passionately about the



Cost of Living Crisis Appeal

We understand times are difficult right now but if you are able to help, please donate today.

At Architects Benevolent Society, we are doing what we can to meet the needs of those who need our support during this cost of living crisis, but we need your help.

There are members of the architectural community struggling to pay their energy bills and put food on the table. Changes to the Universal Credit benefit, along with the increase in National Insurance contributions means that vulnerable families are being hit the hardest.

In these challenging times it can be hard to know how to support each other. By making a donation to ABS,

£10 per month could help a low-income household keep their house warm for 3-months.



you enable us to provide an instant lifeline to those in the architectural community. Our experienced welfare team and partnerships with Shelter, Renovo and Anxiety UK mean that we can offer expert advice alongside financial and emotional support to the people that really need it.

We have allocated an additional £40,000 this year towards supporting those in need through this crisis but we cannot do this without your help.

Regular monthly donations allow us to plan and budget ahead of time so that we can help the most amount of people in the most effective ways. Through gifting regularly, you are helping your fellow professionals and those most vulnerable during this challenging period, building a foundation of support for all.

A donation form can be found on the back of this newsletter, or you can donate online by visiting absnet.org.uk/donate

“ABS provided a helping hand in a difficult time of my life. The CBT sessions helped me cope with the stress and anxiety that was aggravated by Covid. It gave me a new perspective on many aspects I could not control in my life at the time and showed me the alternatives to feeling stuck. I recommend for people who are struggling to reach out to ABS. Often, it is that part that is the most difficult.”

- Architect

“ABS has always been extremely kind and helpful to me. They understand how humiliating and traumatic it can be for professional people’s lives to fall apart for reasons that are beyond their control. They understood that I was at the rock bottom of my life (mentally and financially), but that I was passionate about my career.”

- Landscape Architect

Can you help us with less than 5 minutes of your time?

We want to make sure we are keeping you up to date with the information that interest you most. Can you help us by completing this quick survey? Responses can be returned by post, or you can submit online at absnet.org.uk/surveyfoundations

Profession:

Gender:

Male Female Non-Binary
 Other

Age group:

18 – 24 25 – 34 35 – 44
 45 – 54 55 – 64 65+

Have you ever received support from ABS?

Yes No

What do you enjoy hearing about in Foundations?

Event reviews Upcoming events
 ABS support Appeals and campaigns
 Stories from our community

Any other comments:

Thank you, we're very grateful for your time.



ABS Donation Form

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email:

Please post this form to: Architects Benevolent Society,
6 Brewery Square, Copper Row, London SE1 2LF or give
online at: absnet.org.uk/donate

I no longer want to receive communications by post:

I would like the Society to also contact me regarding:

Events News Campaigns

I would like to receive communications
by email



The personal information you provide on this form will be held by Architects Benevolent Society. If you have opted to hear from us, we will use your details to send you the communications you have opted for, using a third party supplier. You can update your communication preferences at www.absnet.org.uk/consent

giftaid it

Charity Number:
265139

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

I would like Architects Benevolent Society to treat all donations I have made in the last four years, and all future donations as Gift Aid donations until I notify otherwise. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I will notify Architects Benevolent Society if my circumstances change.

Yes I will help rebuild lives with a regular donation

If you have a standing order with ABS please contact your bank to amend the payment or please consider setting up a Direct Debit below.

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit



Service user number

6 9 1 2 1 3

I would like to set up a regular monthly donation by Direct Debit

£5 £10 £25 £50 £100 Other £

I would like to increase my current regular Direct Debit by

£3 £5 £10 £50 Other £ Monthly Annually

Commencing on: 0 1 / / or 1 5 / /

(Please note Direct Debits can only be processed on 1st and 15th of each month)

Name(s) of account holders(s)

Bank/building society account number: Sort Code:

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society Please pay Charities Aid Foundation Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Charities Aid Foundation and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society. We process all Direct Debits through Charities Aid Foundation. A Direct Debit guarantee will be sent to you no longer than 10 days before the first payment is taken.

Signature: Date:

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account.

Yes I will help rebuild lives with a one off donation

Here's my one off donation of £10 £25 £50 £100 Other £

I enclose a cheque/voucher payable to Architects Benevolent Society

I would like to make a card payment to Architects Benevolent Society

Debit/credit card details Visa MasterCard Maestro CAF

Card no. (Maestro only)

Start date: Expiry date: Issue no.: (Maestro only)

Security code: Signature: Date: