

Georgian Leaflet No. 7

HOW YOU CAN HELP

AN APPEAL TO MEMBERS

THE GEORGIAN GROUP
2, Chester Street, S.W.1
Belgravia 3081

“Whatever is good of its kind ought to be preserved in respect of antiquity as well as our present advantage; for destruction can be profitable to no one but such as live by it.”

—Hawksmoor, 1714

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Those who become Members of the Group perform an indispensable service in providing the funds with which the Group's office and activities are financed. But though for some Members perhaps the signature of a cheque or a Banker's Order may be—for sufficient reason—the limit of their contribution, the Group would fail in its purpose if many of its Members were not prepared to do more. *How, then, can you help?*

The first object of the Group is stated to be the awakening of public interest in Georgian architecture and town planning. To this end, leaflets are issued, exhibitions assembled, and upon occasion lectures arranged; but much, perhaps most, can be done by the personal influence of Members, who, in their homes, in their Clubs, and among their friends or business associates, can play their part in putting Georgian architecture "on the map." Though their words may sometimes seem to fall on deaf ears, they will none the less have been worth while, for a breach, however small, will have been made in the walls of indifference—a breach which time will widen. Sometimes, it is to be hoped, the reception will be favourable, and a new Member may be won. It cannot be too strongly emphasised how greatly the Group must rely on its Members in making known its existence and purpose, and in securing an increase in its subscription income.

Each summer Visits to notable Georgian houses are arranged: there is also usually a Week-End. The Visits provide the occasion for Members not only to see fine buildings under the happiest circumstances but also to meet one another and to interest new Members in the Group and its work. They are arranged on a geographical basis so that as many Members as possible may have a Visit in their neighbourhood. Members are invited to submit for consideration by the appropriate sub-committee the names of houses which they think might find a place in the programme.

In these days talk on Georgian architecture need not be confined to generalisations. From Plymouth to Yarmouth, from Poole to Hull, planning is in the air, and there are few places in which the setting, if not the fate, of some Georgian building does not hang in the balance. It is here that Members can play a particularly useful part. By letters to the local press, by representations to local authorities, they can focus attention on aspects of planning schemes which might otherwise escape scrutiny, and in proper cases bring to the notice of the Executive Committee matters which need investigation. The Executive Committee, for its part, can often help Members by taking up a particular point with the Ministry concerned or by support in other appropriate form.

Now that most of the buildings of "special architectural or historic interest" are officially listed, notices given under sect. 29

of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, of proposals to demolish this building or alter that one are becoming more frequent. This is satisfactory inasmuch as opportunity is afforded to scrutinise the proposal and to decide whether it should be accepted with or without modification, or resisted. But it means that the architectural members of the Executive Committee can no longer cope with the task of providing reports on all the buildings, reports which are properly needed if the Executive Committee is to reach a wise decision on the action to be taken. It is here that Members, especially those with technical qualifications, can help by providing reports on buildings in their districts with, if possible, photographs in support. A number sent in their names in response to an appeal made in the 1955 Interim Report and gave particulars of the areas they were prepared to cover. The Executive Committee will be glad to hear from others who would be willing to have their names added to the list.

In a democratic community it is public opinion which has the last word, and such opinion is formed, not by the unwitting and indifferent majority, but by a minority which both knows and cares. If our splendid inheritance of Georgian buildings is not to be squandered in the pursuit of private gain on the one hand and of Brave New Worlds on the other, it will be because public opinion demands that it shall be preserved. It is in the formation of such opinion that Members can play their greatest role.

Members who have business to discuss or suggestions to make are cordially invited to call at the Group's office at 2, Chester Street, S.W.1. Where possible an appointment should be made a few days in advance.

9/59

The GEORGIAN GROUP was founded in 1937. Its aims are:

- (1) to awaken public interest in Georgian architecture and town planning;
- (2) to afford advice in regard to the preservation, repair and use to-day of Georgian buildings;
- (3) to save from destruction and disfigurement Georgian squares, terraces, streets and individual buildings of special merit;
- (4) to ensure, when an area is replanned, that Georgian buildings are not wantonly destroyed, and that the new buildings harmonise (though they may contrast) with the old.

Particulars of Membership can be obtained from the Secretary