NOTE OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ART ADVISORY GROUP MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2008

Present: Robin Harper MSP, Chair
Ted Broicklebank MSP
Liz Lochhead
Ian McKee MSP

In attendance: Fiona McDougall Art Curator / Exhibitions Manager
Alan Rennie, Exhibitions Officer (Minutes)

Apologies: Patricia Ferguson MSP
Jeremy Purvis MSP

Minutes of last meeting

1. The Group approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

Portraiture

2. Winnie Ewing portrait – The Group discussed the possible loan to the Parliament Collection of a portrait of Winnie Ewing by the artist David Donaldson. Members agreed that this would be an appropriate loan to the Collection given Dr Ewing’s role in opening the new Parliament and her contribution to Scottish politics and the quality of the portrait. The Group discussed potential locations for the work; the Members’ Lobby was deemed the preferred area, with the area displaying the Edwin Morgan poem as an acceptable alternative. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to put the Donald Dewar portrait on public display at the same time.

John Smith bust – The location of the John Smith bust was discussed by the Group. Members agreed it would be appropriate to relocate the work to an area such as the Members’ Lobby where it would link with the caricature on display in the Bar and possibly other portraiture such as the forthcoming Winnie Ewing portrait, or existing Donald Dewar portrait.

The Group discussed whether future portraiture acquisitions should strictly be former office bearers or simply those persons who are deemed to have made a significant contribution to Scotland or Scottish politics – all were in agreement that, essentially, the main criteria for any portraiture should be that it represents a person who has made a significant contribution to political life in Scotland as well as demonstrating artistic quality in its execution.

ACTION: Art Curator / Exhibitions Manager to draft hanging proposal and circulate to Group.
Acquisition offers

3. An offer to gift *Northroom* to the Parliament, an artwork by the artist Victoria Clare Bernie and the architects Metis, and previously temporarily installed in the Main Hall as part of the Six Cities festival, was discussed. Members of the Group decided that due to lack of opportunity to display in the Parliament and lack of appropriate storage it would unfortunately not be appropriate to accept.

**ACTION:** Art Curator / Exhibitions Manager to advise The Lighthouse.

Research visits

4. The Group considered what may be, for the majority, the best day of the week for visits. A suitable date and means of transport to be decided.

**ACTION:** Art Curator / Exhibitions Manager to look into options and costs and circulate to Group.

Update from SPCB

5. The Group were updated on forthcoming art-related issues and projects that would be considered by the SPCB in November.

**ACTION:** Art Curator/ Exhibitions Manager to update at next meeting if possible or by correspondence.

Canongate Wall

6. The Group discussed possible writers for consideration for the Canongate Wall project, including the poet Flora Garry. The Group suggested that MSPs may be invited to recommend writers in their own constituency areas to contribute as a way of involving all Members and generating publicity for the project. It was further suggested that perhaps the focus of the project should be on finding the best quotation for addition as opposed to considering particular writers.

**ACTION:** Members of Group to feed any further suggestions to the Art Curator/ Exhibitions Manager by Monday 20 October.

Exhibition proposal

7. Members discussed an initial proposal to exhibit works from final year graduates of Scottish Art Schools / colleges. It was suggested that it may be beneficial for the Group members to meet with Heads of Art Schools / Colleges to discuss issues and possible ways of progressing.

**ACTION:** Chair to make initial contact with Gray’s School of Art and Art Curator / Exhibitions Manager to follow up by exploring a possible November or December meeting.
Date of next meeting

8. Wednesday 26 November, 12.30-13.30, TG20/21