

XXXX XXXXXXXXXXXX, M.P.,
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA.

Date

Dear [Name of MP],

The future of The Society of Antiquaries

I am writing to you as my Member of Parliament to ask for your support for a campaign to secure the future of the Society of Antiquaries, and its priceless collections and library containing over 40,000 items and 130,000 books and manuscripts. The Society of Antiquaries is an educational charity that promotes the understanding of the human past.

Since the 1870s, it has been based at Burlington House under a bespoke Government arrangement which has delivered immense public value as a hub of cultural and scientific discovery. In 2019, independent analysis estimated that the Society of Antiquaries of London delivers £5.4 million of value to the nation per year through knowledge generation and dissemination, the libraries and heritage collections housed at Burlington House, the Society's work with education, public engagement and its membership.

The Society's premises also provide a vital home for the meetings of a number of much smaller but nonetheless important academic and scholarly societies, dedicated to the study of a variety of areas of history and society. One such society is The Heraldry Society, of which I am a member.

The Society of Antiquaries and these smaller societies contribute significantly to our understanding of the past, and add much to Britain's international reputation as the home of scholarship. This in turn contributes to our ability to attract overseas students, and those with skills vital to our economic growth and revival.

Due to a change in Government accounting rules the Society of Antiquaries is now being forced out because the rent has increased by 3,100% since 2012. The rental income this would provide to the Government is of course trivial in comparison with the value provided to the nation's and world's cultural life, and indirectly to our future prosperity and international reputation. Indeed, the proposed rents are not achievable and can have the effect only of squeezing the Society of Antiquaries, and the smaller charities it hosts, out of Burlington House.

If the Society of Antiquaries is forced out, it might have to close down completely, a tragedy after more than three centuries and a scandal that would be very damaging to Britain's reputation.

I would be grateful to know if we could count on your support to secure the Society's future. If so, the Society's campaign team can be reached on saveBH@sal.org.uk, and they will be able to provide further information including how you can lend your support.

Yours sincerely,