



Dear Member,

## The Society of Antiquaries Appeal

The Society of Antiquaries has launched a public campaign to contest the rapidly escalating rental rates at its primary home in Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, U.K.

The Heraldry Society houses part of its Library at The Society of Antiquaries and thus our members can gain access to our Library items and also the rest of the magnificent and unrivalled Library at the Society of Antiquaries by appointment and we have also used their facilities for our public lecture programme.

Since the 1870s, the Society of Antiquaries 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. Since the building is now considered by Government to be an investment property, the Society of Antiquaries is being effectively forced out due to rapidly escalating rents; already rent has increased by 3,100% since 2012.

The uncertainty of the Antiquaries tenure has already restricted its contributions to society over the last eight years, with investment in the building and a number of public engagement activities restricted, and resources instead directed at quietly appealing to the Government to agree an affordable solution.

Without resolution, the need to relocate represents a major threat to the continued existence of the Society of Antiquaries in its current form. Leaving Burlington House would require the prohibitively costly process of re-creating the infrastructure to house its unique collections elsewhere, while moving fragile historical items *en masse* is a huge and extremely costly undertaking in itself.

As a self-supporting charity, the Society of Antiquaries is under enormous pressure to raise funds for alternative premises to house its unrivalled library, unique archive and historically-significant museum collections where they would remain safe and ensure they are accessible to academics, students, and the public.

After eight years spent attempting to seek a fair arrangement behind closed doors, the Society of Antiquaries has now gone public to encourage the Government to recognise the immense value of the Society, its library and collections at Burlington House, and to find an affordable arrangement for the Antiquaries to remain.

A campaign is now underway, and The Heraldry Society invites you to support this effort, should you feel it appropriate. It has been suggested that you may wish to write to your Member of Parliament to ask for their support for this 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. **We attach a suggested form of words.**

More information on the campaign and ways in which people can help can be found on the website of The Society of Antiquaries - <https://www.sal.org.uk/save-burlington-house/>

How you can help: <https://www.sal.org.uk/save-burlington-house/how-you-can-help/>

FAQs: <https://www.sal.org.uk/save-burlington-house/frequently-asked-questions/>

The Council of The Heraldry Society

2 December 2020