

ISOKON TRUST

IT



Provenance

This collection was gifted to the UEA by Chris and Lone McCourt in July 2009. The papers arrived at UEA three years later in August 2012.

Chris McCourt was a Friend of the Isokon Trust. In February 2005, on the resignation of Chris Flannery, he was appointed Trustee and Chairman of

the Trust. Chris McCourt was also Director of Isokon Plus, licensed to manufacture and develop the original Isokon Ltd furniture.

Organisational history

Isokon Trust was founded in 1999 to find an organisation interested in funding Lawn Road Flat's (LRF) restoration and refurbishment and to educate and promote the history of the building. Marco Goldschmied was Patron of the Trust and Chris Flannery was Founder Trustee and Chairman. Other trustees were Mark Pimlott & Trevor Horne. In 2001 the Trust gained charitable status from the Charity Commission.

LRF opened in 1934. The building was designed by Wells Coates and commissioned by Jack Pritchard. In 1969 the building was sold to *The New Statesman and Nation*, and in May 1972 it changed hands and became the property of The London Borough of Camden. After some years the building fell into disrepair.

Refurbishment work began in late 1995 under the direction of architects John McAslan & Partners. They were commissioned by English Heritage to draw up a 4 year, £1 million repair and refurbishment plan. The architects repaired the leaking roof and balconies, carried out minimum upgrades to five flats and restored one, no. 22, to its full specification, at a cost of £20,000. The refurbishment programme was put on hold after this first phase.

In May 2001 Notting Hill Housing Group (NHHG) was chosen from a list of 11 bidders to purchase and restore the grade 1 listed building. The restoration project was awarded to Avanti Architects. It was estimated that £4 million would be needed to restore the flats back to their former 1934 glory.

A single flat, no. 15 (Walter Gropius' flat) was renovated with original fittings to serve as an historical record.

In September 2001 an Open House weekend was held, the event attracted nearly 4,000 visitors to the building. An exhibition was held in the Walter Gropius flat with furniture supplied by Isokon Plus and some personal pieces belonging to Chris Flannery.

Renovations on the rest of the building continued from May 2003. Most of the flats were refurbished with like-for-like materials.

Private sales of 10 apartments and one penthouse flat took place on 29/2/04. The one-bedroom penthouse, formerly the flat of Jack and Molly Pritchard, sold for £525,000. The remaining 25 flats were designated for shared ownership by key workers.

Under the guidelines of English Heritage, the 4-car garage on the ground floor was gifted by NHHG to IT for public exhibition space.

On 22/4/04 IT and Notting Hill Home Ownership (bid partners) submitted a bid to Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the fitting out of the gallery and the purchase of flat no. 15. Two months later on 3/6/04 the bid was withdrawn. Problems relating to planning, and change of use from residential to commercial were cited.

Dates

1998-2011

Extent

5 boxes

Medium

Mixed: Letters, emails, faxes; printed leaflets, brochures, postcards and journals; architectural plans; copies of legal agreements; meeting minutes; mailing lists; MS notes; 1 commercial presentation CD; 1 certificate; floor covering samples.

Scope and content

Arranged in 20 sections or files. Some files comprise sub-files.

Description and arrangement

IT/1 Trust declarations and legal, 1999-2011

IT/2 Isokon Trust minutes, 2004-2011

IT/3 Chris Flannery's file, 1998-2003

IT/4 Current & potential members, 2000-2006

IT/5 For mailing list entry, 1999-200?

IT/6 Postcards and publications, 1999-2004

IT/7 Second stage tender submission by Notting Hill Housing Group [2001]

IT/8 Refurbishing of show flats, 2003-2004

IT/9 Samples of old floor coverings at LRF

IT/10 Marketing, 1999-2002

IT/11 Gallery lease, 2003-2006

IT/12 Isokon Gallery, 2003-2004

IT/13 Museum – fit out & running, 2003-2006

IT/14 Funding – hot favourites, 2000-2004
IT/15 Heritage Lottery Fund, 1999-2004
IT/16 Concrete Society Award, 2004
IT/17 Fundraising: Flat 15 and the Isokon Gallery, 2004-2005
IT/18 Press, 1991-2004
IT/19 Mixed info: Open House, letterheads, correspondence, 2001-2005
IT/20 Plans, 1995-2003

IT/1 Trust declarations and legal, 1999-2011

Contains 46 items.

- Development document presented by Chris Flannery, April 1999 and June 1999.
- Draft Declarations of Trust Deed from Isokon Trust, 1999.
- Annual returns, 2002-2004
- Resignation letter from trustee Mark Pimlott, 29/11/04.
- Annual updates from the Charity Commission, 2003-06.
- Resignation letter from the Chairman Chris Flannery, 28/2/05.
- Declaration on behalf of the trustees to the Charity Commission that the charity of Isokon Trust has ceased to exist, 1/6/11.

IT/2 Isokon Trust minutes, 2004-2011

One ring-binder. Includes letters of resignation from trustees and minutes and declaration on behalf of the trustees that the charity has ceased to exist (1/6/11).

IT/3 Chris Flannery's file, 1998-2003

Contains 240 items. Some items are further sub-divided. Chris Flannery was Chairman and Trustee of IT until February 2005. This file was not used by his successor Chris McCourt. The file contains a ring-binder and loose papers.

The ring-binder includes introductory letters of support for the Trust, 1999-2000; building design response letters in which Flannery thanks people for their continued efforts in the preservation of the building; press releases; planning application with the London Borough of Camden for the reinstatement of the Isobar in 2000; correspondence with English Heritage; with friends and trustees; sketch plans for the Isobar; and correspondence with the Copped Hall Trust.

There are also loose papers from 1998-2004. Included are:

- letters and memoirs from former tenants or people who visited and remembered LRF: former tenant Charles Fenn who lived at LRF from 1949-1954; John Cahill who used to visit the Potinière (former Isobar) as a child in the early 1960s; Michael Shaw, a former manager of the Isobar / restaurant in the 1960s; Susan Staton who lived in flat no. 24, 1958-1960.
- letters from interested parties and prospective buyers of flats.

IT/3/240 Correspondents A-Z

American Institute of Architects

Avanti Architects

Includes fax from Keyvan Lankarni of Avanti Architects to Chris Flannery, John Hughes of NHHG, and

others. Provides details of the works which should be included in a costing package. These works relate to the ground floor of LRF, 10/00. Includes a plan which indicates removal of walls and the reinstatement of others. The garage doors and boiler are also referred to.

Bates, Wells and Braithwaite (solicitors)

Grove Lettings (NHHG)

The Landmark Trust

London Open House

Pritchard, Jonathan

IT/4 Current & potential members, 2000-2006

Contains 59 items. Includes membership application forms, offers of finance, and contact details; and signed up friends of Isokon Trust. Includes correspondence with Jonathan Pritchard relating to donations, 2004-2006.

IT/5 For mailing list entry, 1999-200?

Contains 16 items. Includes lists of contact details.

IT/6 Postcards and publications, 1999-2004

Contains 13 items. Includes correspondence and invoices relating to the sale of postcards; and correspondence relating to the re-print of Jack Pritchard's book *View from a Long Chair*.

IT/7 Second stage tender submission by Notting Hill Housing Group [2001]

Tender submission to the London Borough of Camden (one ring-bound report).

IT/8 Refurbishing of show flats, 2003-2004

Correspondence relates to stripping out works and items to be salvaged. A schedule of items to be salvaged is included from Avanti Architects.

Further correspondence concerns the borrowing of furniture and the fitting out of the show flats; features of the Bestlite collection; and the manufacture of bespoke furniture by Windmill Furniture for the show flats.

Photos are included of a show flat done by NHHG with furniture supplied by Isokon Plus.

IT/9 Samples of old floor coverings at LRF, [undated]

One envelope of half a dozen bits of old floor coverings.

IT/10 Marketing, 1999-2002

Contains 16 items:

- Leaflets for friends and trustees, 1999-2000.
- Leaflets and postcards for a "minimal existence" exhibition held in the flats.
- Postcards from Open House 2001.
- A news leaflet (winter 2002/03).
- Draft brochure on the flats with specific attention given to the gallery, included are block plans.

IT/11 Gallery lease, 2003-2006

Contains 27 items of correspondence on the lease of gallery space on the ground floor of Lawn Road Flats from Notting Hill Home Ownership Ltd. Correspondence is chiefly with solicitors. A letter dated 10/2/06 states that Isokon Trust was returning the lease unsigned and was withdrawing from the Isokon gallery project due to lack of funds.

IT/12 Isokon Gallery, 2003-2004

Contains 3 items.

- A spread sheet of items to be salvaged, 2003.
- Correspondence, 2004.

IT/13 Museum – fit out & running, 2003-2006

Contains 17 items. Includes an outline brief for the gallery area and a list of items to be included; a sketch of the area by Flannery; and schedule of fit out costs.

IT/14 Funding – hot favourites, 2000-2004

Contains 38 items of general correspondence with potential donors, friends, and patron Marco Goldschmied.

Funds were initially required to raise the profile of the building, to run the Trust and pay solicitors' fees.

In 2004, in addition to the HLF application, IT aimed to raise £25,000 from other sources towards the gallery and/or flat no. 15. The file includes a document giving the history of the flat, and the Trust's aims and objectives concerning the gallery; also print-outs of websites of organisations which could potentially provide financial support.

IT/15 Heritage Lottery Fund, 1999-2004

IT/15/1 Heritage Lottery Fund notes and correspondence, 2000-2004

IT/15/2 Heritage Lottery Fund application, 1999-2004

IT/15/1 Heritage Lottery Fund notes and correspondence, 2000-2004

Contains 78 items. This file concerns IT's bid for £405,000 for the fitting out of the gallery and the purchase of flat no. 15 (former flat of Walter Gropius).

The file includes a 2001 proposal from Ranch Associates for the identity and promotion of the Isokon building; letters of support; and correspondence with HLF, the bid was submitted to HLF on 22/4/04.

An email 13/5/04 from Lone McCourt to Paul McGarry of NHHG, explains the conditions under which the HLF may offer funding for the gallery. The gallery would need to be leased for a minimum of 15 years; flat no. 15 would need to be part of the gallery experience. A trained tour guide would need to take visitors up to the 1st floor and strict rules on silence would apply.

An email from Lone McCourt, 3/6/04 states that Isokon Trust had to withdraw the application to HLF for funding. There were problems relating to planning and change of use from residential to commercial.

IT/15/2 Heritage Lottery Fund application, 1999-2004

Contains 85 items. One ring-binder containing check-lists and all supporting documentation for the HLF bid.

IT/16 Concrete Society Award, 2004

1 item. The certificate is contained in a scroll-tube.

IT/17 Fundraising: Flat 15 and the Isokon Gallery, 2004-2005

Contains 49 items. Correspondence with the Landmark Trust and others. The IT tries to interest buyers for flat no. 15, with a view that IT could lease it from the owner. The flat, formerly occupied by Walter Gropius would be furnished appropriate to the 1930s. The idea was that the flat could be leased out as an interesting place to stay in London. IT's only commitment is that the flat would be available for public viewing during the annual Architecture Week and Open House weekends and also that it generates some income to help support the Isokon Gallery situated on the ground floor of the building.

Correspondence in 2005 concerns requests for financial assistance. Correspondents include: Visual Arts and Design, Allies & Morrison Architects, The Ove Arup Foundation, Camden Arts Centre, Clore Duffield Foundation, and Jonathan Pritchard.

IT/18 Press, 1991-2004

Contains 64 items.

- Notes on a meeting to discuss potential media activity generated from the successful Isokon bid, 1/5/01.
- Assorted press-cuttings, journal articles, brochures, etc. Includes photos of refurbished flat no. 22 (1997).

Press articles, around the time of the sale of the flats in Feb 2004, include photographs of the refurbished flats by Avanti Architects. Most of the flats were refurbished with like-for-like materials but a single flat, no. 15 (Walter Gropius' flat) was renovated with original fittings to serve as an historical record.

IT/19 Mixed info: Open House, letterheads, correspondence, 2001-2005

Includes:

- General correspondence with Chris and Lone McCourt.
- Letterheads.
- Papers concerning London Open House (an architecture education charity) and the open weekend in September 2005. As part of Open House the gallery at the Isokon building was open to the public.
- Brief for an Isokon website and registration form for website.
- A list of company names with the wording 'Isokon'.
- List of records in the Wells Coates Archive.

IT/20 Plans, 1995-2003

Contains 28 items.

Plans included:

- IT/20/1 Flat 22 proposed plan layout, 12/95
- IT/20/2 Flat 22 proposed plan. Drawing no. 411/122/1
- IT/20/3 Flat 22 proposed plan – sub contractor, 7/96. Drawing no. 411/22/31. Troughton McAslan Ltd.

Chris Flannery plans:

- IT/20/4 Garage exhibition space. Detail plan & section AA. A-01 A
- IT/20/5 Garage exhibition space. Sections BB & CC. A-02 A
- IT/20/6 Garage exhibition space. Sections DD/EE and FF. A-03 A
- IT/20/7 Garage exhibition space. Detail plan & elevation AA: WC. A-04 A
- IT/20/8 Garage exhibition space. Detail WC elevations B/C/D. A-05 A
- IT/20/9 Garage exhibition space. Detail dressing room mock. A-06 A
- IT/20/10 Garage exhibition space. Detail kitchen mock. A-07 A
- IT/20/11 Mock up core walls. Joinery details. A-09 A
- IT/20/12 Display window to exg door. Joinery details. A-10 B
- IT/20/13 Flase wall to exg door. Joinery details. A-11 A
- IT/20/14 Reception desk. Joinery details. A-12 A

Phadoemichit & Flannery Architects plans:

- IT/20/15 Isokon flats. A 00
- IT/20/16 Original studio layout. Drawing no. 9864-20-301
- IT/20/17 Proposed studio flat. Drawing no. 9864-20-306
- IT/20/18 Proposed plan exhibition space. A 01
- IT/20/19 Front elevation proposed. A 02
- IT/20/20 Studio flat kitchen joinery. A 05
- IT/20/21 Studio flat dressing joinery. A 06
- IT/20/22 Studio flat 15. A 07
- IT/20/23 Flat 15 and access corridor

Avanti Architect plans:

- IT/20/24 Salvaged door schedule. Drawing no. 9864-X8-100 rev. A
- IT/20/25 Stripping out drawings for each flat, the penthouse and garage

Other plans:

- IT/20/26 Studio flat kitchen joinery. A21
- IT/20/27-28 Studio flat kitchen joinery. A22

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