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PRESS RELEASE

Open-City announces new trustee as founding director takes on new role

The founding director of Open-City Victoria Thornton OBE has announced today she will step down from her current role in the next six months, instead taking over the Open House Worldwide programme and the Open-City Impact Study for its 25th anniversary year.

Thornton founded Open-City in 1992 to promote public awareness and appreciation of the capital's building design and architecture. Since then the organisation has grown to be the largest of its kind in the UK and supports a variety of initiatives including Architecture in Schools, to teach young children about the built environment, Accelerate, to encourage teenagers from disadvantaged backgrounds to study architecture and the week long sustainability showcase Green Sky Thinking.

Thornton's new role, leading Open House Worldwide, as well as Founder of Open-City, will see her devoting one day a week to the charity. Recruitment for a new director is set to begin in October.

Thornton said: "It has been an incredible ride steering Open-City along over the years and we are in a stronger place now than ever. Last year saw more than 200,000 people taking part in London's Open House event whilst only after just three years, the Archikids Festival for children is truly established and the charity's new chair, Crispin Kelly, is working hard with the team to make it even better in the coming years.

"Green Sky Thinking is now a high-profile event in the built environment calendar with more than 40 companies from across the built environment showcasing events annually. And this year has been the most successful yet for Accelerate, with fifteen young people getting places to study architecture at some of the country's most prestigious universities.

"My energy now will focus on Open House Worldwide, with an incredible 'family of 32 cities' in the anticipation of it growing to 50 by 2017 with applications in from Venice, Milan, San Diego, Amman, Lagos, Santiago and Kuala Lumpur. A key focus will be producing an impact study to show the success it brings to cities and towns across the world."

Meanwhile, Tony Pidgley, executive chairman of the Berkeley Group, has been named as the latest trustee to join Open-City.

Pidgley said: "You don't learn to love architecture from a text book. You've got to touch the detail and understand how a place was made. Open-City's education programmes play an excellent role in reaching out to future generations whilst the



incredibly successful Open House festival of architecture and design helps us care about this great city. So I am very honoured to become a trustee.”

Pidgley will sit on the board of trustees alongside Alison Brooks, director of Alison Brooks Architects, Edwin Heathcote, FT architecture critic, Stephen Howlett, CEO of Peabody, Helen Newman, partner Olswang LLP, The former MP Nick Raynsford, and Alan Stanton, partner of Stanton Williams Architects.

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