

THE
MERCERS'
COMPANY

2019—2021
Review
Philanthropic
contribution
and reflection



Contents

02 Introduction

04 Philanthropy

34 Fellowship

44 Stewardship

Introduction Master

When I started my journey to become Master, I had a fair idea of what it would bring, but little did I know how different it would turn out to be. I could not have imagined that I would serve two years and life would fundamentally change for all of us.

The Clerk's introduction follows mine and largely focuses on our external accomplishments but I want to focus on the contribution of the people inside the Company that underpins that success.

The Members make the Company what it is. In a normal year, we work our members very hard and a third of them are actively involved as school governors, charity trustees or members of committees. They all volunteer their time and in the last two years they have willingly adjusted the way they work to keep the Company on an even keel. It is this sense of duty that reflects our ethos and ensures the Company evolves. Alongside the Membership is a dedicated Executive Team. If the average British worker has worked an additional 10% over the time of the pandemic, I think that we can say we are at least equal to this.

Our Covid-19 response is a testament to the collective strength and commitment of our Membership and Executive Team. Like so many institutions, the pandemic affected our income but we took the steps early on to make sure our longer-term commitments would not be affected and that all multi year grants would be honoured. We also effectively managed an increased demand for support. I am pleased to say that to date we have provided over 100 grants to charities in need and the team ensured these grants were processed in days rather than weeks and in some cases in just a few hours.

Although we will continue to see a downturn in our charitable giving over the medium term, once Covid-19 is under control, we will again see an increase in our income which will flow through to our grant making.

The purpose of the Company today is to be a philanthropic force for good, and it is the hope of each Master to leave the Company in a stronger position than when they started their term.



This review marks the end of my term as Master and going through this process has given me time to reflect on both points. Financial metrics are one measure of our success but despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, I believe that we have made an effective contribution to society and we will continue to do so.

I want to take the opportunity to thank the Membership, Rob and the Executive Team for working tirelessly to keep the beating heart of the Mercers' going.

Mark Aspinall
Master

“Our Covid-19 response is a testament to the collective strength and commitment of our Membership and Executive Team. Like so many institutions, the pandemic affected our income but we took the steps early on to make sure our longer-term commitments would not be affected and that all multi year grants would be honoured.”

Introduction Clerk

This annual review covers an extraordinary two years in the life of the Mercers' Company. As I write this, we continue to inch closer to normality, but I am conscious that there remains a long way to go. I am incredibly proud of the strong, resilient partnership forged between the Membership and the Executive Team in this period.

We are now three years into our refreshed philanthropic strategy, and since its start in 2018, the Company and the charities, working collaboratively, have distributed £27.5m across our three people-based programmes: Young People & Education, Older People & Housing and Church & Communities. Collectively they are doing a huge amount to help the disadvantaged and some of the highlights of their giving are showcased in this review.

In addition, through our Members' Philanthropy programme the Company has also supported the Members' and Executive's individual charitable commitments both in the UK and internationally. Since 2018, £625k has been given to a wide range of organisations where a modest amount of money can make a significant and lasting impact.

Learning and evaluation is now a significant part of our philanthropic work. Each of our programme areas is researching the effectiveness of our giving to ensure that we continue to deploy our resources effectively to maximise impact. We are also starting to disseminate our findings to policy makers, funders and charitable organisations to increase sector knowledge and practice.

The Stewardship of the Company and Charities' assets is essential to funding our philanthropy. Many of these assets are held in property in Covent Garden and the City and we continue to invest in these to secure their long-term future. Closer to home, in 2019, the refurbishments of 1-3 and 7-8 Frederick's Place were completed and formally opened. In Covent Garden we have made major lettings before and during the pandemic, completed the refurbishment of St Martin's Courtyard and are now looking ahead to the redevelopment of Old Brewer's Yard.



I am delighted that we have used our longstanding relationship with the National Portrait Gallery to showcase an exhibition that celebrates prominent Mercers – from a saint to a scout! The exhibition is part of a wider partnership which will also see the Company support the Gallery's early years outreach programme and provides an exciting model for future collaborations.

Underpinning all our activities is a robust governance structure for both the Company and the charities of which it is trustee. We take our responsibility as corporate trustee very seriously and the creation of charity governance committees ensures that we continue to fulfil this role to the highest standards. On the Company side we are currently drawing together our strategic objectives for the next four years to ensure we continue to progress across all fronts.

Finally, on a personal note, I am hugely grateful to the Company and individual Members and staff for their support of my sponsored cycle across Nepal in January 2020. I was truly humbled by the very many donations, words of encouragement and practical assistance which contributed to the success of the challenge. I was delighted to surpass the fundraising target of £100,000, which has meant that the Shree Prabha school in Nepal has been rebuilt with new facilities and is now 'earthquake proofed'.

Rob Abernethy
Clerk

Philanthropy is the common thread that links our past, present and future. Like our original benefactors, we believe in creating positive change so that everyone has the potential to lead a fulfilling life. The Company and the charities of which it is trustee work together to provide three people-focused programmes.

Philanthropy Review

Building on our strengths

Over the last year our philanthropy has been agile and responsive to the demands placed on it by the pandemic; we have balanced reduced incoming funds with increased demand across our major grant making programmes, housing schemes and the schools to which we appoint governors.

Within grant making, the three programmes – Young People & Education, Older People & Housing and Church & Communities – have stood the test of the pandemic. The programme priorities remain relevant although there has been some change of emphasis to focus on the greatest need (for example relieving loneliness, promoting digital inclusion and promoting mental health). The case studies on the following pages illustrate some of our work. We also set up our own Rapid Response Fund.

We have become a more collaborative funder – playing our part in the London Community Response and aligning funds to it from both the Older People & Housing and Young People & Education programmes to tackle need on our doorstep; contributing to discussions with funder groups; entering a further funding partnership with Key Fund, a social investor working in the North East; developing greater links with the Norfolk Community Foundation; and, closer to home, contributing to the Livery Initiative for NHS staff.

We have continued to listen to our grantees and learn from the frontline as to what works and what doesn't. We want to leverage our knowledge and connections to facilitate systemic change. Above all, we want to build on our relational approach so that we have an open and ongoing dialogue with the organisations we fund throughout the period of their grant so that organisations thrive. As part of this we are looking at how we can make sure our programmes are accessible and inclusive to those organisations that most need our support.

The three major grant making programmes adopted by the Company and the Charities* from 2018 are now midway through their first phase of operation (2018–2023). The Company reviewed the operation of the programmes in December 2020 and is pleased with the progress so far. Considerable funds have been invested through programmes since 1 April 2018. The focus is now shifting to evaluation of what we are learning from those programmes and consideration of how that influences our future grant making. This annual review sets out our Covid-19 response and highlights some of our early learning from our programmes.

Serena Hedley-Dent
Deputy Clerk

*The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington, the Earl of Northampton's Charity, the Mercers' Charitable Foundation, the St Paul's Schools' Foundation, Mercers' School Memorial Trust (including the Merrett Bequest), Lady Campden's Money Legacy for Loans, and the Charter 600 Charity.



Since 2018, through our three major grant programmes, we have awarded 388 grants to 318 organisations totalling

£27.5m

£13.6m

Young People & Education Programme

→ Find out more

£7.1m

Church & Communities Programme

→ Find out more

£6.8m

Older People & Housing Programme

→ Find out more

Our Philanthropic Response to Covid-19

How we have helped

Rapid Response Fund

The Company moved quickly once the potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the charity sector became clear. Even before the first lockdown started we had signed the Covid-19 funders' statement, which indicated our support for our grantholders. We also established a Rapid Response Fund (RRF) to provide emergency funding of up to £10k to existing grantholders.

The RRF was funded by the Mercers' Charitable Foundation, the Charity of Sir Richard Whittington and the Earl of Northampton's Charity and has supported 88 organisations with 93 grants. The majority of the organisations supported were London based but significant support was also given to organisations in Norfolk and the North East.

During the first emergency phase the turnaround time from application to receipt of funds was 11 days, which was much faster than a normal grant application. This enabled our grant holders to provide immediate frontline support when it was most needed. Since May the RRF has also supported organisations to adapt their services to help them evolve and adapt in order to thrive beyond the pandemic.

London Community Response

Over the summer 2020, the Older People & Housing programme distributed £100k through the London Community Response and supported 11 charities working to combat loneliness in older people. Two of our grant programme managers each dedicated their time to lead a team of volunteers put together by London Community Response to manage the grant applications for funding for People at Risk, the homeless and infrastructure projects.

In addition, the three main grant programmes (Young People & Education, Older People & Housing and Church & Communities) continued to respond to the impacts of Covid-19 by supporting organisations and their ongoing challenges and needs.

→ [Find out more](#)

More than money

As of 31 March 2021, our total Covid-19 response amounts to £1.3m in grants and many hundreds of hours put in by our team keeping in touch with existing grantholders, running webinars and helping on the Covid-19 response.

Our Philanthropy and Giving Committees (and particularly their Chairmen) have contributed large amounts of their time to ensure grant applications were dealt with quickly during these extraordinary times.



Our Covid-19 response at a glance

107

Total number of organisations supported

£608k

In RRF grants¹

£1.3m

Total amount awarded

121

Total number of grants awarded

£518k

Through our three main programme areas²

£249k

Older People & Housing and Young People & Education funding aligned to

LONDON COMMUNITY RESPONSE

¹ Funded by the Mercers' Charitable Foundation, the Earl of Northampton's Charity and the Charity of Sir Richard Whittington.

² Young People & Education, Older People & Housing and Church & Communities.

Our Philanthropic Response to Covid-19

Case studies

InCommon

Bringing generations together

InCommon is a social enterprise whose mission is to bring different generations together. Before the pandemic they facilitated in-person sessions between primary school children and older people living in sheltered housing.

In March 2020, the sessions had to stop because of Covid-19 restrictions. In response, InCommon completely changed its model by quickly setting up

InCommon Buddies, which provides families with resources to keep the young and old connected by phone or online video. Since the start of the pandemic, InCommon has also facilitated over 200 conversations between younger and older people over Zoom.

→ [Find out more](#)



Livery Kitchen Initiative

Providing meals for NHS staff and East End communities

Early in the pandemic, the Drapers' Company set up the Livery Kitchen Initiative to provide meals to four Barts Health NHS Trust hospitals and communities in London's East End through the charity City Harvest. 59 Livery Companies and other charities, organisations and individuals have supported the project by allowing the use of their kitchens whilst others, including the Mercers' Company, have provided financial support.

Since April 2020, over £625k has been raised, and over 100,000 meals have been delivered to clinical staff in four Barts Health NHS trust hospitals and 50,000 to 13 communities in East London.



Foresight

Support for disabled people

Foresight supports people facing disadvantages resulting from disabilities. In the past year it has encountered several challenges due to Covid-19. Alongside Key Fund and Charity Bank, we helped Foresight review their situation and plan what to do next. Foresight went on to secure a loan of £833k and a grant of £180k from Charity Bank for its building projects, and over £40k from Key Fund to re-open its day centres in a Covid secure way.

Foresight was also awarded £4.8k from the RRF to take on the running of a meals on wheels service; extending it to more vulnerable people (23 to date) and increasing revenue so that the charity can support more people.

→ [Find out more](#)

"Funding from the Mercers' Rapid Response Fund has ensured we could successfully integrate Fresh Start Meals into our service delivery, enabling it to operate efficiently and underpinning the growth of this service."

PAUL SILVESTER, CEO FORESIGHT



Evaluating our Progress

We use the learning and evaluation from our current grant making to shape our future work. As well as working with organisations to understand the difference that our funding is making, we also commission independent research to further support our learning.



Young People & Education Programme Evaluating our initiatives to create lasting change

We commissioned The Education Policy Institute and The Centre for Education and Youth to evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery method for each organisation supported by our Early Years or Transitions special initiatives. The reports will be published by 2023 and the results will enable us to shape our future funding plans.

The Anna Freud Centre is helping our Associated Schools and Colleges measure and monitor their pupils' mental health and wellbeing. The work has led to discussions with policymakers, including the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Social Care.



Finding out what works for the development of children.



Discovering how to help young people move to a positive goal after finishing school.



Influencing mental health and wellbeing policies.

Older People & Housing Programme

Assessing befriending services and responding to Covid-19

We have facilitated peer support webinars for our grantees, focused on evaluating and adapting services. The webinars have enabled us to formulate an effective response to the pandemic and will help inform the areas of focus for our future grant making.

Two evaluators have been working with our grantees and also the grantees of Independent Age to improve our understanding of befriending services and how they have evolved during Covid-19.

Internally, we will use the research to improve our assessment of grant applications. We will also disseminate our findings to other organisations so they can effectively adapt their services.

→ Find out more



Facilitating nine peer support webinars with 44 speakers and representatives from 87 organisations during the pandemic.



Evaluating befriending services.



Church & Communities Programme 'Deep dive' into homelessness

The Church & Communities programme funds 21 projects, which support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with grants totalling over £1.2m. Independent evaluators, Swain & Frost, were commissioned to take a 'deep dive' into the projects. Their research found that our homelessness funding strand is:

"already delivering significant social benefit. All projects are delivering work which is: good quality; impactful and of value; relevant and broadly consistent with the research and policy evidence base; and which reflects both Mercer's general principles and values, and the priorities for this specific programme."

→ Find out more



All 21 projects deliver good quality, impactful and valuable work.



The programme delivers good value and social benefit.



Some identified gaps, e.g. support for homeless women; tackling structural or policy issues.

Young People & Education Programme

We aim to help young people achieve a good start in life, have strong mental health and feel supported through challenging transitions. We achieve this by working with charity partners and through our four strands of work:

1. Associated Schools and Colleges
2. Mental Health and Wellbeing
3. School Leadership
4. Special Initiatives for Early Years, Literacy and Transitions

Anna Freud Centre Promoting long term wellbeing in young people

For the past few years, we have partnered with the Anna Freud Centre (AFC). AFC has conducted research across our Associated Schools and Colleges into the effectiveness of different ways of improving young people's mental health and wellbeing.

During the pandemic, AFC has been helping the Associated Schools and Colleges with advice and guidance about how best to support their students' wellbeing.

Our partnership is part of a wider initiative by the Centre, which is carrying out research at a national level into young people's wellbeing. When the full findings are collated it is hoped they may influence government policy on young people in education in order to promote better wellbeing in the long term.

[→ Find out more](#)

£300k

OVER THREE YEARS FROM
THE MERCERS' CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION



Royal Ballet School Supporting students' wellbeing in our Associated Schools

Complementing our work with the Anna Freud Centre, several of the Associated Schools and Colleges have initiated their own wellbeing projects which the Young People & Education programme has funded. One of these initiatives is the Royal Ballet School's Positive Minds project.

A dancer's career is both physically and mentally demanding. The Positive Minds project provides a dedicated professional team and specific tools to help dancers to learn and take charge of their wellbeing. The project has been particularly valuable during the pandemic, which meant that sometimes students had to try and continue their ballet studies from home.

The funding will enable the programme to continue over the next two years. Its insights and findings will be shared with other ballet and performing arts schools so their views and experiences can be fed back into the Centre's research.

→ [Find out more](#)

£75k

OVER THREE YEARS FROM THE MERCERS' CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



Drive Forward Foundation Aiding the transition from care to career

Drive Forward Foundation helps care-leavers in London to transition from care to career.

The funding has supported their Breakthrough programme which helps 15-19 year olds make informed choices, access support, and overcome barriers in order to move into independence and develop a positive outlook for the future. Following an initial assessment each young person receives one-to-one support for their personal and career development. When they achieve their desired objective, further mentoring support will be provided to help sustain engagement.

The success of the programme depends on building strong relationships. Maintaining these has been the key focus during the pandemic. During the first lockdown, Drive Forward staff kept in touch with the young people through messaging and phone calls, providing reassurance and supporting their wellbeing. Virtual group sessions were set up to bring the young people together and when it was possible, the staff provided face-to-face help.

→ [Find out more](#)

£334k

OVER THREE YEARS FROM THE MERCERS' CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



“The Breakthrough programme gives you the opportunity to be whoever you want to be. If you let them know who you want to be, they are there to guide you and help you achieve your goals.”

PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT



Older People & Housing Programme

We help older people to lead fulfilling, independent lives by providing accommodation to over 200 residents in our almshouses and sheltered housing schemes and through our grant making programme, which has a particular focus on combating loneliness and isolation. We also facilitate knowledge sharing between our grantees.

Norfolk Community Foundation

Improving communities in Norfolk

Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) is dedicated to building stronger communities and improving the lives of people in Norfolk. In September 2019, we announced our partnership with the Foundation, through which we have distributed grants to reduce loneliness in older people. Initially, the partnership was for one year. We have now extended it for a further two years.

The funding will help 18 small charitable groups and includes a contribution to the Foundation's running costs. It is the first time there has been a dedicated fund to help alleviate loneliness in Norfolk where the demand is high and funding can be difficult to find.

NCF has a strong delivery process and a large network. This collaboration will allow our grants programme to reach a greater number of individual beneficiaries and organisations than we could through direct grants.

In response to Covid-19, NCF launched its emergency Community Response Fund. A Rapid Response Fund grant was made towards the fund.

→ [Find out more](#)

£269k

OVER THREE AND A HALF YEARS FROM THE EARL OF NORTHAMPTON'S CHARITY

£10k

FROM THE RAPID RESPONSE FUND



Linking Lives UK Helping communities

Linking Lives UK works in partnership with churches to deliver projects aimed at reducing loneliness and increasing connectedness for older people. The funding was originally awarded to help Linking Lives UK set up five new projects as well as an intergenerational pilot project linking youth groups and older people. However, owing to the pandemic, Linking Lives UK had to revise its strategy, moving many of its services online. In response, we enabled them to redirect their funding to support their core costs, which proved incredibly successful.

They developed an alternative befriending model for use across the UK focusing on telephone befriending leading to 43 new projects being set up (exceeding the numbers outlined in their original proposal).

→ [Find out more](#)

“This key grant has enabled us to reach and support almost 1,000 socially isolated older people across the UK by establishing 43 Company telephone befriending projects in the year to March 2021.”

JEREMY SHARPE, NATIONAL DIRECTOR, LINKING LIVES

£100k

OVER THREE YEARS
FROM THE EARL OF
NORTHAMPTON'S CHARITY



Southwark Pensioners Centre Using creativity to connect local older adults

Southwark Pensioners Centre (SPC) is open to all and is a membership based organisation rooted in the community in Camberwell, South London. The grant will support creative activities for 500 older people a year, including transport and volunteer support.

During the pandemic SPC has provided food and essentials to its members, made hundreds of phone calls, and has moved its activities online. Although SPC briefly re-opened in late summer of 2020 at the request of its members, it has since moved back to remote support.

→ [Find out more](#)

“Southwark Pensioners Centre is grateful to the Mercers’ Company for its support of our Creative Age programme. The funding enabled us to collaborate with users, volunteers and artists to co-design and co-deliver creative life affirming activities to increase the creativity, mental abilities and social networks of older people.”

CATHY DEPLESSIS, DIRECTOR, SOUTHWARK PENSIONERS CENTRE

£29k

OVER TWO YEARS FROM THE
CHARITY OF SIR RICHARD
WHITTINGTON

£1.7k

RAPID RESPONSE
FUND



Almshouses & Sheltered Housing Schemes

We manage and provide high quality accommodation supporting independent living for over 200 residents in financial need.

What we do

The four almshouses and two sheltered housing schemes we directly manage, aim to provide well-maintained, safe and secure properties which foster a sense of community and provide a variety of activities to meet resident's needs, nurture wellbeing and relieve loneliness.

Achievements

Our 2020-2025 strategy is dedicated to continuous improvement. One important aspect of that is to open up to external scrutiny to enable us to improve our service to residents as well as share our knowledge with others. We are pleased to have achieved the Good Provider level of the EROSH Code of Practice Accreditation Scheme. EROSH is the national network for older people and housing services and professionals. It champions good quality in service provision by sharing best practice and procedures and by providing feedback from the sector to government. We now aim to achieve the Outstanding Provider level.

What is available to residents

Our residents are part of their local communities and participate in a range of local activities and also broader initiatives such as the National Garden Competition. We also support interaction between residents and local charities we help through our grant making programme.

At Lady Mico's Almshouse in Stepney residents have benefited from the Tenants Activity Pot (TAP) which is an initiative of Tower Hamlets local authority. TAP is resident-led and makes funds available for them to organise and take part in activities that tackle loneliness and wellbeing by buying in expertise and services which meet their specific needs. The TAP scheme also allows residents to attend activities at other sheltered housing schemes in the borough.

Structural improvements

In 2020 we completed major repair work to the boundary wall at our almshouse, Trinity Hospital Greenwich.

Covid-19

The safety and wellbeing of our residents has been paramount during the pandemic. When it has been permissible, we have had social distanced doorstep coffee mornings, birthday celebrations and exercise activities.



"Few perhaps realise how vibrant and relevant the almshouse movement is today and how it continues to provide a strong sense of community; offering safety and security, and making it possible for those in need to continue to live independently, in a locality of their choice, often near to families."

ALMSHOUSE ASSOCIATION



Church & Communities Programme

We believe that people thrive when communities thrive. We aim to strengthen communities and families, building positive inclusive relationships between people, increasing a sense of belonging and reducing isolation. We fund locally led charities and social enterprises as they are best equipped to recognise and combat issues in their communities.

Speak Street English classes for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants

Speak Street offers a scalable approach to help refugees and asylum seekers improve their language skills, reduce isolation, and integrate within their local communities.

Speak Street runs regular free pop-up language cafés in North London community venues. Led by qualified English teachers and supported by English speaking volunteers from the local community, the sessions are friendly and flexible enabling people of all abilities to drop in and improve their language skills.

In 2019 Speak Street was awarded £40k to support this core work. During the pandemic, we worked with Speak Street to write the Learning English Through Londoners workbook, which included an entry about the Mercer Sir Thomas Gresham.

→ [Find out more](#)

£40k

OVER TWO YEARS FROM THE
CHARITY OF SIR RICHARD
WHITTINGTON

“The lessons during the pandemic were really helpful. Although we can’t meet, we can see each other on Zoom.”

SANDRA, SPEAK STREET PARTICIPANT



700 Club Overcoming adversity

The 700 Club is a Darlington-based charity that aims to help homeless people regain control of their lives. We supported the Lodge, a 13-bedroom property that provides temporary accommodation and support services to vulnerable individuals and couples who are homeless or at risk of being homeless, and who are experiencing hardship or distress.

During the Covid-19 crisis, 700 Club redirected some of the grant to support an increase in demand for accommodation and the cost of making the Lodge Covid secure.

→ [Find out more](#)

“Owing to the financial support, many people in emergency need who have accessed the Lodge in the past are now living independently. The moral support of the Mercers’ Company has been equally valuable.”

DR JOHN ELLISTON MBE,
HEAD OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT,
700 CLUB

£85K

OVER TWO YEARS FROM
THE MERCERS’ CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION



Ormiston Families Addressing issues faced by women and families

Ormiston Families’ MPower service supports women in Norfolk, who have previously had a child taken into care, to reduce the chances of it happening again.

They help women understand and address the issues that led to the removal of their child by providing support plans tailored to individual needs including practical and emotional support and help in accessing other community and therapeutic services.

During the pandemic the women faced added pressures affecting their mental health and wellbeing. The project was able to address these needs via online services. The two-year grant has supported the continuation of this important service and led to them obtaining further funding from foundations and Norfolk County Council to underwrite the costs of the project for a further two years.

→ [Find out more](#)

£50K

OVER TWO YEARS FROM
THE MERCERS’ CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION



*“Without the guidance
of everyone at Ormiston
Families, I would not be
where I am today.”*

ORMISTON FAMILIES
SERVICE USER



Fellowship is the bond that binds our Company. We benefit from the breadth and depth of professions, expertise and experience represented across our members. Our philanthropic work would not be possible without their deep commitment.

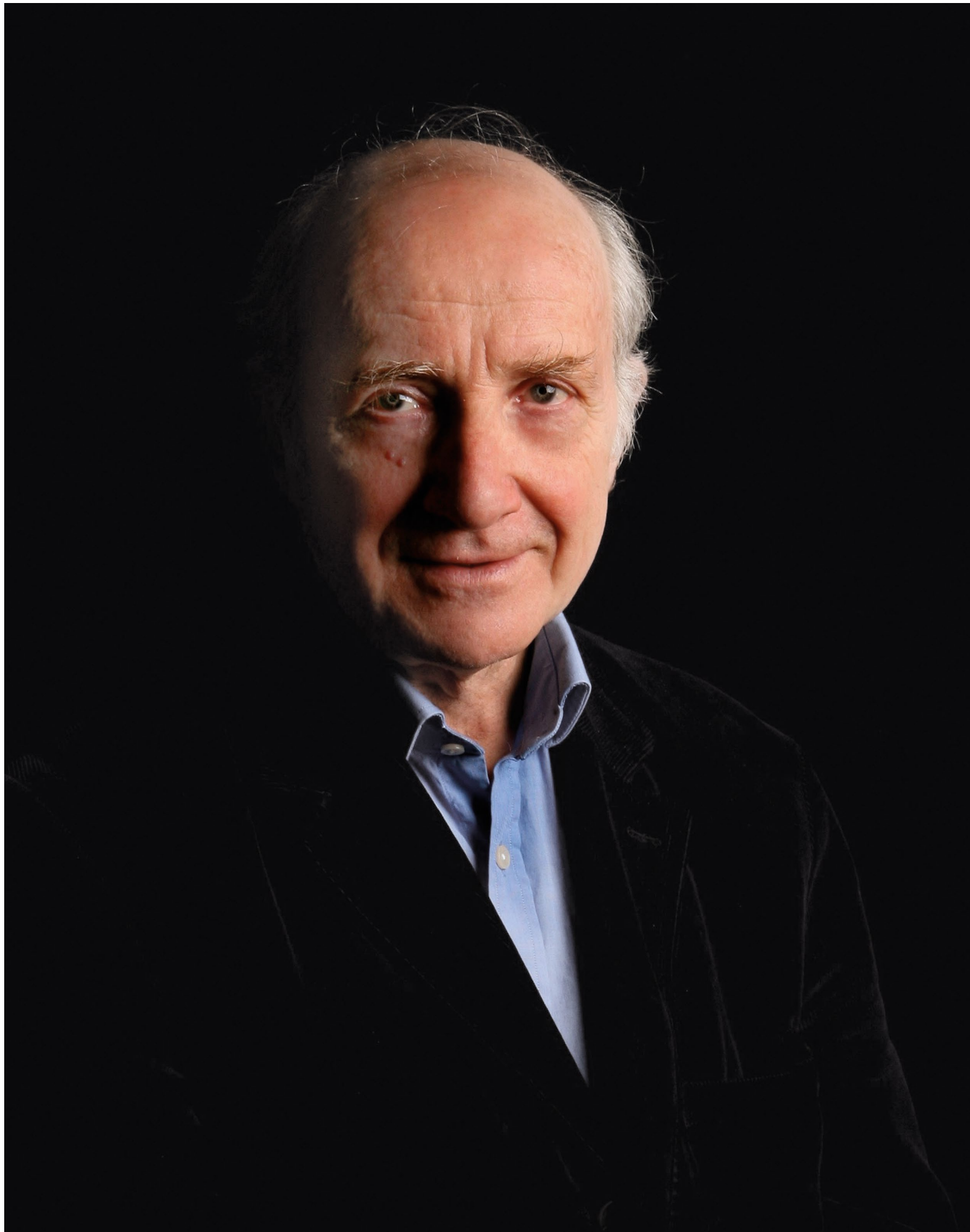
Admissions 2020—2021

Mr Oliver Aston

Mr Simon Bryant

Miss Marina Inoue

Lady Alexandra Knatchbull



Obituary

John Roundell Palmer GBE FRS DL

John Roundell Palmer, the 4th Earl of Selborne GBE FRS DL died on 12th February 2021 at home at Blackmoor Estate which he farmed for most of his working life, developing his passion for the landscape, his community and, above all, apples, as a large commercial grower who set up the country's first community apple day. His increasing realisation that the most successful farmers and growers developed close links with the agricultural research community led John to work with great dedication to bring these sectors closer together, believing in the importance of sharing knowledge and experience.

Beginning with his chairmanship of a large apple marketing co-operative and of the Hops Marketing Board, there followed a long and eminent career in agricultural and environmental research, policy and public service. He held no less than 87 public or charitable appointments during his life, including twice chairing the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, of which he was especially proud. Renowned for his skill at chairing a meeting, John's chairmanships encompassed everything from the Agricultural Research Council to the Blackmoor Village Hall Committee.

Increasingly John became involved in environmental policy issues, becoming a member of the Government Panel on Sustainable Development and the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution and in 1991 he was made chairman of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. He was delighted to be appointed a trustee of Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and served as chairman. He greatly enjoyed his

presidency of the Royal Geographical Society and joked about becoming Chancellor of Southampton University despite getting a fourth-class degree from Oxford. He was much respected for his chairmanship of the Foundation for Science and Technology and his election to be a Fellow of the Royal Society was testimony to his dogged championing of science and the high regard in which he was held by the scientific community for that work.

John treasured his membership of the Mercers' Company. He was Master in 1989 and served on a wide range of committees including the Finance Committee from 2000–2010, for nine of those as Chairman. He also chaired the Charity Coordinating Committee from 2014 to 2016. He was a Governor of St Paul's School and, for seven years from its establishment, a Governor of Sandwell Academy. He also chaired the working party that set up the highly successful Thomas Telford School.

After his cancer diagnosis he quietly set about walking to every Anglican cathedral in England and Wales over an extraordinary 116 days, raising significant money for his much loved parish church. John made light of this achievement, as he did of his long and distinguished CV. Despite his many achievements John was above all a family man and will be greatly missed by his wife Joanna and children William, George, Luke and Emily, his 8 grandchildren and his wider family and friends, who knew him for his humility, warmth, humour and generosity, as well as for his numerous interests including a love of family history, tennis, skiing and nature.

In Memoriam

2019–2021

Dr Stephen Thomas Crump
HRH, The Duke of Edinburgh
Sir Michael James Harwood Harrison Bt JP
Mrs Mary Tatyana Hawley
Viscount Montgomery of Alamein,
David Bernard Montgomery CMG CBE

The Earl of Selborne,
John Roundell Palmer GBE FRS DL
The Lord, Robert Crause Baden-Powell
Mr Edward Pearce Serocold
Mr Colin Nicholas Oliver Watney
Mr William Henry Westmacott

National Portrait Gallery Partnership

Celebrating and building on our philanthropic roots

In 2021, the Company began a three-year partnership with the National Portrait Gallery (NPG), building on many years of collaboration and support.

The NPG is currently closed while it undergoes a major building project. During its closure, we are displaying eight major paintings of Mercers and Mercer benefactors from the Gallery's primary collection.

The Company's early members were merchants trading in wool and luxury fabrics. Many Mercers and some non-Mercers left significant benefactions which they entrusted to the care of the Company. These form the foundation of much of our philanthropy today. Two of those benefactors feature in the display; Sir Thomas Gresham, whose will provided for the founding of Gresham College in 1596, and

Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton who, though not a Mercer, entrusted the almshouse he founded in Greenwich shortly before his death in 1614 to the management of the Company. Both these foundations continue to flourish today.

Our partnership with the NPG also extends to its education work. Through our Young People & Education programme, we are supporting the Gallery's school outreach programme while it is closed. It aims to engage with schools in areas of significant deprivation to help them to access cultural learning. We have also awarded a three-year grant to enable the Gallery to develop an Early Years education and to develop a model of engaging with pre-school children which can be shared with the wider heritage sector.



Above: Unknown Anglo-Netherlandish artist, Sir Thomas Gresham, c.1565, oil on panel.

Left: The Somerset House Conference, 1604 by Unknown artist oil on canvas, 1604 81 in. x 105 1/2 in. (2057 mm x 2680 mm) Purchased, 1882 NPG 665

© National Portrait Gallery, London

Members' Philanthropy

We promote a culture of giving by supporting our Members and staff in their philanthropic endeavours. We help in four ways: matching personal donations, matching funds raised, awarding grants, and making donations for regular volunteering.

1

Matching personal donations of up to £2.5k
Just for Kids Law

Just for Kids Law advocates for young people in need by helping isolated and desperate young people obtain their legal rights and get them back into society. One of our members donated to the charity and Members' Philanthropy contributed a further £2.5k.

→ [Find out more](#)



2

Matching funds raised of up to £2.5k
TZ Rising

We matched £1.1k raised by a member who hiked 100km from London to Brighton to raise funds for TZ Rising, a charity supporting young girls in Tanzania who live in extreme poverty or broken family environments. From primary school right through to college and university, the girls are supported with everything from healthcare to emergency food supplies and safe accommodation on top of their education fees.

→ [Find out more](#)



3

Awarding grants of up to £5k
Children of Rwanda

The Children of Rwanda is a community-owned and led charity that works to ensure children can access and benefit from their universal right to an education, which is key to breaking the cycle of poverty in Western Rwanda. We awarded a grant in 2019. The funds have kept the most vulnerable children educated and secured health insurance for their families. To help lessen the impact of Covid-19 on the charity, a further £5k was awarded in 2020 towards a new sustained strategy.

→ [Find out more](#)

Overview of giving October 2018–December 2020

Grants	Totalling
261	£625k
Overseas	United Kingdom
£121k	£504k

4

Making donations of up to £2.5k for regular volunteering
Howbury Friends'

Howbury Friends' advances the education of families and communities in the London Borough of Bexley by running events and activities. The charity also works closely with St Augustine PCC where it runs the Slade Green Food Bank. We awarded £2.5k to the charity in recognition of a member of staff volunteering at its foodbank since March 2020.



Charter 600 Awards

Linked to our Members' Philanthropy initiative, the Charter 600 Charity Awards give three large annual grants. In 2020, awards totalling £73k were made to the following three charities.



Headway Cambridgeshire

Rehabilitating those with brain injuries whilst helping the environment

Headway provides tailored assessments and support to help rehabilitate people with acquired brain injuries, neurological conditions and cognitive difficulties.

Headway Cambridgeshire seeks not only to support brain injured individuals and their family's recovery, but also to contribute to ecology and sustainable food sources within Cambridgeshire.

The Charter 600 Award will support their plans to develop a network of green therapies, recruit volunteers and increase understanding of brain injury and horticultural therapies.

→ [Find out more](#)



Kennedy St CIO Foundation

Helping people suffering from alcohol and drug addiction

Kennedy St CIO provides tailored, professional support for people recovering from drug and alcohol addiction in and around Brighton.

The funding will help the organisation reach more people. It will enable them to recruit and train additional peer support volunteers who have themselves been through the programme. It will also extend their Helpline service and allow staff to focus on developing more corporate partnerships.

→ [Find out more](#)



Mindsong

Supporting people with dementia and their carers' environment

Mindsong offers music and singing therapy throughout Gloucestershire for people with dementia or long term health conditions along with their carers.

Many of the people Mindsong works with were already isolated but during the pandemic that isolation has increased. As support networks were unable to operate, people caring for loved ones with dementia at home have also become increasingly isolated.

The funding will enable Mindsong to meet the increased demand for its services and the provision of new activities to meet the needs created by Covid-19.

→ [Find out more](#)

Stewardship We develop and maintain a strong commercial property portfolio, which generates the majority of our income. The Company estate extends to over five acres in Covent Garden and two acres in the City and comprises a retail, restaurant, office and residential portfolio.

Covent Garden

Developing our property to fund our philanthropy

The Covent Garden estate consists of a series of five blocks, totalling over five acres and situated to the north of Long Acre and the south of Shelton Street with an east-west axis between Upper St Martin's Lane and Drury Lane.

Highlights of the year

- 01 In 2021 No Chaos opened on Neal Street.
- 02 Boots and Russell & Bromley opened flagship stores.
- 03 The £9m refurbishment and repositioning of St Martin's Courtyard was completed.
- 04 The refurbishment of 143 Long Acre was completed.
- 05 Dishoom doubled in size in late 2020.
- 06 110 Long Acre is being refurbished as Grade A office space with a roof terrace. The building will be the new European Head Quarters for Peloton.
- 07 The refurbishment of 6 Langley Street provides Grade A office and retail space, now fully let to Conduit Club.
- 08 A long lease extension with Hines enabled a redevelopment of this City block.



Long Acre & Neal Street Key lettings

We have made several key retail lettings around the busy junction of Long Acre and Neal Street. Major brands Boots and Russell & Bromley opened flagship stores and other international retailers brought their brands to the UK for the first time or expanded their presence on the estate.

Right: In 2019 Boots and Russell & Bromley opened their UK flagship stores on the estate.

Below: In 2021 No Chaos opened on Neal Street.



The Yards Creating a destination

The Yards consists of three interconnected courtyards: St Martin's Courtyard (part of the Longmartin joint venture with Shaftesbury plc), Mercer Walk, and Old Brewer's Yard. The £9m refurbishment of St Martin's Courtyard, which provides three new restaurant units and remodelled entrances to create a new food and beverage led venue, has now been completed.

The development of The Yards as a retail and hospitality driven location has continued into 2021, with phase one of the redevelopment of Old Brewer's Yard including a new link from Langley Street, created as part of the 6 Langley Street office refurbishment project.

Below: Flower installation at The Yards entrance on Slingsby Place.



143 Long Acre Developing the area

143 Long Acre sits within our successful joint venture with Shaftesbury plc. The completion of the £8.5m project included a major refurbishment and repositioning of a building that comprises a gateway to the Company estate. The project provides for new ground and first floor retail accommodation and 7,500 sq ft of fully let, Grade A office accommodation.

Below: Finished Grade A office space at 143 Long Acre.

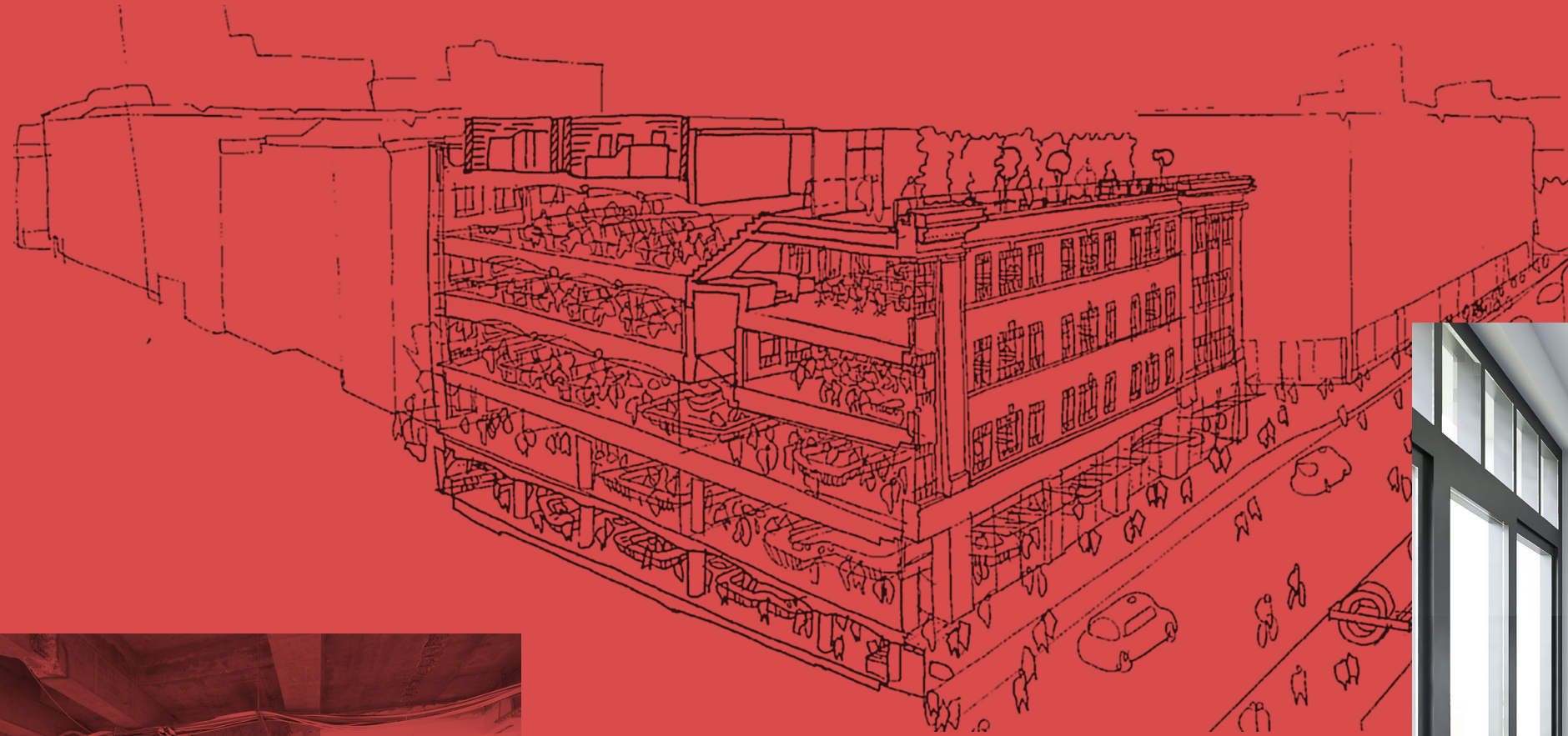


110 Long Acre Progress in action

110 Long Acre is being upgraded and remodelled to provide 20,000 sq ft of high quality, Grade A office space and a new roof terrace. The work is underway and will be completed this autumn.



Above: CGI of the roof terrace.



Above: CGI of remodelled office space.



Property Development Regenerating historic property for modern business

Most of our property in the City of London is located in the block bounded by Ironmonger Lane, Old Jewry and Cheapside.

In November 2019, we celebrated the completion of a two-year regeneration project at numbers 1-3 and 7-8 Frederick's Place. It was the culmination of many years work to restore the buildings to create first class office space. We are pleased that it is now fully occupied with the legal and asset management firm MJ Hudson leasing the majority of numbers 1-3.

In 2021, the completion of a new restaurant at number 1 Frederick's Place will conclude the project.

"The design, quality and attention to detail employed by the Company regenerating the Frederick's Place buildings is a testament to the continuing investment in, and commitment to, our estate and has been instrumental in sourcing a collection of high quality occupiers."

SIMON TAYLOR,
PROPERTY DIRECTOR
THE MERCERS' COMPANY



Left & right: 2019 opening event of Frederick's Place.



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Qing dynasty kesi dragon robe,
c.1850–75, silk

The Company's connection to its original trade has diminished over time but it continues to acknowledge its trade origins. To this end, the Company has been actively acquiring historic silk textile items, including this Chinese dragon robe which was made using the silk tapestry technique of kesi. The items provide a visual reminder of the craftsmanship of silks produced through the ages.

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