



THE  
MERCERS'  
COMPANY

2023–2024  
ANNUAL REVIEW





COVER INSPIRATION

“A Clooth of Gold Bright Shoon”

The two stained glass panels shown on the front and back cover are by stained glass artist Cathy Lee and were procured for the Whittington Building (p78) through a Glaziers’ Company competition sponsored by the Mercers’ Company.

The weave of a cloth of gold that stretches across both panels is made from the (golden) fleece of the sheep. A girl stretches up to hold a strand of the cloth and in so doing reaches for her bright future. It was wool which Mercers originally traded in.

Today, the Mercers’ Company is a livery company focused on being a philanthropic force for good, collaborating with the Charities of which it is a trustee, to relieve disadvantage and help people reach their full potential. Meanwhile the streets of London are paved with gold according to the folklore of Dick Whittington who was three times Master Mercer in 1395, 1401 and 1408.



Photo: Matt Spour

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Philanthropy is the common thread that links our past, present and future.

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# MASTER'S

## PETER LANE

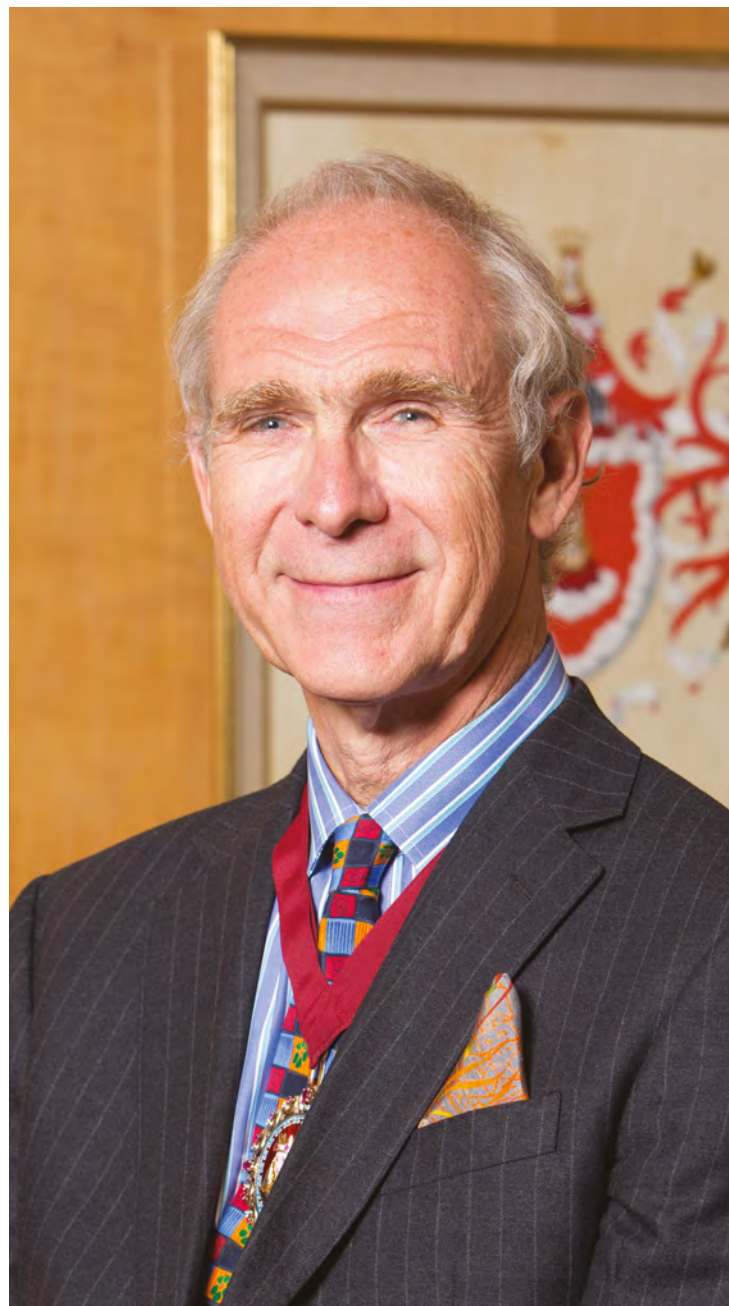
# STATEMENT

It has been an honour and a privilege to lead the Mercers' Company, a year which has seen many significant milestones for the Company and impactful philanthropic work delivered.

We were pleased to award £13 million to charitable organisations from April 2023 to March 2024 and this Annual Review highlights the important work they provide, helping those in society most in need.

Aligned with our philanthropic purpose and recognising that those in poverty and disadvantage are often hardest hit by environmental degradation, the Mercers' Company is committed to ensuring its environmental sustainability and safeguarding the planet for future generations.

After establishing the Environmental Working Group in June 2023, I am delighted to announce that we published our inaugural Environmental Action Plan (EAP) this year, committing to a 43% reduction in Scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon emissions by 2030 (compared to a 2024 baseline) and the decarbonisation roadmap for how this will be achieved.



While progress is afoot, there is still much to do, and the Mercers' Company looks forward to delivering on its EAP, which will be reported on annually.

The completion of the Whittington Building and new archive in the City were significant achievements for the Company, of which we should be immensely proud. The Whittington Building, named after great Mercer philanthropist Sir Richard (Dick) Whittington and the archive, were designed with sustainability in mind. They complement the Georgian courtyard in Frederick's Place and the development sees the historic foot passage connecting Frederick's Place with Ironmonger Lane returned and re-imagined. The Whittington Building, once leased, will continue to support income generation for our philanthropy.

The new archive facility opening in October 2024, will house our historical documents and artefacts, reaffirming our dedication to history and the stewardship of our collection.

I am also pleased to share the progress of Diageo's 'Guinness at Old Brewer's Yard' in Covent Garden, set to open in spring 2025. Old Brewer's Yard, a site with a history dating back to 1772 and once home to the Watney Brewery will once again see beer production with the establishment of a state-of-the-art Guinness microbrewery. The site, aiming to be carbon neutral by 2030, will also be home to Diageo's award-winning 'Learning for Life' Bartending and Hospitality Programme, striving to improve employability and livelihoods across the UK.

I am delighted to report that our Philanthropy Framework, delivered in collaboration with the charities of which we are trustee of, is in its second phase (2023-2028) and continues to yield positive impact.

Visiting grantees and seeing the extraordinary work they do has been a highlight of my tenure and time as a Mercer. In January, I visited the Cardinal Hume Centre in Westminster and saw the impact funding is having for a community of young people, children and their families by offering a safe place to live and the opportunity to reach their full potential.

I have also witnessed the fantastic work within our almshouse communities and the faith and community work of our eight benefices. In March this year, I also visited four of our Associated Schools & Colleges in the West Midlands with fellow Court Members. It was fantastic to see the excellent education and pastoral care delivered across these Academies.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to all those that support the Mercers' Company to be the philanthropic force for good that it is today. None of the excellent work outlined in the Annual Review could be achieved without our valued Members who help oversee the running of the Company and the Charities of which the Company is corporate trustee or sole member; and many of whom also serve as Governors at our Associated Schools & Colleges or as a Trustee on associated bodies. Furthermore, I extend appreciation to the Executive team who work tirelessly, and I am immensely grateful for their contribution.

Thank You.

**PETER LANE – MASTER**



# AT A

We have a rich history dating back over 700 years with philanthropy as the common thread between our past, present and future.

Our aim is to create positive change so that everyone has the chance to lead a fulfilling life.

# GLANCE





PHILANTHROPY

We aim to distribute

£10 MILLION

every year to relieve disadvantage in London, Norfolk, Lincolnshire and the Northeast of England. Supporting c.180 individual not-for-profit organisations.

GIVING

£64.2 MILLION

has been awarded to relieve disadvantage since 2018.

With consistent impact indicators across all grantmaking programmes:



IMPROVE  
PEOPLE'S LIVES



STRENGTHEN  
ORGANISATIONS



CONTRIBUTE TO  
SOCIETAL CHANGE

OUR COLLABORATIVE  
FUNDING PROGRAMMES

Five of the charities, of which we are trustee, support our four main funding programmes:

YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION

We aim to help young people have a good start in life, strong mental health and opportunities beyond secondary school.

OLDER PEOPLE & HOUSING

We aim to address loneliness and poverty faced by older people.

CHURCH & COMMUNITIES

Focused on strengthening communities and delivering better outcomes for people and families in areas of deprivation and from marginalised groups.

HERITAGE & ARTS

Our work seeks to enrich people's lives through heritage and the arts, with a particular focus on access for disadvantaged groups and support for people at the start of their careers.

National Portrait Gallery



WE ALSO:

- Provide high quality accommodation to over 200 residents in six [almshouses](#);
- Work with our [Associated Schools & Colleges](#) which educate c.18,000 pupils;
- Appoint 88 charity trustees and school governors;
- Support [churches](#) in eight Church of England benefices, of which we are patrons; and
- Maintain our centuries-old links with the Armed Forces, the City of London Corporation and other livery companies.

We are driven by our philanthropic purpose supported through our Membership and Stewardship.

MEMBERSHIP

Our Members volunteer their time and without their deep commitment our philanthropic work would not be possible.

We also run the Members' Philanthropy programme supporting Members of the Mercers' Company and the Executive team in their own philanthropic endeavours, with a focus on improving people's lives.

Find out more about our Membership on [page 56](#)

STEWARDSHIP

We manage, develop, and maintain a strong property and investment portfolio that helps deliver our philanthropic work.

Find out more about our Stewardship on [page 76](#)



# CLERK'S

## R O B A B E R N E T H Y

# STATEMENT



We continue to make progress across the three pillars of the Company – Philanthropy, Stewardship and Membership, supported by strong governance and the dynamic partnership between the Company's Membership and the Executive team.

Reflecting on the past year, the Company has much to be proud of and this Annual Review demonstrates the impactful work of the charities we support and the projects funded through our Philanthropy Framework.

In February, we saw the completion of the new Whittington Building in Frederick's Place. This provides 36,000 sq. ft of lettable Grade A office and restaurant space, an increase of 120% from the previous buildings' footprint. It is rated BREEAM Excellent and EPC A, demonstrating the Mercers' Company's commitment to sustainable development and providing a blueprint for future estate regeneration.

The second phase of our Philanthropy Framework has started strongly with £13 million awarded so far across the four main funding programmes. You will see in the Philanthropy section on [page 14](#), the importance the Company places on building relationships and how our funding goes beyond supporting grantees financially. Earlier this year we were also delighted to announce that the Mercers' Charitable Foundation made a major social investment, agreeing a £1 million loan to support Key Fund's Northern Impact Fund.

As corporate trustee of active charities we work hard to ensure robust governance and the effectiveness of our structures and processes. We continue to invest in the future, emphasising our commitment to continuous improvement, while remembering the importance of our history and heritage as a 700-year old livery company.

Our five-year business strategy remains on track to complete in 2025 and we are now turning our attention to developing a new ten-year strategy. That process begins with a 'Strategy Day' in the Autumn which will ask where we want to be in ten years' time in each of our core areas of activity. In an increasingly volatile world long-term planning is becoming harder but even more essential.

This work will ensure the Company remains fit for purpose, relevant and most importantly resilient.

Fundamentally, everything the Mercers' Company achieves is down to its people. I would like to thank our Members and the Executive team for the energy, excellence and dedication they bring across the Company's work. I would particularly like to thank our Property Director, Simon Taylor, who successfully delivered the truly exceptional Whittington Building and whose work over the past eight years across our property portfolio has been transformational. I wish him all the best in his retirement later this year.

I look forward to the year ahead and believe we are well placed to continue to deliver on our philanthropy and our long-term planning, ensuring excellence in everything we do.

**ROB ABERNETHY – CLERK**



# HERITAGE

Our Heritage team manages our collections and illuminates the Mercers' Company's history, supporting our philanthropic objectives.

## NEW ARCHIVE BUILDING

The new £5 million state of the art archive building provides a bespoke space for the Mercers' Company's historical documents and artefacts and will allow considerable expansion of the collection in the future.

The building has been carefully designed to protect our collection, with the removal of natural light and creation of environmentally stable storage. We are privileged to hold artefacts that span many centuries, from 13th century land records to the late 15th century statue of the Dead Christ rediscovered after the Second World War.

The new archive building also has a reading room and education suite to facilitate research.

The official opening of the archive building will be in October 2024, after which we look forward to welcoming Members to learn about the history of their own Company, supporting partner organisations and facilitating external research.

## THE MERCER MAIDEN

The new Mercer Maiden on the archive building was designed and sculpted by Emma Sheridan, supported by the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust as part of her BA in Historic Carving: Architectural Stone from City & Guilds of London Art School.



## EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS – THE LITERACY PIRATES

In May, the Heritage team hosted an educational workshop inviting 20 children from the [Literacy Pirates](#), a London based grantee of our Young People & Education programme – Literacy & Oracy Special Initiative.

Children enjoyed learning about the language of fans, creating their own fan artworks and engaging in creative writing inspired by the Cheapside exhibition.

“My favourite bit was finding out about fans and pretending to be at a ball”

CATTLEYA, YOUNG PIRATE



Heritage Team's Educational Workshop with the Literacy Pirates



SCAN TO WATCH THE  
[LITERACY PIRATES](#)  
VOLUNTEERING RECRUITMENT  
VIDEO PRODUCED BY FUNDER  
PLUS PARTNER MEDIA TRUST.

## CHEAPSIDE: METROPOLIS AND EMPORIUM EXHIBITION

The exhibition celebrating the Mercers' Company's home since the Medieval period – Cheapside – has been curated by the Heritage team. It tells the story of Cheapside's history as a crucial city thoroughfare, bustling with people and trade through the centuries.

The Cheapside exhibition has allowed the Company to develop relationships with the Society of Antiquaries, the Weiss Gallery, the Guildhall Library, the Company of Fanmakers and the Bowes Museum who have all kindly lent artefacts.

The exhibition runs until December.





# PHILANTHROPY



Primary Shakespeare Company

The Mercers’ Company and the [charities](#) of which we are trustee work together through the Philanthropy Framework to help people facing disadvantage.

We do this through our four main funding programmes:

-  Young People & Education (YP&E)
-  Older People & Housing (OP&H)
-  Church & Communities (C&C)
-  Heritage & Arts (H&A)

These programmes help individuals, families and communities facing disadvantage, to reach their full potential by inspiring a love of learning, strengthening self-belief and wellbeing, and creating opportunities to live a balanced, rewarding and varied life.



It has been an active six years delivering our Philanthropy Framework across our four main funding programmes.

The second phase of the Philanthropy Framework (2023-2028) is underway and yielding positive impact.



Brentford Football Club Community Sports Trust

# GIVING

GIVING OVER SIX YEARS (1 April 2018 to 31 March 2024)

£64.2M

total awarded

£56.4M

awarded across four main giving programmes

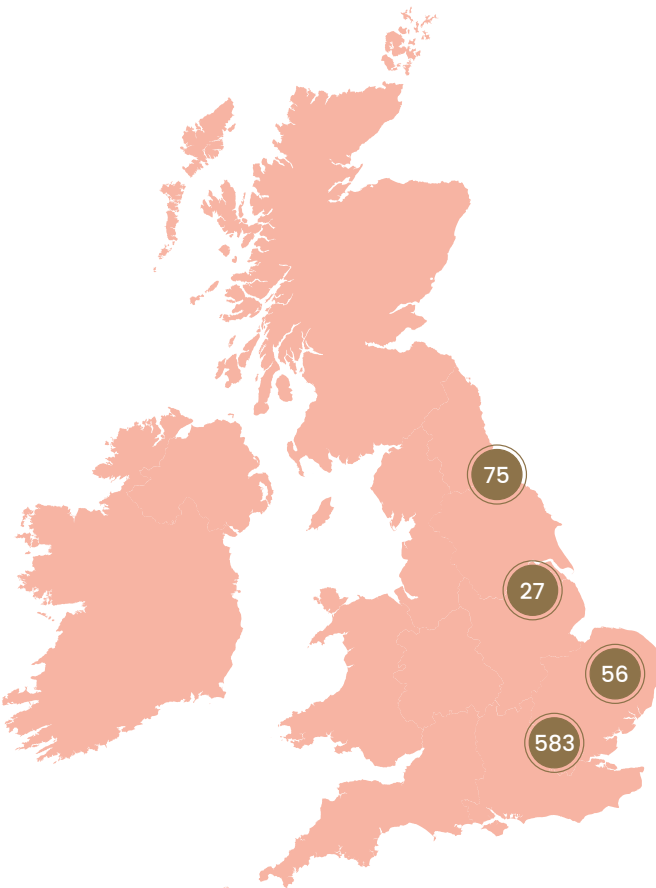
879 491

grants organisations

£7.8M\*

direct company giving (including Gresham College and Members' Philanthropy)

\*Company year end 31 December



Distribution of grants across people-focused funding programmes (balance of grants made to Associated Schools & Colleges (ASCs) and organisations headquartered in England).

We believe in open data and transparency. We publish information on our grants, to provide details of who we fund, how much we funded and what the funding was for.



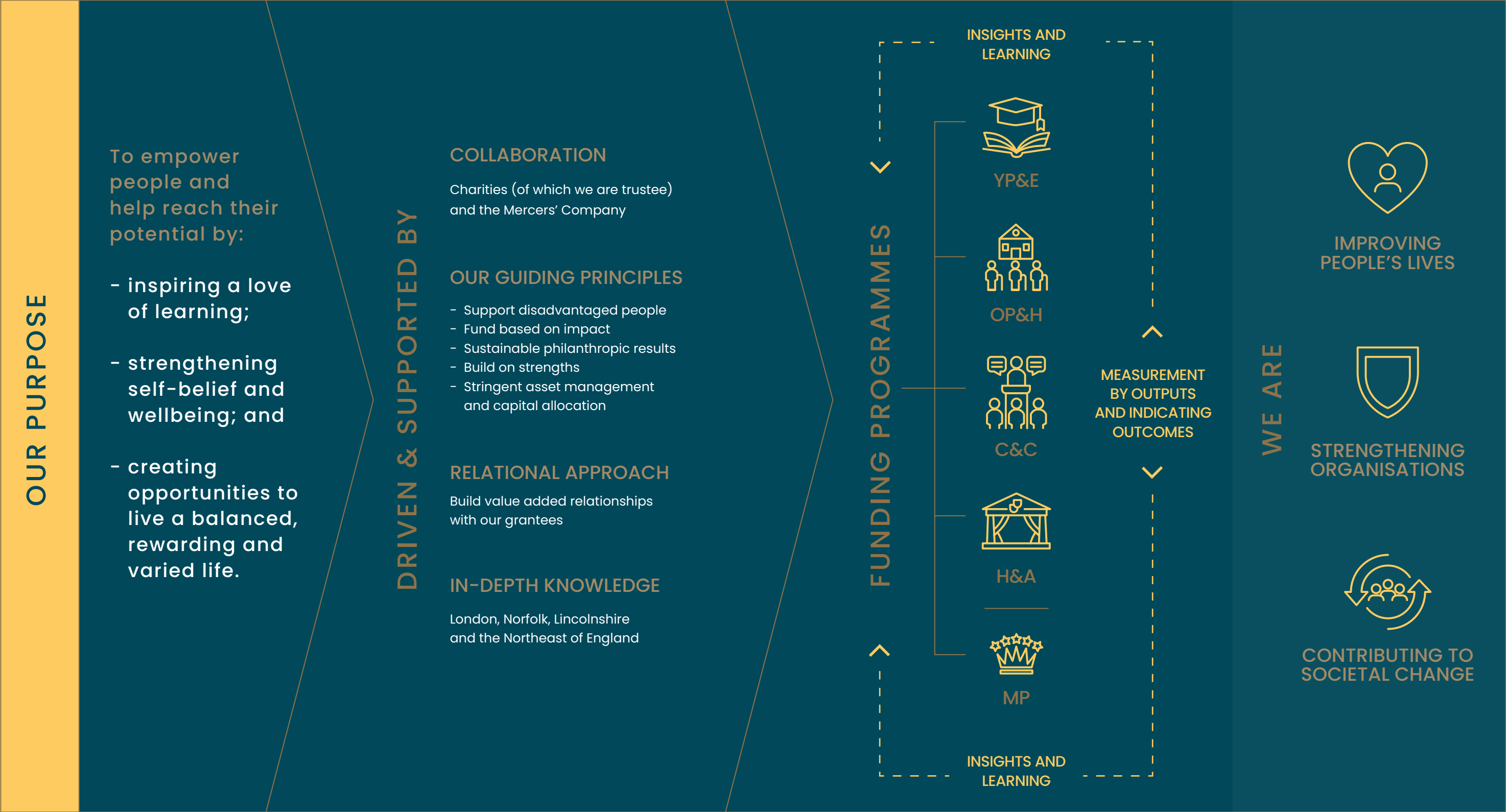
SINCE 2018, WHEN WE ESTABLISHED OUR PHILANTHROPY FRAMEWORK, WE HAVE PUBLISHED GRANTS FROM OUR FOUR MAIN FUNDING PROGRAMMES ON 360 GIVING.



# PHILANTHROPY FRAMEWORK

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, a Philanthropy Framework review is undertaken every five years to evaluate our progress against objectives and shape our philanthropic work in line with our guiding principles.

For our 2023–2028 Philanthropy Framework, we have developed consistent impact indicators for all our funding programmes. Through these programmes we aim to improve people’s lives, strengthen organisations and contribute to societal change. The impact indicators ensure that our programmes are achieving these aims.





# OUR APPROACH

## FUNDER PLUS

Our Philanthropy Framework goes beyond supporting our grantees financially. Through capacity building we also help the organisations we fund to become stronger and more resilient by providing access to training and support.

## INSIGHTS AND LEARNING

We work with leading evaluation, research and learning partners across our funding programmes to inform our [Insights & Learnings](#). We also facilitate collaborative learning amongst our grantees.

This approach not only allows our partners to evaluate their findings and adapt their delivery, but also increases our understanding of the sector and shapes future grantmaking.



## RELATIONSHIPS

We aim to build positive and trust-based relationships with our grantees and encourage them to do the same with those they work with. We also foster relationships between organisations to build networks that support our grantees and inform our grantmaking. Our relational approach includes visits, regular contact, events, learning opportunities and additional support. We also maintain strong links with the Company's [Associated Schools & Colleges](#), [almshouse](#) residents, and our [church](#) patronages.



## IVAR

We are committed to open and trusting grantmaking and being a flexible funder for the organisations we support. We have signed a pledge to open and trusting grantmaking, a campaign coordinated by the [Institute for Voluntary Action Research \(IVAR\)](#).



SCAN TO  
READ OUR 8  
[COMMITMENTS](#)  
TO OPEN AND  
TRUSTING  
GRANTMAKING.



## FOUNDATION PRACTICE RATING

The Mercers' Charitable Foundation was selected as part of the sample for the first two years of the [Foundation Practice Rating](#), a project initiated by several leading UK foundations to hold themselves to account in respect of diversity, transparency and accountability. We opted in to the third year (2024) and will continue to do so if one of the funding charities is not selected within the sample. Our overall rating in 2024 was B.

## SOCIAL INVESTMENT

Social investment is the use of repayable finance (e.g. loans) to help organisations create social impact. It is a sustainable tool we can use to further the aims of our Philanthropy Framework; enabling us to support people-focused UK charities and social enterprises to gain additional resources, become more resilient and increase impact. Our objective is to further our work with partners to help achieve this.



## LIVING WAGE

We are proud to be a [Living Wage](#) Employer and Living Wage Funder, paying employees and supporting grantees to pay the real Living Wage.



## DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We are committed to investing time and resources in understanding and defining DEI. Since January 2023, we have been collecting and tracking the data of our grant applications and funded programmes using the [DEI Data Standard](#) that was created by an independent working group of UK Funders.

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

We strive to improve our grantmaking practice based on feedback from our grantees. This feedback is gathered from progress reports completed by our grant recipients, our learning partners' reports and through conversations. This year we will commission a grantee perception survey to further understand what our applicants and grantees think about the Mercers' Company and the charities as funders. This will help further improve our funding processes and approach.





## 2023-2024 PHILANTHROPY

# DEPUTY CLERK

SERENA HEDLEY-DENT

Building on the success of the Philanthropy Framework's first Phase, Phase 2 has started extremely well. In 2023-2024, £13 million was awarded in grants across the Company's four main giving programmes. The delivery and impact of our Young People & Education, Older People & Housing, Church & Communities and Heritage & Arts programmes and the fantastic work that our almshouses, Associated Schools & Colleges and Church Livings provide is outlined on [pages 24 to 53](#) of the Annual Review.

Our Philanthropy Framework, which is an effective collaboration between the Company and the charities of which it is trustee, is predicated on aspiration for all. The desired impact being to improve people's lives, strengthen the organisations that support them and contribute to societal change.

Whilst we see progress across our programmes, the third sector currently faces significant ongoing challenges. There is increasing demand for services on the part of beneficiaries, many of whom have multiple and complex needs. The cost-of-living crisis continues to adversely affect charities with

operational costs rising and funding streams decreasing. The sector is seeing high employee and volunteer turnover due, in part, to fatigue and burnout. These challenges have been particularly evident in the older people sector, where charities continue to have to close their doors due to challenging operating environments. This, combined with the worsening poverty and housing situation across the UK, is further compounding the underlying issues. This context makes the work undertaken by our grantees all the more impressive and important.

The need for funding programmes like ours, designed to tackle a wide range of societal issues is clear. We believe it is important that, within this broad approach, we focus to ensure impact. As an open, flexible funder, we continue to listen to our grantees, gaining insights from the frontline, as well as working with leading research and learning partners to leverage our knowledge and connections to support our grantees and facilitate change.

In line with our aim of strengthening organisations, our high engagement "Funder

Plus" model provides access to training and resources through our industry leading partners, including [Cranfield Trust](#), [Media Trust](#), [Windsor Leadership](#) and [Open University](#).

We believe in continuous improvement for ourselves as funders both in our approach and in testing new ways of funding. In July 2024, we were pleased to announce that the Mercers' Charitable Foundation signed a £1 million loan agreement to support Key Fund's Northern Impact Fund. Social investment is an important and sustainable funding strategy that aligns with our philanthropic priorities. Returnable funding, such as loans, can make our philanthropy go further for longer.

Finally, I want to reiterate that our philanthropy would not happen without our grantees, who deliver the vital work on the ground helping those in society that need it most and with whom we are privileged to build close relationships. Furthermore, it could not happen without the equally dedicated commitment of our Members and the philanthropy team. We hope you enjoy finding out more on what has been achieved this past year.



## GIVING

From 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, through our Philanthropy Framework, we have awarded 151 grants to 118 organisations totalling £13 million with an additional £1.5 million awarded through direct company giving.

# £14.5M

total awarded

## £13M

awarded across four main giving programmes

151 grants

118 organisations

## £1.5M\*

direct company giving (including Gresham College and Members' Philanthropy)

\*Company year-end 31 December 2023



SCAN TO READ 2023-2024  
GRANTS (ABOVE £10,000)  
ACROSS FOUR MAIN FUNDING  
PROGRAMMES



PHILANTHROPY FUNDING PROGRAMMES

# YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION

## SUPPORTING DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE

We aim to help young people have a good start in life, strong mental health and opportunities beyond secondary school.

- Early Years, Literacy & Oracy and Transitions from Secondary Education (Special Initiatives)
- Young People’s Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Our 16 Associated Schools & Colleges (ASCs)
- School Leadership

Our Special Initiatives programme includes access to funder plus/capacity building opportunities. [Cranfield Trust](#) provides support for organisations’ resilience and growth and [Media Trust](#) supports grantees with stakeholder engagement through digital communication. Both capacity builders received a grant from the Mercers’ Charitable Foundation during 2023–2024.



**WHERE WE FUND**  
GREATER LONDON\*

\*16 ASCs in Greater London and across England



Reading and Writing for Pleasure Framework  
Illustration by Onyinye Iwu

### 2023–24 HIGHLIGHTS

# £6.8M

awarded

## 66

new grants

## 45

organisations received grants



IMPACT

Impact includes total figures provided from all reports submitted in 2023-2024 across the Young People & Education programme.

 IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES	 STRENGTHEN ORGANISATIONS
13,100 people reported increased wellbeing	10 organisations leveraged additional funding
12,237 people feel connected to community	12 organisations developed an evidence base
13,643 people improved their skills	8 organisations developed new partnerships
38 people found work	1 organisation developed new services
17,136 people supported on a regular basis	 CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETAL CHANGE
241 volunteers supported	12 grantees raised awareness of an issue
453 leaders had improved wellbeing	3 grantees built evidence of social change
568 leaders developed their abilities	Learning partners evidence based research and reports supporting societal change

EARLY YEARS

Our Early Years Special Initiative (EYSI) funds organisations that support children (2-5 years old), facing socio-economic disadvantage. The programme aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increasing children's numeracy, literacy and language skills; and
- Improving school readiness (personal, social and emotional development).

Phase 2 funded by The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington, was launched in early 2023 to continue addressing Early Years' inequalities. Six organisations were selected to receive grants of up to £300,000, payable over four-years. These included, [British Association for Early Childhood Education](#), [Coram Family and Childcare](#), [The Fatherhood Institute](#), [NCFE \(Campaign for Learning\)](#), [National Day Nurseries Association](#) and [Youth Sport Trust](#). [SQW](#) is the funded learning partner for Phase 2.



Fatherhood Institute

£1.9M  
awarded



NURTURING YOUNG MINDS

In March 2020, [Absolute Return for Kids \(Ark\)](#), a Phase 1, Cohort 2 grantee, received a £338,000 three-year grant from The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington to launch Ark Start, improving early years education in disadvantaged communities.

Starting with 28 children in October 2020, enrolment grew by 321% to 118 by 2023, with 100% attendance for its 'Stay and Play' sessions. By 2022, 87% of initial starters achieved a Good Level of Development (national average 70%). Staff also benefited, gaining confidence, leadership skills, and adding 17 new members. Additionally through Ark, 35 families joined the Parent Power programme with Citizens UK. As an example of the wider impact that our funded programmes can have, Parent Power supported Layla.

Layla says the group changed her life. Layla, her husband, and three children were living in a mould-infested studio flat. Despite multiple requests, the council offered no alternative housing. Parent Power helped Layla take a stronger stand. The group hosted visits from local councillors and the MP, allowing Layla to make her case directly. Soon after, Layla received confirmation of a new home – a three-bedroom flat with a garden.

"The children can run everywhere, up and down the stairs – they can't believe it."

CASE STUDY PROVIDED BY ARK.



Ark Start



## LITERACY & ORACY

The Literacy & Oracy Special Initiative supports organisations that help disadvantaged children think of themselves as readers and writers, who have a voice, leading to the following outcomes:

- improved social and emotional skills;
- increased ability to engage with school; and
- higher attainment and improved life chances.

Phase 1 of the three-year Literature & Oracy Special Initiative concluded in 2023. Six grantees, formed the Cohort – [Doorstep Library](#), [Literacy Pirates](#), [Ministry of Stories](#), [Primary Shakespeare Company](#), [World Book Day](#) and the [National Literacy Trust](#). Grantees reported positive impact from funded initiatives and received additional one-year bridging grants from The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington.

Phase 2, Cohort 1, launched in June 2023 with a four-year funding programme focused on 11–16 year-olds. The seven grantees are [CARAS \(Community Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers\)](#), [Company Three Theatre](#), [First Story](#), [Theatre Peckham](#), [UK Reads](#), [West Ham United Foundation](#) and [Write Back](#). The Learning Partner for Phase 2 is [The Open University – Centre for Literacy and Social Justice](#).

Phase 2, Cohort 2 (focus 5–11 year-olds) four-year funding applications were launched in March 2024. Grantees will be announced in October 2024.

Phase 2, Cohorts 1 and 2 are funded by St Paul's Schools Foundation.

£2M  
awarded



CONTRIBUTE TO  
SOCIETAL CHANGE

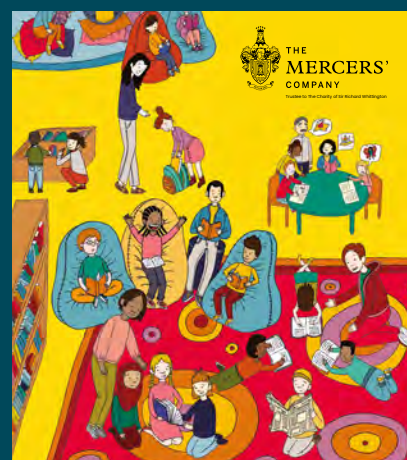
### READING AND WRITING FOR PLEASURE

Over the past three years (2020–2023), The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington funded charities working with children in London to develop literacy skills by promoting reading and writing for pleasure. Alongside this we commissioned [The Open University](#) as the learning partner to establish 'Approaches that seem to be effective in inspiring and encouraging children and young people (5 to 13-years old) to read and/or write for pleasure'.

In December 2023 at Mercers' Hall, the Open University delivered its findings and the Framework for Practice. The Framework highlighted the benefits and importance of engaging young learners in literacy activities which they enjoy; and empowering young readers and writers by fostering a sense of self-agency. The framework has been presented to the Department of Education and has opened a dialogue about writing for pleasure.



SCAN TO READ THE  
READING AND WRITING  
FOR PLEASURE – A  
FRAMEWORK FOR  
PRACTICE



Reading and Writing for Pleasure:  
A Framework for Practice  
Executive Summary



## TRANSITIONS FROM SECONDARY EDUCATION

Our Transitions Special Initiative funds organisations that support young people, from disadvantaged communities, to progress successfully from secondary education.

Since the initiative was launched in 2019, £4.7 million has been funded by The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington and the Mercers' Charitable Foundation for Phase 1, Cohorts 1, 2 and 3 programmes. Phase 2 of the Transitions Special Initiative is set to launch in July 2024.

In November 2023, we held a Learning Symposium at Mercers' Hall with learning partner [Centre for Education and Youth \(CfEY\)](#). The symposium celebrated Phase 1, Cohort 2 grantees' work – [Brentford Football Club](#), [Community Sports Trust](#), [Dallaglio Rugby Works](#), [IntoUniversity](#) and [Young Westminster Foundation](#), exploring common challenges and shared learnings. Young people from the programmes said that mentoring helped them feel empowered and workshops with employers boosted CV writing and confidence when applying for roles.



IMPROVE  
PEOPLE'S LIVES

### POSITIVE FUTURES

[XLP](#), a charity supporting inner-city London youth, received £330,000 over three years from The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington. Funding supported four apprenticeships for 18–19 year-olds; two now work full time at XLP and two study youth and community work at university. XLP has also created a Level 2 apprenticeship in youth work.

"Growing up in Canning Town was a unique experience. There were lots of difficulties, a lack of opportunity in the area – we felt alone, like there was no hope. When XLP first started running football sessions there wasn't any excitement because of the disappointment from other fleeting organisations. As a young person growing up with nothing, XLP offered us everything. Ian reached out to me and mentioned the Ready to Work programme. I was on board immediately."

TAZ, YOUTH WORKER, XLP

XLP – Young Leaders Programme



SCAN TO WATCH  
TAZ'S STORY



## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING IN THE COMMUNITY – PROPEL

We work with Mental Health & Wellbeing Community Projects in Greater London through the Propel Fund.

This [fund](#) addresses systemic issues to achieve longer-term sustainable change, develop equitable funding practices and encourage collaboration.

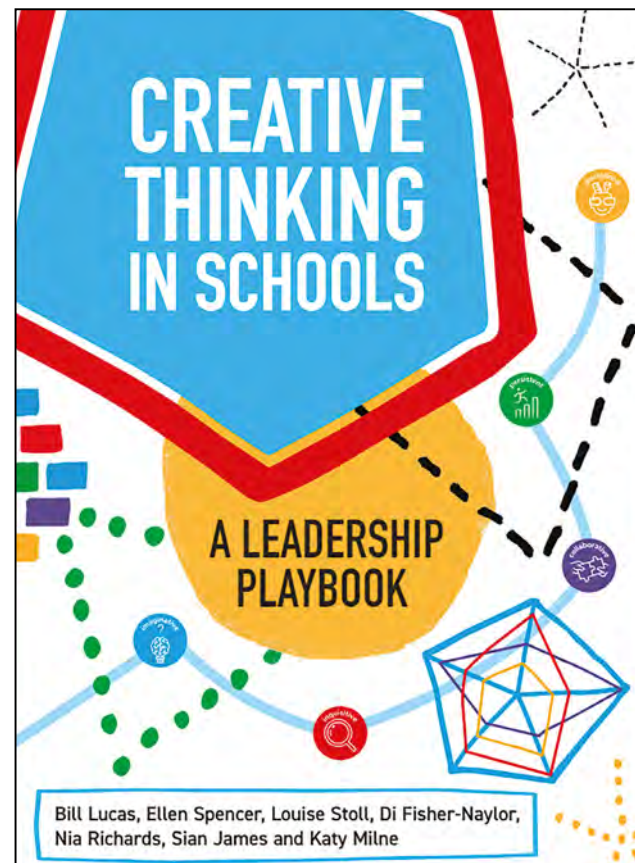
In 2023 we awarded seven grants to [Go Forward Youth](#), [The Change Foundation](#), [Spectra CIC](#), [African Community School \(ACF\)](#), [Newham All Star Sports Academy \(NASSA\)](#), [South London Counselling Services \(SLCSS\)](#) and [Body & Soul Charity](#).

The grants were funded by The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington and The Mercers' Charitable Foundation. Learning partners [St. Mary's University](#) and [Maudsley Learning](#) ensure knowledge sharing and explore areas for collaboration.

**Pr\*pel**

£949,386

awarded through Propel



## SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

We support initiatives that empower headteachers and governors to be confident and inspiring leaders. Our partners include: [The Churchill Fellowship](#), [Windsor Leadership](#), [University of Winchester: Centre for Real World Learning](#) and the [Chartered College of Teaching](#).

In June 2023, the University of Winchester published its [Creative Thinking in Schools: A Leadership Playbook](#), funded by the Mercers' Charitable Foundation. The playbook provides a toolkit to embed creative thinking in their curricula.

## ASSOCIATED SCHOOLS & COLLEGES (ASC)

We continue to strengthen valued relationships with our 16 ASCs across England, collaborating with Headteachers and Chairs of Governors to foster closer connections. Our work includes:

- Facilitating collaborative learning between the ASCs
- Supporting Heads and Governors to be effective leaders
- Appointing and nominating Governors to ASCs
- Awarding grants to initiatives that align to the YP&E programme

## 2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

£1.3 million has been awarded to support a wide range of projects at our ASCs, including transitions to and from secondary education; literacy support; expeditionary learning; school and community entrepreneurship; and school and community partnership. An additional £560,000 has been awarded for Mental Health & Wellbeing initiatives for our ASCs pupils.

In March 2024, the Court of the Mercers' Company visited our ASCs in the West Midlands. Members met with Heads, Governors and students and discussed funded projects and positive impact.

Our Heads' Working Group and Chairs' Forum continue their work, promoting closer links and facilitating sharing of knowledge and best practice. The Chairs Forum Lunch in October 2023 focused on teacher/Governor recruitment and boards. The Head's Round Table in November 2023 at Mercers' Hall discussed Artificial Intelligence, leadership, and the challenges of leading multi-generational staff and stakeholders.

The second Mercers' School Leaders' conference was held at Abingdon School in February 2024 with Heads and senior leaders exploring the theme 'Leadersmithing' – continual learning in leadership.

In June 2024 the enrichment conference for gifted and talented Year 12 pupils from ASCs was held at Reading University. The conference theme was 'The Power of Thought' with workshops in Psychology and Business faculties. The keynote speech was delivered by TED talk speaker and inspirational Paralympian, Wendy Smith.

£1.9M

awarded for projects and Mental Health & Wellbeing initiatives at ASCs



The Court of the Mercers' Company visiting ASCs



PHILANTHROPY FUNDING PROGRAMMES

# OLDER PEOPLE & HOUSING

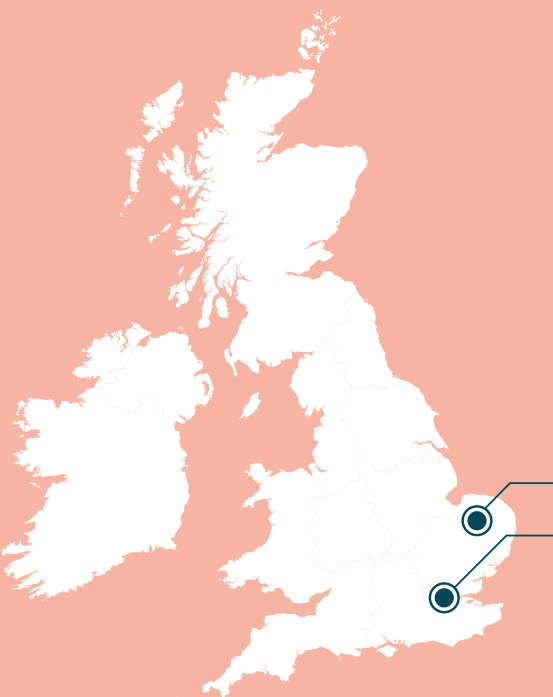
## COMBATTING LONELINESS AND POVERTY

Older people deserve the right support and opportunities to lead a healthy and connected life.

Funding priorities:

- Loneliness faced by older people
- Poverty faced by older people

Preference is given to organisations working with older people who are at high risk of chronic loneliness and poverty, which we've identified as those living in black or ethnic minoritised communities, LGBTQ+ communities, disadvantaged neighbourhoods, as well as informal carers and people living with long-term conditions.



### WHERE WE FUND

- NORFOLK
- GREATER LONDON



Hackney Showroom



2023-2024  
HIGHLIGHTS

£1.9M

awarded

22 grants  
22 organisations received grants



Dragon Hall - coffee and tea drop in

In 2023-2024 the Older People & Housing programme awarded £1.9 million to 22 not-for-profit, community-led organisations in Greater London and Norfolk. Of this £1.3 million was awarded to organisations delivering against both of the priority areas to combat loneliness and poverty and a further £569,000 to directly combatting loneliness.

Pensioner poverty is on the rise, with 1 in 5 older people living in poverty, made more challenging due to the current cost of living crisis. In addition, 1.4 million older people in the UK are often lonely. Research states that people with a high degree of loneliness are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's as people with a low degree of loneliness.

Capacity building remains a key priority for us as funders and for our grantees. We are partnered with [Cranfield Trust](#) who empower charities with the confidence and capability to thrive. Cranfield delivered two webinars, 'Investability – why should I invest in your charity?' and 'Talking and walking through the numbers – financial focus, cash flow forecasting and funding' with over 75 attendees in total.

IMPACT

Impact includes total figures provided from all reports submitted in 2023-2024 across the Older People & Housing programme.

IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES		STRENGTHEN ORGANISATIONS	
8,727	135	1	4
people improved their skills	people found work	increased its profile	developed new services
1,961	15,486	4	3
leaders developed their abilities	people supported on regular basis	expanded services to reach more people or communities	improved its financial sustainability
59,798	2,594	6	35
people supported throughout year	volunteers were supported	developed skills of staff and/or volunteers	leveraged additional funding totalling £3,471,677
21,677	1,817	20	18
people reported increase in wellbeing	leaders had improved wellbeing	developed an evidence base	developed new partnerships
27,449		1	
people feel connected to community		adapted its decision-making process to include voices of its beneficiaries	
CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETAL CHANGE			
8		36	
grantees built evidence of social change		grantees raised awareness of a particular issue	
5			
grantees influenced change in practice beyond own organisation			





## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS IN NORFOLK

We have forged a positive relationship with [Norfolk Community Foundation \(NCF\)](#) and the Connecting Older People Fund. The Earl of Northampton's Charity awarded the fund £528,601 in 2020 over a three-year period. To date NCF has made grants to 70 charities in the Norfolk area aiming to combat loneliness and poverty faced by older people. Projects that have been supported include:

- Community hubs across Norfolk, which offer food and/or activities to older people;
- Projects for vulnerable individuals (veterans and those with dementia);
- Specific social activities, such as sport, singing and woodcraft;
- Community transport initiatives; and
- Advice and support services for older people.

"Mercers' Members and staff have been a pleasure to work with. They are knowledgeable and genuinely interested in the work that local groups are doing, and we can see that working together is making a huge positive difference to older people in Norfolk."

**CLIVE RAYNER,**  
SENIOR PROGRAMMES ADVISOR, NORFOLK  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

## RECONNECTING WITH COMMUNITIES

[Middlesex Association for the Blind](#) received funding of £90,000 over three years from The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington towards its Home Visiting Service to support elderly visually impaired people in London to reconnect to their communities. As a result of funding, the charity has been able to expand its services and monthly social groups.

"Losing sight is one of the heaviest traumas that anyone can go through. I was devastated. This organisation has helped me with everything. I now have moral support and I have friendship. It is a wonderful thing to know that someone is going to come and visit you every week. I feel like all of you, at this meeting, are my brothers and sisters. You have become my family."

**ESPERENZA,**  
(BENEFICIARY)



Middlesex Association for the Blind



## IMPROVING PRACTICE

The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington awarded [Age UK Sutton](#) £75,000 over three years towards the Community Connections part of its Let's Connect service, which offers individual and group support. Isolated older people receive one-on-one support and 'Walk and Talk' sessions, leading, once ready, to friendship sessions, confidence-building activities and wider community groups across Sutton. The service builds on befriending foundations to boost community integration. Age UK Sutton adapted the Let's Connect service over the course of the grant to meet changing



Age UK Sutton

community needs, enhancing traditional befriending models to encourage longer term integration with the wider neighbourhood, rather than exclusively with their Community Connector. This development is a strong example of improving practice and building communities.



## FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

The [Third Age Project](#) is an older people's centre on the Regents' Park Housing Estate in North London, offering social, educational, cultural and healthy living activities. It received £90,000 from The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington for the Five Ways to Wellbeing project, engaging older people post-COVID.

Strengthened by partnerships and research initiatives, it hosted the Apple Tree Study with University College London (UCL), promoting healthy eating to reduce dementia risk. Additionally, collaborating with the Centre for Ageing Better, it contributed to the "State of Ageing 2023" report, a national report which informed Government actions, including establishing a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing and fostering age-friendly local communities.



Third Age Project



# ALMSHOUSES & HOUSING

We manage and provide high-quality accommodation, supporting independent living for over 200 residents in need. Our four almshouses and two sheltered housing schemes are at the heart of our commitment to older people.



## 2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

It has been a busy year at our almshouses and sheltered housing schemes, ensuring quality living for those in need. We work closely with older people housing groups including the [Almshouse Association](#), [erosh](#) and local authorities to keep up to date with innovative ideas, best practice and managing and chairing networks in the sector.

In January 2024, Channel 5 interviewed Nick Philips, CEO of the Almshouse Association, at Trinity Hospital in Greenwich, London. The interview highlighted the vital role almshouses play in providing affordable, community-led housing for those at disadvantage. Channel 5 also spoke with two of our residents Geraldine and Terry about the benefits of almshouses, their sense of community and how living at Trinity Hospital has changed their lives.



During the course of the year we were delighted to welcome [InCommon](#), a grantee of our Older People & Housing programme, to Lady Mico's almshouse in Stepney, East London. InCommon organised intergenerational workshops where primary school children joined residents and enjoyed life story interviews, arts and crafts, gardening, games and storytelling.

[London Bubble Theatre](#), another grantee of our programme, visited Trinity Hospital in June 2024 and performed "Beneath the Papers," a moving new play by their older adults' touring company.

Residents enjoyed the performance and were enthusiastic about the opportunity to participate in 'Tea Break Theatre' a regular social theatre group for adults to be delivered by Bubble Theatre at Trinity Hospital over the summer.

Residents appreciated visits by the Master and Committee Members over the course of the year which provided another opportunity to meet and hear from residents. Additionally, we have held two residents' forums in the past 12 months and provided six monthly updates. Feedback continues to be highly positive with residents feeling heard and importantly contributing to the success of the almshouses and their community.



SCAN TO  
WATCH THE  
[CHANNEL 5](#)  
INTERVIEW





PHILANTHROPY FUNDING PROGRAMMES

# CHURCH & COMMUNITIES

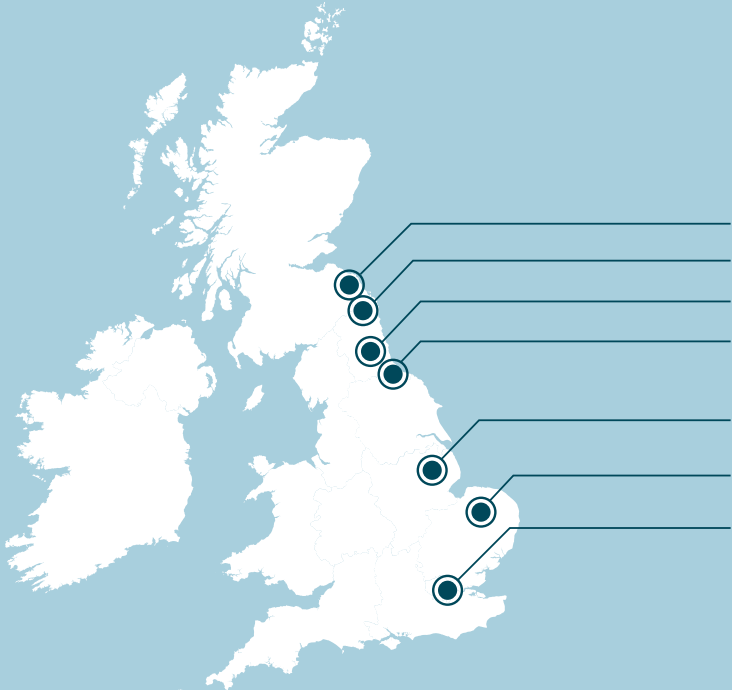
## PEOPLE THRIVE WHEN COMMUNITIES THRIVE

We support churches and other faith & community-based organisations that strengthen communities and deliver better outcomes for people and families in areas of deprivation and from marginalised groups.

Our work seeks to build positive and inclusive relationships between people, increase a sense of belonging and reduce isolation with the following priorities:

- Build stronger communities, focused on disadvantaged communities and support for refugees and people who are homeless
- Deliver better outcomes for families and carers facing poverty or other challenges

## WHERE WE FUND



NORTHUMBERLAND  
TYNE AND WEAR  
COUNTY DURHAM  
TEES VALLEY

LINCOLNSHIRE  
NORFOLK  
GREATER LONDON

The Kitchen Club





2023-2024  
HIGHLIGHTS

£3.4M

awarded

41

grants

41

organisations  
received grants



East Marsh

Our focus continues to be building relationships, supporting existing grantees and ensuring that new grants are awarded to organisations which focus on our priority areas.

We have also continued to provide support to strengthen the organisations we fund, including:

- Peer to peer support groups for charity leaders, run by [Cranfield Trust](#) – with 12 already engaged and 9 set to be involved later in 2024; and
- Targeted funding for our grantees to support the wellbeing of staff and volunteers, many of whom are facing record challenges.

During the period £2.6 million was awarded to organisations supporting ‘Stronger Communities’ of which £1.77 million was directed to disadvantaged communities, £538,000 to refugees and £285,000 to homelessness. A further £832,000 was awarded to bring about ‘Better Outcomes for Families’ supporting unpaid carers and families facing disadvantage.

IMPACT Impact includes total figures provided from all reports submitted in 2023-2024 across the Church & Communities programme.

IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES		STRENGTHEN ORGANISATIONS	
10,889	860	1	1
people improved their skills	people found work	organisation increased its profile	organisation improved its systems and processes
92,924	149,689	6	22
people supported on regular basis	people supported throughout year	organisations developed new services	organisations developed an evidence base
3,250	94,001	6	28
volunteers were supported	people reported increase in wellbeing	organisations developed skills of staff and/or volunteers	organisations developed new partnerships
90,599		8	1
people feel better connected to community		organisations improved its financial sustainability	organisation adapted its decision-making process to include voices of its beneficiaries
CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETAL CHANGE			
12	45	5	43
grantees built evidence of social change	grantees raised awareness of a particular issue	organisations expanded services to reach more people or communities	organisations leveraged additional funding totalling £6,200,707
2	2		
grantees influenced local or national policy	grantees influenced change in practice beyond the organisation		





## SUPPORTING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

In October 2022, £79,000 over three years, was awarded to the [Cardinal Hume Centre](#) in Westminster, London from The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington. The Centre provides comprehensive support for vulnerable families and young people facing poverty and homelessness.

Over the last 12 months the Centre has:

- Helped over 100 families to avoid homelessness
- Secured positive welfare outcomes for more than 150 families, including backdated benefit and welfare payments of £282,322
- Welcomed 80 adults and 130 children into the Family Centre, where they participate in activities such as English conversation for parents, study club for children and family Saturdays

“Receiving a 3-year multiyear grant has given us the income security as well as the confidence to apply for and commit to additional resources needed to meet the increased demand for our services caused by the cost-of-living crisis.”

CARDINAL HUME CENTRE



Cardinal Hume Centre

## LEILA'S STORY

“I first came to the Cardinal Hume Centre in 2019 when my first daughter was born – I now have three daughters 5, 3 and 2. My husband was working, I spoke little English, and we lived in a studio flat with one bed to share with broken amenities. The Centre helped us get bunkbeds for the kids, food, and apply for school for my oldest daughter. They also helped us apply for a council house; it took three years, but I could not have done it without them.

“Taking English classes at the Centre has been amazing; now I can communicate with people and manage my life. Most importantly, my confidence has increased. My hopes for the future are to learn more so I can help my children with their homework, talk with their teachers and support them. When my youngest daughter starts going to school next year, I hope to have completed my English exams and I would like to become a nurse.”





## PEACE OF MIND

[Peace of Mind](#) is a refugee-led and support charity in Gateshead. In April 2023, Peace of Mind was awarded £65,000 over three years from The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington. This included £5,000 towards wellbeing funding to provide mindfulness and relaxation sessions for staff and volunteers, as well as other team activities.



“The support we have been able to offer to our team of volunteers and trustees has improved our team’s wellbeing and quality of life resulting in increased resilience, better engagement, higher performance and productivity. It has truly strengthened our organisation. We are very grateful – thank you!”

SARA MUZAFFAR, PEACE OF MIND

## FUNDER PLUS – WELLBEING SUPPORT FOR FRONTLINE WORKERS

The wellbeing of staff and volunteers is crucial. A 2023 study by [Pro Bono Economics](#) and [Nottingham Trent University](#) found that 30% of charities reported increased staff burnout, 26% saw a rise in low wellbeing, and 25% noted more sickness absence. This is believed to be due to increased stress from the pandemic and rising demands on charity workers.

Since January 2023, organisations applying to the Church & Communities programme can apply for an additional £5,000, ring-fenced, to support the wellbeing of their team and volunteers, recognising the sector’s growing pressures.

# £175,998

wellbeing grants awarded to grantees

## CAPACITY BUILDING

We are partnered with [Cranfield Trust](#) who empower charities with the confidence and capability to thrive. For our Church & Communities programme we have worked with Cranfield Trust to deliver Peer to Peer Exchange groups to allow senior leaders the opportunity for neutral thinking and solving leadership challenges confidentially.



“I had heard of Cranfield Trust, but never contacted them. After the webinar, I contacted them, and they have agreed to arrange pro-bono consultancy with an accountant for us, which I am thrilled about. Our bookkeeper is retiring soon, and I am keen to reassess our finances and see if we can improve our ways of producing management accounts and cashflows. I wanted to thank you, being a Mercers’ grantee has led to so many good opportunities and improvements for CARE.”

ANNE BICKERSTAFFE, [CARE LTD](#)







SUPPORTING THE HOMELESS

All People All Places (APAP) was established to provide emergency accommodation and support homeless people and those facing homelessness in Haringey and Enfield. In October 2023, APAP was awarded £42,000 over two years from The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington.

APAP strengthened its relationships with local housing teams and partner organisations, hosting outreach sessions with Enfield Drug & Alcohol Team, Enfield Citizens Advice Bureau, and immigration lawyers.

Initially operating from a Church Hall, APAP's day centre provision moved in January 2023 to a shared site in a parks building. APAP is in discussions with Enfield Council about securing a permanent and sole use site for its service and has secured initial funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to deliver capital improvements to the site.



All People All Places

“It is an exciting time for APAP where multi-year funding has enabled us to build our capacity and think strategically about how we grow in a sustainable way. The grant was the first large and multi-year commitment received and that piece was key to us.”

GEORGE DUNSTALL, CEO,  
ALL PEOPLE ALL PLACES

EVALUATION SHAPING FUNDING PRIORITIES

In 2021 an evaluation of the Church & Communities programme's homelessness priority was published by Swain, Weir and Frost. The report identified homeless women as a priority for funding due to women facing additional barriers and projects often being male dominated environments. The programme is now supporting four homelessness projects focused on women, providing an example of how evaluation and learning shapes our work.

One such project is the [Magdalene Group](#), a faith-based charity that seeks to raise awareness and provides support to marginalised women and young people in Norfolk. In July 2021, the Magdalene Group was awarded £90,000 over three years from The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington.

The organisation is influencing change in Norwich and surrounding areas. The Charity contributed to Norwich City Council's Rough Sleeper Strategy and joined the Pathways Board – a local partnership working together to end rough sleeping. The project also established a vulnerable women's group, to create a greater understanding of the needs of women and the importance of utilising a trauma and gendered approach.



“We were delighted to have been awarded a grant which enabled our work to flourish. Maximising opportunities to influence stakeholders with the effectiveness of our approach and developing our frontline services to find solutions for hidden homeless and rough sleeping women.”

SUZI HEYBOURNE,  
CEO, THE MAGDALENE GROUP



# CHURCH LIVINGS

We are proud to share patronage of eight benefices of the Church of England.

Grants continue to be provided to the Company's church patronages, parish church, St Paul's Cathedral and three further associated churches. Over the period we awarded £95,518.

We also continue to support the churches associated with the Company with a relational approach. This includes helping clergy and others with financial and general issues that face the Church of England. Reverend Canon Penny Green, outgoing vicar of one of the Company's church patronages has said "I can say that you are the best of those seeking to support clergy in the most challenging of times."

Every year there is a Clergy Day at Mercers' Hall, which provides an opportunity to celebrate the work of the clergy associated with the Company. This year we held our Clergy Day on the 6th of June, with 33 attendees. The day involved a service led by the Mercers' Chaplain, followed by a fascinating discussion led by The Right Reverend Lord Richard Harries (former Bishop of Oxford), a lunch and a memorable visit to Westminster Abbey, hosted by the Dean.

"Thank you for all you do to support our churches and clergy! It is very much appreciated."

REVEREND JESS BELLSHAW,  
CURATE, [SOUTH LAWRES AND BARLINGS](#)

£95,518  
awarded

16  
churches



Clergy Day at Mercers' Hall



## PHILANTHROPY FUNDING PROGRAMMES

# HERITAGE & ARTS

## ENRICHING LIVES

We appreciate the richness that heritage and the arts bring to our lives. What we have inherited from the past and what we create in the present can help us to understand who we are and where we have come from, and to build a sense of belonging, ownership and opportunity.

Our Heritage & Arts programme is a research-based initiative through which the team identify organisations and invites them to put forward proposals for funding. The programme funds the following priorities:

- **Access & Outreach**, enriching lives through access to heritage and arts
- **Early Careers**, supporting people at the start of a career in heritage and arts



West Dean College  
Photo Thom Atkinson

## 2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

2023-2024 was the first year of the reinstated Heritage & Arts programme which sees the Mercers' Charitable Foundation committing £1 million of funding over five years (1 April 2023 to 31 March 2028).

In its first year, £337,000 was awarded under the Early Careers priority, including the Mercers' Arts Awards. An additional £7,500 was awarded to St Nicholas and the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, under Access & Outreach, to support restoration of significant murals which have suffered from environmental damage, and a further £4,000 grant to the Livery Textiles Group.

£348,123  
awarded

7  
grants

7  
organisations

## THE MERCERS' ARTS AWARDS

The reinstated Mercers' Arts Awards launched in Autumn 2023, with the aim of supporting graduating MA students from underrepresented or socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds pursuing a career in Music, Textiles & Conservation and Visual Arts. Funded through the Mercers' Charitable Foundation, we were delighted to announce three partnerships with leading arts Institutions: [Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance](#); [University of the Arts London](#); and [West Dean College](#). In addition to funding, the institutions will provide award recipients mentoring and production/exhibit opportunities to support the careers of artists entering specialist fields.

### TRINITY LABAN CONSERVATOIRE OF MUSIC & DANCE

#### £80,000 | Trinity Laban

Award sixteen individuals £4,500 through The Postgraduate Innovation Awards, which supports MA Music students emerge as artists through the production of an original music project within the first year of their career post-graduation.

ual: university of the arts london

#### £80,000 | University of the Arts London

Award eight individuals £10,000 upon graduation with an MA from Camberwell College of Arts or Chelsea College of Arts. Graduates will utilise their award to launch a career in the fields of Textile Design, Illustration, Sculpture, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, Drawing or Computational Arts.

WEST DEAN

#### £80,000 | West Dean College

Award £10,000 to eight graduates who are uniquely trained in rare craft skills, particularly those on the Heritage Crafts Red List, to support them as they enter the first year of their career in Conservation, Craft Practices, Tapestry and Textiles, Drawing, Painting, Sculpture or Printmaking.

## HISTORIC ENGLAND

£92,123 was awarded to [Historic England Foundation](#) over three years from the Mercers' Charitable Foundation. The Foundation enables Historic England to achieve additional philanthropic support for projects that improve people's lives and protect the historic environment.

The first grant awarded under the new programme was for Historic England's Future Talent programme. The programme focuses on developing career entry points for young and under-represented people within heritage, to start careers in the sector in a sustainable way.

"The placement has opened up a whole load of other career paths for me... working with Historic England has made me much more likely to apply for jobs in this field."

### FUTURE TALENT PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT



©Historic England



# CHARITIES

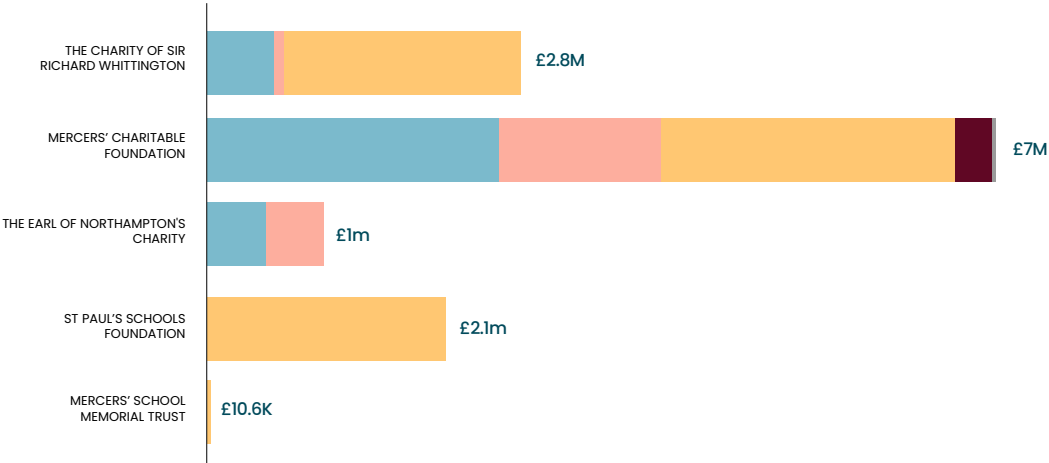
Over the centuries, The Mercers’ Company has been entrusted with significant charitable gifts and bequests for charitable purposes from Members and other benefactors.

The Company is corporate trustee of six charities and sole member of Mercers’ Company Housing Association. Five of these charities support our collaborative Philanthropy Framework funding programmes.

- YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION
- OLDER PEOPLE & HOUSING
- CHURCH & COMMUNITIES
- HERITAGE & ARTS
- OTHER

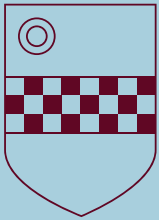
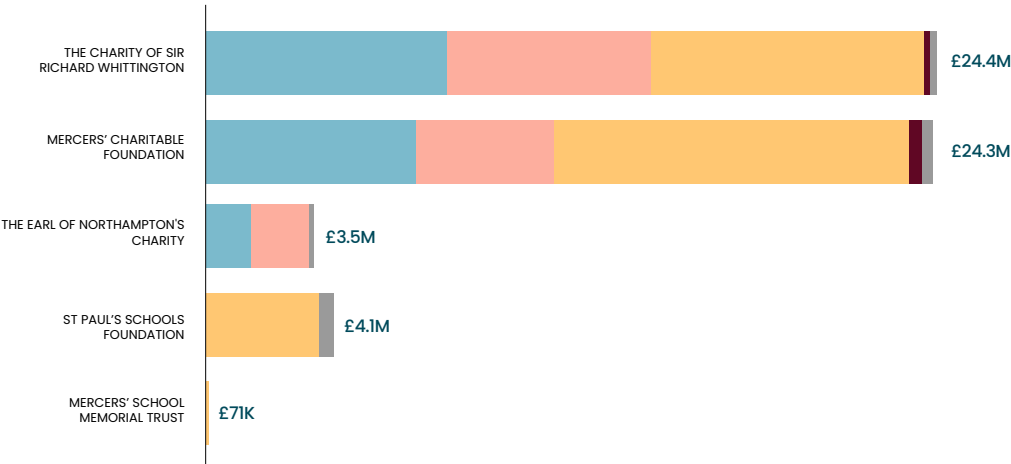
## 2023-2024 CHARITY SUPPORT

From 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 the charities awarded **£13 million**



## 6-YEAR CHARITY SUPPORT

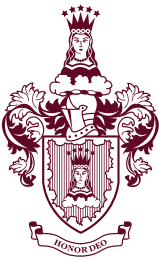
From 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2024 the charities awarded **£56.4 million**



### THE CHARITY OF SIR RICHARD WHITTINGTON

**Established 1424**, under the will of Richard Whittington (1354-1423) who was Lord Mayor of London four times and Master of the Mercers’ Company three times. The Mercers’ Company was entrusted with the care of the charity in 1424 and remains the sole Trustee.

- Provides almshouses for the elderly and supports people in need through grants.



### MERCERS' CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

**Established 1983**, The Mercers’ Company is the Trustee.

- General charitable purposes and makes a number of grants to a wide range of organisations through the Philanthropy Framework.



### THE EARL OF NORTHAMPTON'S CHARITY

**Established 1614**, The Mercers’ Company is the Trustee.

- Provides sheltered accommodation and support for beneficiaries in its almshouses in Greenwich, London and Shotesham, Norfolk and support for people in need, hardship, or distress.



### ST PAUL'S SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

**Established 1509**, The Mercers’ Company is the Trustee.

- The Foundation is an educational charity. It is best known for its support of St Paul’s School and St Paul’s Girls’ School but it also makes grants to London-based educational organisations through the Young People & Education programme.



### MERCERS' SCHOOL MEMORIAL TRUST (THE MERRETT BEQUEST)

**Established 1984**, The Mercers’ Company is the Trustee.

- The Trust has wide charitable purpose including, but not limited to, the advancement of education and the relief of need to former pupils of the Mercers’ School.



# MEMBERSHIP

Philanthropy and giving is a central tenet to being a Mercer. Every year Mercers invest thousands of voluntary hours to support the Company and the charities of which it is trustee. Without their deep commitment our philanthropic work would not be possible.

In 2023–2024, 174 volunteering positions were held by Members across 21 Philanthropy, Stewardship and Fellowship Committees that oversee the running of the Company and the Charities for which it is corporate trustee or sole member. We also have 42 Mercers serving as Governors at our Associated Schools & Colleges or as a Trustee on associated bodies.\*

Our Membership Development team cultivates the talents of our Members through training, mentorships and networking opportunities. This ensures our Members are equipped with the necessary skills to support the Company's philanthropic activities and fosters diversity of experience within our committees, schools and other appointments.

**174**  
volunteering  
positions are held  
by Members

**42**  
Mercers serving  
as Governors and  
Trustees of Associated  
Schools and bodies\*

"The knowledge and skills held within our Membership are amongst the Company's greatest assets. By helping to develop the Membership, we enhance the Company's strategic decision-making and maximise our philanthropic impact, helping disadvantaged people, not only today but also in the future, just as we have done in the past."

ROB ABERNETHY,  
CLERK OF THE MERCERS' COMPANY

## IN MEMORIAM

2023–2024

Tessa Mills  
Christopher Pelham Clementi  
Simon Anthony John Watney  
Michael Knyvett Totton

Mercer Maiden featured in 'A Clooth of Gold Bright Shoon' glass artworks in the new Whittington Building



\*An additional 28 non-Mercers are appointed by the Company on a skills basis as Governors and Trustees across the 16 ASCs.



# IN

Three of our Members from our Philanthropy Committees discuss what it means to them to be a Mercer and the value they create and gain from the volunteering work they undertake on behalf of the company.

# FOCUS



## JO DOWNIE

Member since 2002

Member of the Older People & Housing Committee

“These experiences enable me to contribute to the Committee. What we do is meaningful, and I feel well placed to make a difference.”

**Why did you choose to be a Member of the Older People & Housing Committee?**

I have a nursing background and for the past 20 years I have worked assisting elderly clients to make the right choices for them, whether that be organising appropriate care in their own home or a move into residential care. I retired last year to help support my elderly mother who lives with dementia. These experiences enable me to contribute to the Committee. What we do is meaningful, and I feel well placed to make a difference.

**What volunteering do you undertake and what does a week as a volunteer on behalf of the Mercers’ Company typically look like?**

The Committee meets four times a year – this can be in person or online. Our time is spent discussing updates about the almshouse operations, followed by reviewing funding applications for grants from the Company.

The Committee visits every almshouse over the spring/summer and I try to join these when I can. I also assist with interviewing potential residents for the almshouses.

The almshouse residents are also invited to Mercers’ Hall for Christmas and Lent sermons, where they enjoy meeting one another over afternoon tea and speaking with Committee Members.



### What do you enjoy most about volunteering?

I love visiting our almshouse residents, many of whom I have got to know over the years. When I can add on an extra day to my time in London, I also like to visit the charities which the Committee supports. I recently joined one of the Grant Managers when they visited [Open Age](#), a charity we fund which works within a deprived area. The charity holds arts and crafts classes and there was an exhibition of their work. The Committee's focus is on combatting loneliness and poverty in older people, so being able to see how people are benefitting from our funding first hand is important and rewarding.

### Has there been a standout moment – either rewarding or challenging since you began volunteering?

There are many rewarding moments being part of the Committee and supporting older people, both within our almshouses and the charities we help fund.

But one of our biggest challenges was Covid-19. The Committee held several meetings via Zoom to work out how best to support our grantees. We gave extra funding during that time to further older peoples' access to technology and to help with telephone befriending, which our commissioned research showed as an effective way to address peoples' loneliness.

### Who inspires you?

I have reflected on this and the person in my life who inspires me most is my mother. She has always been non-judgemental, kind, funny and willing to help people regardless of their circumstances. Even now as she is living with dementia, she retains her dignity and sense of humour.



### What advice would you give to other Members considering taking on a volunteer role?

Don't hesitate! I have loved being on the Committee – to give to others, as well as an opportunity to meet fellow Members and the Executive Team. When I first started, I felt slightly intimidated, but everyone was so kind and willing to help. We have a really great team – every person has their strengths and experiences, each valuable.

### What does it mean to you to be a Mercer?

It is a huge privilege. My family, the Collyer's have been Mercers since the 16th century and I have known about the Company all my life. In 2002, to the delight of my dear old pa, my sister and I were admitted to the Company as some of the first women. Both my children are Mercers and contribute where they can – so the family tradition will continue.

## JOHNNY ROBERTSON

Member since 1972

Master (2016) / Chair of the Members' Philanthropy Committee / Member of the Philanthropy Committee / Member of the Court of Assistants / Founder and Chair of No Going Back (Pan-livery charity initiative)



"It is all about helping those in need and being able to assess results."

### What roles do/have you undertaken and what does volunteering look like as a Mercer?

I have been a Mercer since 1972 during which I have undertaken many roles for the Company. My roles include being Master in 2016, Governor of St Paul's School from 2010–2020, Chair of Governors from 2014 to 2020 and Member of the Finance, Estates, Longacre Estates and Property Committees until 2022. I am currently Chair of the Members' Philanthropy Committee and continue other volunteering positions outside of the Committees.

My life as a Mercer is calmer now. Up to the end of 2017, I was an investment manager and my partners, particularly here in the UK, were very supportive of my Mercers volunteering and commitments. The fact that I was commuting, almost weekly to Europe, Asia and North America alongside my roles as a Mercer and at St Paul's School seems almost unbelievable now.

### In terms of volunteering, what does success look like?

It is all about helping those in need and being able to assess results. It is easy to give money and time, and not as easy to understand what has been achieved.



### Has there been a standout moment – either rewarding or challenging during your time?

The Pan Livery Initiative (PLI) and No Going Back (NGB) are two achievements that stand out for me. During my year as Master, The PLI and related Steering Group were formed, bringing Livery Companies together, ensuring all Liveries are represented to develop shared philanthropic endeavours and more transparent communication. I, alongside the Clerk, have served on the Group since its inception. Some of the major achievements of The PLI are the publication of a bi-annual report on Philanthropic Giving and the Livery initiatives which demonstrate how Livery Companies can work effectively together. Livery Kitchens, Pollinating London, Climate Action Group, Livery Chairs Group and NGB are just some examples.

In 2020, NGB was formed as a groundbreaking Livery collaboration to reduce re-offending. NGB supports people through their journey in prison, preparing them for release and for the wide range of job opportunities the programme has on offer. Four years on, the programme has 40 participating Livery Companies, over 160 livery volunteers and a partnership with City and Guilds. Circa 2,000 participants have benefited from the programme and its unique 'Kangaroo' assessment tool which provides individuals the necessary support on their rehabilitation journey.

“NGB supports people through their journey in prison, preparing them for release and for the wide range of job opportunities the programme has on offer. Four years on, the programme has 40 participating Livery Companies, over 160 livery volunteers and a partnership with City and Guilds.”

Additionally, in 2023, we created and launched a social enterprise cleaning and facilities management Company (CIC) to employ ex-offenders from NGB, many of whom have been trained in prison. The Mercers' Company and its Members have been major supporters of both the NGB Foundation and the CIC. Being involved as Chair of NGB is constantly challenging, not least in raising funding. Nevertheless, I am constantly rewarded when meeting the team, the volunteers and those we have helped back into society.

### Who inspires you?

I would say Whittington, Colet and Gresham are former Mercers who continue to inspire me. Also, my father, who was Master the year that I joined the Company and many contemporary Mercers in the organisation today have guided and inspired me to contribute to our Company.



Sir Thomas Gresham



No Going Back

### What advice would you give to other Members considering taking on a volunteer role?

Volunteering can be the most rewarding experience but make sure you use your skills. To me what is interesting is to volunteer on the ground and work with the charities we support. This is an area that our Company needs to continue to focus on.

### What does it mean to you to be a Mercer?

It is an incredible honour to be a Member of the Company and to have the opportunity to be Master. It is important to me that I constantly remind myself to give back to the Company what it has given and still gives to me and my family.



## ALEX CLAYTON

Member since 1998

Member of the Church & Communities Committee / Member of the Audit Committee / Governor at St Paul's Girls' School



### What work do you undertake and what does a typical week look like as a volunteer on behalf of the Mercers' Company?

I am on the Audit Committee, the Church & Communities Committee and I have recently become a Governor of St Paul's Girls' School. Between the three of these there seems to be a meeting most weeks one way or another. I am extremely fortunate that I work very close to Mercers' Hall, so I can attend most meetings – work permitting. Both the Committees I am on are at the heart of the Company, therefore I am fortunate to gain valuable insight into how our philanthropy programmes and the Mercers' operate. I would encourage all Mercers to look at both these Committees.

### What do you enjoy most about volunteering?

There are things that stand out for me. Firstly, it gives me a good reminder that there is so much more going on outside our own 'little bubbles'. Both on the Committees that I am on and with the people I meet on the frontline, I get to speak to others with different perspectives which is important. Secondly, the slightly more obvious one being, that it is a privilege to be in the position where we are able to give back notwithstanding our own busy lives – we actually do have the time to volunteer. Many others are not so fortunate.



### Has there been a standout moment – either rewarding or challenging as a volunteer?

The Mercers' Company is patron of a number of benefices in the Church of England. [St Andrew by the Wardrobe](#), in the City of London, has recently undergone a major refurbishment as it was in a state of disrepair. I am effectively the Mercer representative for the Church. Watching and following the work over the past two years has been very rewarding. Being able to support the Church in a small way will go a long way to ensuring the Church remains standing for many more centuries!

### Who inspires you?

A cliché – but the work my father has done with and for the Mercers over the years is an inspiration to me.

### What advice would you give to other Members considering taking on a volunteer role?

It will give you a new perspective on many things, which must be a good thing. You also become much closer to other developments happening at the Mercers' Company in terms of its heritage and property estate (such as the opening of the Guinness Experience in Covent Garden), which makes you feel proud to be a Mercer. Lastly, and I am sure this has been said before – it is time consuming, but absolutely worth making the time.

### What does it mean to you to be a Mercer?

The first feeling is pride, but very closely followed by a feeling of responsibility. I am proud that the Mercers continues to evolve. Everything is changing at such a pace and the Mercers is changing with it. Also to work in the City and be a Mercer is an honour. I am looking forward to getting more involved in the Company going forward.

“It is a privilege to be in the position where we are able to give back notwithstanding our own busy lives – we actually do have the time to volunteer. Many others are not so fortunate.”



# MEMBERS' PHILANTHROPY

It is our aim to build a culture of giving. Our Members' Philanthropy programme advocates and supports Members and employees in their own philanthropic endeavours with a focus on improving people's lives.

## MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES PHILANTHROPIC COMMITMENT – HOW OUR FUNDING PROGRAMME WORKS



UP TO  
**£2.5K**

Matched funds from fundraising and/or up to £3k personal donations



UP TO  
**£2.5K**

Matched funds for regular volunteering



UP TO  
**£10K**

Grants awarded to organisations nominated by Members and employees

Funding from Members' Philanthropy helps a wide range of charities, particularly smaller, grassroots organisations where a comparatively small grant can make a big difference.

Members and employees can apply for match funding from the Mercers' Company for their volunteered time, fundraising efforts and personal donations to charities as well as apply for grants for an unlimited number of charitable organisations.



Àban, outdoor adventure charity in Scotland



# 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

Members and employees continue to be involved with a wide range of charitable organisations that improve people's lives, particularly those who are disadvantaged. 2023 saw an increase in grants awarded and fundraising/donations and volunteered time match funded.

From 1 January to 31 December 2023 we are pleased to have distributed:

200  
donations and grants

152  
organisations received  
donations and grants

£400,120  
total of matched funding  
and grants awarded

121  
Members and employees  
participating

## DONATIONS AND GRANTS AWARDED

£126,000	to young people
£76,000	to medical and disabilities
£69,000	to heritage, arts, Turkey Syria Earthquake relief appeals and other charities across the United Kingdom and overseas
£54,000	to communities
£50,000	to families
£25,000	to older people

Of the 121 people who donated, volunteered or nominated an organisation for a grant – 21 were members of Court, 47 were Liverymen, 31 were Freemen and 22 were employees.

“We are pleased to see an increasing number of Members and employees engaging with our Members Philanthropy programme and continue to welcome more Members to apply for one or all three funding strands.”

MIMI PHUNG, MEMBERS PHILANTHROPY  
MANAGER, THE MERCERS' COMPANY



## EXAMPLES OF MATCHED FUNDS FROM PERSONAL DONATIONS OR FUNDRAISING



**Tim Robertson (Member)** took part in a three-day 1,500 km ‘Dash to the Med 2’ in a Spitfire inspired car for four different charities ([East Surrey Domestic Abuse Service](#), [Renewed Hope](#), [RGS Foundation](#) and [My Name’s Doddie Foundation](#)).



**Isobel Hohler (Member)** completed the London Marathon to raise funds for the [Children’s Liver Disease Foundation](#), the only UK charity dedicated to fighting all childhood liver diseases.

£75,769

donations from Members and employees and matched funding awarded by the Company to 118 organisations

£30,334

fundraising by Members and employees and matched funding awarded by the Company to 28 organisations



**The Mercers Ski Team** took part in the Livery Skiing Event raising funds for [Snow Camp](#), a charity with the aim to turn young lives around through the power of snow-sports.

**Rob Abernethy (Clerk)** undertook a solo cycle challenge across the Andes in South America in January 2024 fundraising for [Shree Prabha School](#) in West Nepal. The cycle challenge followed Rob’s cycles across Nepal in both 2020 and 2022 which raised important funds for the school.





## EXAMPLES OF MATCHED FUNDS FOR REGULAR VOLUNTEERING



St Andrews Church Croydon

"As well as being testament to the Mercers' longstanding traditions of philanthropy, the acknowledgement that the Company also recognises the charitable efforts of its own Members doing their thing in their own community, is very warming, as well of course being profoundly useful to our church."

**JAMES HODSON,**  
MERCERS' COMPANY MEMBER

**James Hodson (Member)** and volunteer Organist and Honorary Treasurer of [St Andrew's Church](#) in Croydon is a first-time applicant to Members' Philanthropy. Through matched funding for volunteered time, he raised funds to support the Church and ongoing community activities.

**Guy Macpherson-Grant (Member)** is a volunteer at the [Grantown Museum & Heritage Trust](#) in a remote part of the Scottish Highlands. In addition to financially supporting the museum, he also helps planning and fundraising for exhibitions.

**James Lane (Member)** volunteers with [NMCWatch](#), which supports nurses, midwives and other healthcare professionals, going through Fitness for Practice investigations. James' volunteer work includes updating digital channels, producing podcasts and strategic advice to the committee board.

# £23,500

awarded to 10 organisations matching time volunteered by Members and employees

# £270,517

total of grants awarded

# 44

organisations received grants



Mummy's Star



## EXAMPLES OF GRANTS AWARDED TO ORGANISATIONS NOMINATED BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES

**Flying Seagull Project**  
**Tara Watney (Member)** sponsored a grant of £5,000 to the [Flying Seagull Project](#) for the charity's Urgent Laughter Relief – Talking Turkey project. The project puts on play and laughter sessions for children and young people who are victims of the Turkey and Syria earthquake, to help them recover a sense of normality, childhood and hope.

**Àban**  
**Claire Jennings (Member)** sponsored a grant for [Àban](#), an education charity in Inverness, Scotland. A grant of £9,970 was made towards its youth community outreach work. The charity aims to improve lives by making outdoor adventure part of everyday routine, affordable and accessible to all.

**Mummy's Star**  
**Conor Watney (Member)** sponsored a £8,276 grant for [Mummy's Star](#), a charity dedicated to supporting mum and birthing parents affected by cancer in or around pregnancy. The grant helped fund the expansion of end of life and pre-bereavement support for families.



SPOTLIGHT –  
MAXIMISING IMPACT

PERSONAL DONATION, VOLUNTEERING,  
SPONSORING A GRANT.



The more a Member or employee is involved and supports a charitable organisation, the more funding they'll be able to unlock for that charity to improve people's lives.

"We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Mercers' Company for their generous support. We have been able to provide one-to-one mentoring for our most vulnerable children. Those facing challenging home lives have benefited from much-needed respite and support from caring adults. Thank you!"

JASMINE KHOBIARY,  
SOLIDARITY SPORTS

**Lewis Palmer (Member)** has utilised all three strands of our Members' Philanthropy programme. He supports [Solidarity Sports](#), a London charity that harnesses the transformative power of play to nurture disadvantaged children recovering from complex trauma.

His volunteering time, alongside personal donations has been matched funded by the Mercers' Company (via Members' Philanthropy). Lewis also supported a grant application in 2023 for the charity with funds going towards its mentoring programme.

Organisations recently supported through Members' Philanthropy include:



We thank our Members and employees for their continued volunteering in line with our purpose – creating positive change so that everyone has the potential to lead a fulfilling life.



# CHARTER 600 CHARITY

The Members' charity provides larger annual grants for small charities.

The charity welcomes participation and donations from Members, to support charitable causes. This year the Membership selected two charitable organisations for its Charter 600 awards.



Dogs for Autism

## £45,000

over 2 grants were made by Charter 600 to the following charities:

### DOGS FOR AUTISM – AWARD OF £30,000

[Dogs for Autism](#) is the only charity that exclusively provide assistance dogs, at no cost, to autistic people of any age, anywhere in the UK.

The charity is committed through the provision of its assistance dogs, trained to mitigate some of the most disabling impacts of autism and the environment, to create and maintain successful person-dog partnerships.

“This £30,000 funding allows us to undertake the very important and pioneering work around the role of scent alerting autistic meltdowns, with the potential to change the lives of an exponential number of autistic people and their families.”

JAN KILEY,  
CEO, DOGS FOR AUTISM

### FIREFLY INTERNATIONAL – AWARD OF £15,000

[Firefly International](#) is a UK based organisation that supports children affected by war. The £15,000 award will fund a child-centred, activities-based programme with well-trained and professionally supported teachers in hard-to-reach rural areas of northern Syria.

“I’m so grateful that the Mercers’ Company has supported Firefly. The grant directly helps children affected by conflict in Syria, supporting their education as well as giving them a safe and calm environment.”

ALICE HOHLER,  
MERCERS’ COMPANY MEMBER



Firefly



# STEWARDSHIP

We manage, develop and maintain a strong investment property portfolio which generates the majority of our income. Revenues are reinvested, support our operations and importantly help deliver our purpose-led philanthropic work.

The Mercers' Company's estate extends over five acres in Covent Garden and two acres in the City of London and comprises a mixed retail, restaurant, office and residential portfolio.

Across our estate we are committed to reducing our carbon emissions, supporting the Paris Agreement IPCC goal to limit global temperature rises to 1.5°C. In June 2024 we announced our Environmental Action Plan which outlines our commitment to significantly reduce emissions across our property portfolio and operational footprint.



Frederick's Place



# THE CITY

## Regenerating our historic property portfolio for modern business

Our City portfolio is focused on the block bounded by Ironmonger Lane, Old Jewry and Cheapside.

### FREDERICK’S PLACE THE WHITTINGTON BUILDING

The Whittington Building, named after great Mercer philanthropist Sir Richard (Dick) Whittington, was completed in February 2024.

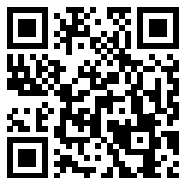
It is a Grade A office and restaurant building, spanning five floors, with 36,000 sq. ft of lettable space (an uplift of 120% from the previous building footprint). The fourth and fifth floors offer outstanding private terraces and city views.

A new foot passage connecting Frederick’s Place with Ironmonger Lane, for the first time in over a hundred years, animates the ground floor which also includes a restaurant, enhancing the local offering.

Sustainability has been at the heart of this £40 million project, which has been designed by leading architects, Stanton Williams, to be environmentally efficient through its consideration of space, heating, and cooling, as well as facilities for occupiers. The Whittington Building has EPC A and BREEAM Excellent ratings. The development showcases the Mercers’ Company’s commitment to sustainable development and will be used as a blueprint for future estate regeneration by the Company.



The Whittington Building, Frederick’s Place  
Photo: Office Curator



SCAN THE  
QR CODE TO  
VIEW THE  
WHITTINGTON  
BUILDING.

BREEAM®

BREEM EXCELLENT



OPTIMISED  
ENERGY METERING



HYBRID VRF  
AC SYSTEM



AIR SOURCE  
HEAT PUMP



OPTIMISED GLAZING  
SPECIFICATION



EPC A



FULLY  
ELECTRIC



LED  
LIGHTING



PASSIVE  
SOLAR SHADING

47%

BEST PERFORMANCE  
PART L REGULATION



THE WHITTINGTON  
BUILDING OPENING

The official opening, to celebrate the completion of the Whittington Building, was held on the 18th of April with the Master marking the occasion with a speech at the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Guests included Members and organisations central to the successful development and completion of the project, including Knight Harwood, Hanover Cube, Stanton Williams, KJ Tait and Avison Young.

The Master thanked those involved for their professionalism and enthusiasm. Demolition works began in June 2021 and the project was completed in February 2024.



The Whittington Building terrace

“The Whittington Building is an elegant and smart building of which we should all be very proud – Dick Whittington would be delighted that this special building bears his name”

PETER LANE,  
THE MASTER OF THE MERCERS’ COMPANY.

“I have put together hundreds of project teams during my career, but I can honestly say this is the finest team I have ever had the privilege to lead. This is an exceptional group of people who have all helped to make this project so successful. It has also been an enjoyable project with a true team ethos. Problems have been solved collaboratively without disputes or claims. We have had fun along the way, and I know everyone is sad that we have come to the end of the journey because it has been such an enjoyable project.”

PAUL BODEN,  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER OF THE WHITTINGTON  
BUILDING AT HANOVER CUBE



The Whittington Building exterior



The Master, opening The Whittington Building

THE ARCHIVE BUILDING

The new £5 million state of the art archive building provides the Company with a considered, environmentally focused space for its historical documents and artefacts, allowing for expansion of the collection.

Read more about the Archive Building in our Heritage section on [page 12](#).



The Archive Building  
Photo: Dave Parker Photography

BECKET HOUSE

The 7th floor of our Becket House property on Old Jewry has been recently refurbished and let. The refurbishment has been led by fit out specialists Quarterback, with sustainability central to the project. The team used an assortment of amazing materials from coffee chairs to clay walls to create a calm working and hospitality space.



Becket House – 7th Floor refurbishment  
Photo: Office Curator



# COVENT

## THE YARDS

# GARDEN

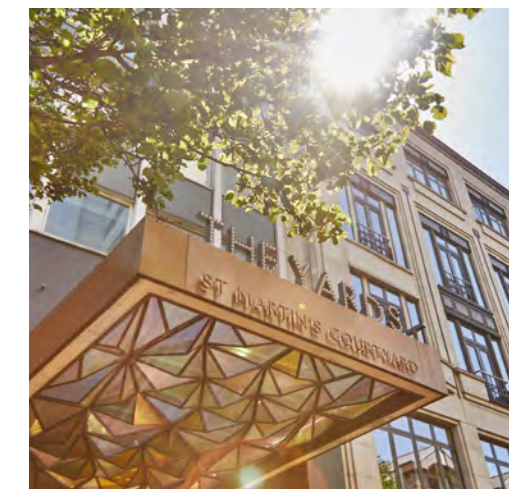
Slingsby Place



The West End continues to take shape as we build a vibrant neighbourhood for office workers, residents, international and UK visitors.

Our portfolio including shops, cultural spaces, offices and flats comprises six blocks on the north side of Long Acre and includes [The Yards](#) which has three interconnected courtyards – St Martin's Courtyard, Mercer Walk and Old Brewer's Yard.

Over the years we have secured key lettings offering recognised brands alongside unique concepts which sees our portfolio largely occupied. During 2023–2024 the following key lettings were completed on our direct and Joint Venture Longmartin estate:



The Yards entrance



lululemon - Slingsby Place

## lululemon

Global sportswear and athleisure brand [lululemon](#), opened a new, 130% upsized store spanning two floors at the Company's joint venture with Shaftesbury Capital, St Martin's Courtyard. The prominent corner unit at 8,330 sq. ft, marks a significant investment from the leading international brand and a strong vote of confidence in [The Yards](#).

Enhancing The Yards' vibrant neighbourhood of office workers, residents, and international and local visitors, lululemon's upsized store is set to be a hub for the community, hosting events such as running clubs and group exercise sessions, rooted in the brand's focus on movement, connection, and personal growth.



Space NK store



## SPACENK

[Space NK](#), worldwide retailer for luxury cosmetics, has been a long-term staple of Neal Street, Covent Garden, and a tenant of the Mercers' Company.

The retailer has recently doubled the size of its occupancy with its first two-storey store on the Company's estate.



## GUINNESS AT OLD BREWER'S YARD

### A new micro-brewery and culture hub in London

Works continue to deliver Diageo's 'Guinness Experience' in the heart of Covent Garden. Old Brewer's Yard first brewed beer back in 1722 and with the new Guinness microbrewery located on this historic brewing site, it will be brought to life 300 years later.

The destination is set to open in the spring of 2025 and is expected to create 150 jobs and provide a space for events and community initiatives across the five buildings leased from the Company. The site, aiming to be carbon neutral by 2030, will also be home to Diageo's award-winning Learning for Life Bartending and Hospitality Programme, striving to improve employability and livelihoods across the UK.



Guinness at Old Brewers's Yard CGI



# ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN

## SUPPORTING A LOW CARBON FUTURE



We are dedicated to preserving the environment and ensuring the well-being of the planet for future generations. This drives the decisions and actions taken by the Mercers' Company across the business.

Across our estate, we have pledged to reduce our carbon emissions, supporting the Paris Agreement (IPCC), and UK Government's goal to limit global temperature rises to 1.5 °C.

As such, in June 2024, we were delighted to announce our inaugural Environmental Action Plan, which outlines our commitment to reduce CO2e emissions by 43% across our property portfolio and operational footprint before 2030.

We are committed to reducing our carbon emissions and sustainable development through:

- Reduction in absolute energy consumption through operational efficiencies – Scope 1, 2 & 3 targets
- Electrification of the property portfolio
- BREEAM building standards Excellent or Outstanding
- Biodiversity, conservation and integrated approaches to land-use planning

"Our commitment to the environment and safeguarding the planet for future generations, underpins the decisions and actions we take, across every aspect of our business. We have achieved a lot already, however there is still much to do and the Mercers' Company look forward to delivering on our Environmental Action Plan."

PETER LANE,  
MASTER OF THE MERCERS' COMPANY



The Whittington Building terrace






## COMMITMENT

# 43%

reduction in CO2e emissions by 2030



OUR COMMITMENT

<div> Carbon Emissions</div>		
<div><b>Scope 3 emissions</b> Complete report to establish Scope 3 emissions and set targets in 2025</div>	<div><b>Scope 1, 2 &amp; 3 emissions</b> Achieve 43% reduction in emissions, compared to 2024 baseline, by 2030</div>	<div><b>Net zero emissions</b> Set net zero timetable once Scope 3 emissions report completed</div>
<div> <b>Electrification</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Cease ordering new mains gas connections</li><li>- Implement power data gathering and analysis for management</li><li>- Evaluate and procure renewable energy PPA arrangement 2024</li><li>- Investigate options to become part of a power generating group and sleeve renewable electricity across the grid</li></ul></div>	<div> <b>BREEAM Building</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- All new building and refurbishment projects minimum of BREEAM Excellent and BREEAM Outstanding where economically viable</li><li>- New buildings to achieve a minimum B EPC rating</li><li>- Assess buildings for embodied carbon to inform project evaluation</li></ul></div>	<div> <b>Biodiversity</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Continuous improvement of biodiversity across investment and operational property estates</li><li>- Green roof installation to the Whittington Building, supported by the Pollinating London Together initiative</li><li>- Rainwater harvesting, green roof and living wall installations across Covent Garden Yards portfolio</li></ul></div>
	<div> <b>Investment</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- ESG focused investment strategy</li></ul></div>	

DECARBONISATION ROADMAP

What we have achieved so far  
Scope 1 & 2 emissions

We commissioned a Scope 1 & 2 emissions report, to measure and assess our carbon emissions which established a 2019 base-year of 20,295 tpa CO2e (16,412 tpa (81%) electricity, and 3,883 tpa (19%) mains gas).

We have committed to a 43% reduction of direct Scope 1, 2 & 3 emissions against a 2024 baseline by 2030. If achieved this will put us on on the Paris trajectory to limit global warming to 1.5°C by 2050.



Becket House

ESTATE DEVELOPMENT/REFURBISHMENT

Since 2018 we have delivered a number of enhancements across our property estate to improve environmental efficiencies across energy, heating and cooling.

Across the portfolio, smart electricity and gas meters have enabled detailed monitoring for both new build and refurbishments to improve energy usage. We have also set targets to improve EPC ratings across our estate, with residential properties as a priority.



The Whittington Building



DELIVERY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN

2024-2026	2026-2027
<div><b>Scope 1, 2 &amp; 3 emissions</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Complete all scope 1, 2 &amp; 3 emissions analysis and prevention first strategy - review carbon off-set</li></ul></div> <div><b>Electrification</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Cease ordering new mains gas connections</li><li>- Implement power data gathering and analysis for management</li><li>- Evaluate and procure renewable energy PPA arrangement</li><li>- Investigate options to become part of a power generating group and sleeve renewable electricity across the grid</li></ul></div> <div><b>BREEAM</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- All new building and refurbishment projects to be a minimum of BREEAM Excellent and BREEAM Outstanding where economically viable</li><li>- New projects across the property estate to achieve a minimum B EPC rating</li><li>- Assess buildings for embodied carbon to inform project evaluation</li></ul></div> <div><b>Biodiversity</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Continuous improvement of biodiversity across investment and operational property estates</li><li>- Green roof installation to the Whittington Building, supported by the Pollinating London Together initiative</li><li>- Rainwater harvesting, green roof and living wall installations across Covent Garden Yards portfolio</li></ul></div>	<div><b>Scope 1, 2 emissions</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Complete remaining actions</li></ul></div> <div><b>Scope 3 emissions</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Define scope 3 plan and targets</li></ul></div> <div><b>Electrification</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Cease ordering new mains gas connections</li></ul></div>
	2030
	<div><b>CO2e emissions</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 43% reduction in emissions across Scope 1, 2 &amp; 3, compared to 2024 baseline by 2030</li></ul></div> <div><p>We look forward to delivering on the Environmental Action Plan and reporting progress on an annual basis.</p><div><div>SCAN TO VIEW OUR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN.</div></div></div>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank our Members, employees, grantees and strategic partners who work tirelessly in the pursuit of creating positive change so that everyone has the chance to lead a fulfilling life.

Designed by K4 Creative  
Editor Felicity Winkles

The Mercers' Company

6 Frederick's Place  
London EC2R 8AB

020 7776 7200  
info@mercercs.co.uk  
mercercs.co.uk



