

Annual Review

24

25



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We are a thriving livery company focused on being a **philanthropic force for good**.

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

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Master's Introduction



Grant Powell

– Master –
2024–2025

It has been an honour and privilege to serve as Master of the Mercers' Company over this past year, a period of important Company milestones and continued meaningful philanthropic work.

Perhaps the most important development this year was setting the Company's new ten-year strategy. In November 2024, we held our Court Strategy Day to ask the important question – where do we want to be in 2035? The day brought much valued input from Court Members and has helped shape our new ten-year strategy, launched in June 2025. The Clerk gives an excellent overview of this on pages 11–14, setting out how we will continue to be a dynamic City of London Livery Company and a philanthropic force for good.

As always, a central pillar of our success and ability to deliver our philanthropy is the strength of our property portfolio. During the year we completed a significant transaction, exercising our option to acquire the remaining 50% of Longmartin Properties Ltd, securing full ownership of St Martin's Courtyard. This will unlock new opportunities for our Covent Garden portfolio while enhancing our capacity to grow our income and in turn increase our philanthropic impact.

Meanwhile, I am pleased to report that Diageo Guinness at Old Brewer's Yard in Covent Garden is set to open Winter 2025. Over in the City, we secured a 15-year tenancy for our new Whittington Building, with leading international law firm Davis Polk – as they continue to grow their team, I wish them all the best in their new home.

In October 2024, we celebrated the opening of our Archive building, reaffirming our commitment to preserving our historic collections.

This year saw new acquisitions and commissions (page 81) and in recognition of our heritage and philanthropic purpose, this year's Annual Review front cover features a detail from the facsimile of Charleston's Shell cushion. It was stitched by prisoners supported by Fine Cell Work, a UK rehabilitation charity which helps people in prison to develop embroidery skills, gain paid work and access post release support. The Company funded the project.

Our Company Historian, Jane Rudell was instrumental in bringing our history and heritage to life. Over her 17-year tenure, she ensured our Company's history was told with the depth, context and care it deserves. It is with great sadness that I pay tribute to Jane, who died in April after a long illness. In July, Members, colleagues and her friends gathered at Mercers' Hall Chapel to remember her remarkable contribution and share fond memories. Her final work, 'The Greatest Mercer' will be published in the Autumn (page 84).

Jane, with her love of travelling and cultural heritage, also helped to inspire many a Mercer pilgrimage. Not least our recent trip to Antwerp and the Low Countries, following in the footsteps of two great Mercers, Sir Thomas Gresham and William Caxton. Over 20 Members and their partners explored the Flemish cities that helped shape their legacies. It was a fascinating trip where we enjoyed heritage and mercantile tradition while enjoying each other's company, renewing old acquaintances and forging new friendships and, on a personal note, allowing my wife Rosemarie to share her love for her homeland.



The Master visiting an almshouse

Philanthropy is a central tenet of being a Mercer; and arguably the greatest inspiration to Mercer philanthropy was the example of Richard Whittington who left his entire estate for charitable purposes. In 2024–2025 we awarded £12.9 million to organisations whose vital work supports those in greatest need. The Philanthropy section (pages 15–64) highlights the many charitable organisations and beneficiaries reached through our funding programmes.

"I have seen first-hand our philanthropic work, the vibrant communities in the almshouses and excellent education and pastoral care at our Associated Schools & Colleges."

As Master, I have seen first-hand our philanthropic work, the vibrant communities in the almshouses and excellent education and pastoral care at our Associated Schools & Colleges. This year I had the pleasure of visiting Lady Mico's, Trinity Hospital, Greenwich and Whittington College almshouses and enjoyed spending time with residents at their Christmas parties. I also visited Thomas Telford School, St Paul's Girls' and St Paul's Schools and The College of Richard Collyer. I was particularly pleased that Collyer's, where I previously held a nine-year governorship, was awarded Ofsted Outstanding during the year.

All this year's achievements could not have been realised without our valued Members who help and oversee the running of the Mercers' Company and the Charities for which we are trustee, and those who serve as Governors at our Associated Schools & Colleges or as a Trustee on associated bodies. I am enormously grateful to all our Members for their continued support.

Thank You.

Grant Powell – Master

At a Glance

Creating positive change

We are a livery company focused on being a philanthropic force for good. We have a rich history dating back over 700 years with philanthropy as the common thread between our past, present and future.

As trustee of several charities, we recognise our responsibility to deliver their charitable objectives. Through our Philanthropy Framework, our aim is to create positive change so that everyone has the opportunity to live a fulfilling life.

We aim to



Improve people's lives



Strengthen organisations



Contribute to societal change



£78.1m

total awarded through
Philanthropy Framework*

*1 April 2018 to 31 March 2025

£68.7m

awarded across 4 main
funding programmes*

*1 April 2018 to 31 March 2025

c.£10m

distributed every year

c.115

charities supported every year

Hackney Playbus



Our funding programmes

Our giving is focused on relieving disadvantage in London, Norfolk, Lincolnshire and the North East of England.



Young People & Education

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



Older People & Housing

Aims to address loneliness and poverty faced by older people and provide high quality accommodation to over 200 residents in six almshouses.



Church & Communities

Aims to build stronger communities in areas of deprivation, supporting refugees and the homeless and deliver better outcomes for families and carers facing poverty or other challenges.



Heritage & Arts

Aims to enable access for disadvantaged groups and support people at the start of their careers.

Our philanthropic purpose is supported through our Membership and Stewardship.

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.

We also run our Members' Philanthropy programme supporting Members and the executive team in their own philanthropic endeavours.

Find more about our
Membership on page 65

Stewardship

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

Find more about our
Stewardship on page 85

Our associations

Whilst our connection to our original trade has diminished over time, we maintain our centuries-old links with our Associated Schools & Colleges, the Armed Forces, our Church Livings, the City of London Corporation and other livery companies.

Clerk's Statement



Rob Abernethy
– Clerk –

The past 12 months have been a pivotal period for the Company. In October 2024, we completed the acquisition of Shaftesbury Capital's share of Longmartin Properties Ltd, securing full control of the Covent Garden Estate.

This, coupled with the completion of the redevelopment of our core property portfolios in the West End and City of London and the close of our five-year strategy, marked a major milestone. All of this has presented an opportunity to broaden our long-term perspective and formulate a new ten-year strategy, Project 2035.

This plan sets out our strategic aims across the Company's core pillars and outlines our direction of travel through to 2035. Our overarching and perpetual ambition is to remain a dynamic City of London Livery Company, harnessing the energy and commitment of our Member community to deliver social good, increase the impact of our giving and safeguard our long-term future.

The world is less stable than it was five years ago and this places an even greater premium on resilience. To support our ambition of being a philanthropic force for good and position the Company for future generations, we will diversify and strengthen our asset base. We will continue to be a catalyst for positive change by keeping an unwavering focus on philanthropic priorities that address need and are impactful. We will continue to invest in our Membership, developing new opportunities for Members to engage, particularly in philanthropy, and we will continue to modernise and strengthen our governance, ensuring the Company leads in best practice as both a corporate body and a charity trustee.



In parallel, we reaffirm our commitment to a low-carbon future, working to reduce our emissions in line with our Environmental Plan that we launched in 2024.

As well as looking to the future, this Annual Review reflects upon the impactful work of the Company, and the charities we are responsible for.

We are now midway through the second phase of our Philanthropy Framework (2023–2028) and in 2024–2025, £12.9 million was awarded through our four main funding programmes, supporting efforts to relieve disadvantage in London, Norfolk, Lincolnshire and the North East of England.

“Everything the Mercers' Company achieves is down to our people. We are powered by the dynamic partnership between our Members and the executive team, whose continued commitment shapes and drives our philanthropic purpose.

A mid-term review is now being undertaken to evaluate progress against our objectives and will help shape future activities. Also, as part of our commitment to continuous improvement, our first grantee and applicant survey was conducted this year, by an independent research organisation. The survey yielded positive and insightful feedback and the final report will be published over the summer. We are committed to building on the results to further improve our grantmaking, be even more transparent and follow best practice in the sector.

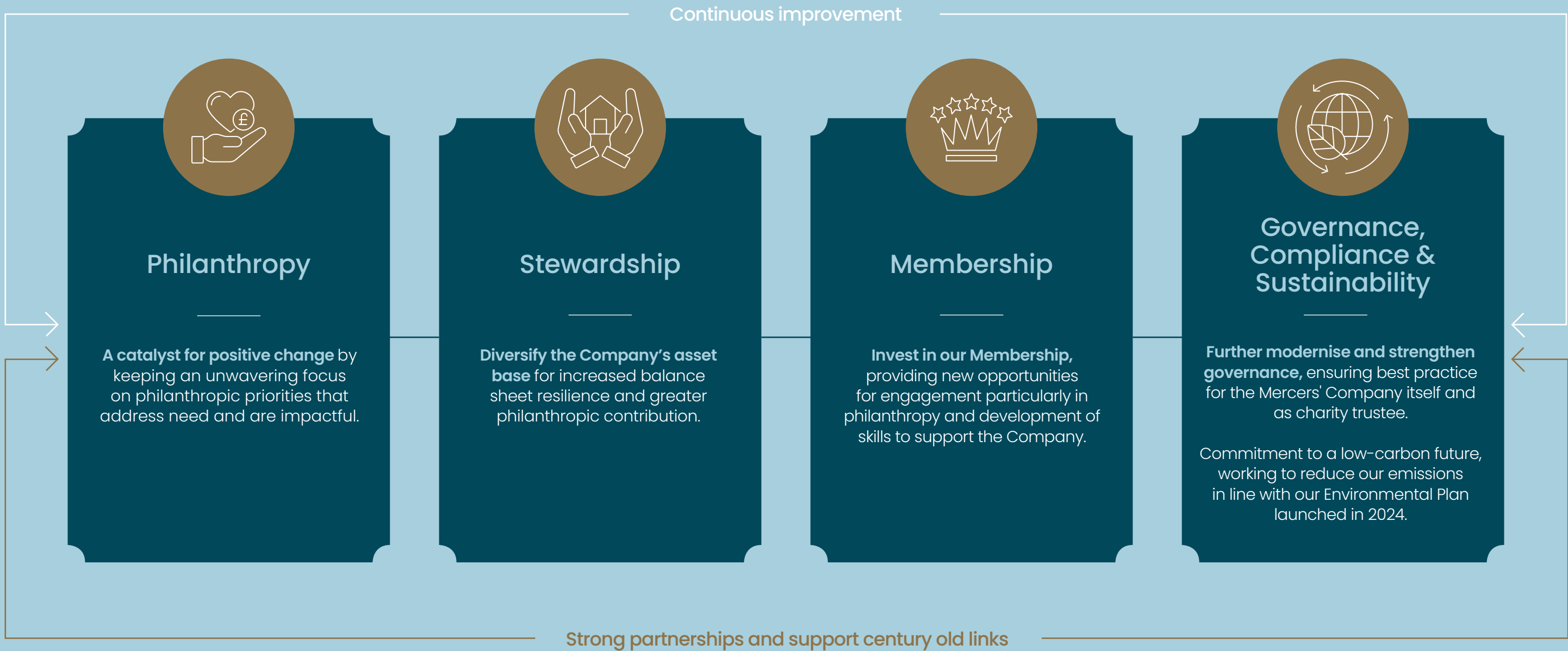
Ultimately, everything the Mercers' Company achieves is down to our people. We are powered by the dynamic partnership between our Members and the executive team, whose continued commitment shapes and drives our philanthropic purpose. I would like to extend my gratitude to both the Membership and the executive team for their continued energy, enthusiasm and dedication.

Rob Abernethy – Clerk

Ten-Year Strategy

A philanthropic force for good – positioning the Company for future generations.

Our overarching and perpetual ambition is to remain a dynamic City of London Livery Company, harnessing the energy and commitment of our Member community to deliver social good, increase philanthropic impact and safeguard our long-term future.



Philanthropy

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

As corporate trustee of several charities we work together through the Philanthropy Framework to help people facing disadvantage in London, Norfolk, Lincolnshire and the North East of England through our four main giving programmes:



Young People
& Education



Older People
& Housing



Church &
Communities



Heritage
& Arts



Doorstep Library

Giving over seven years

1 April 2018 to 31 March 2025

£78.1m*

total awarded

*£969k awarded to other charitable organisations outside of main giving programmes



Third Age Project

£68.7m

awarded across four main funding programmes

1,187

grants

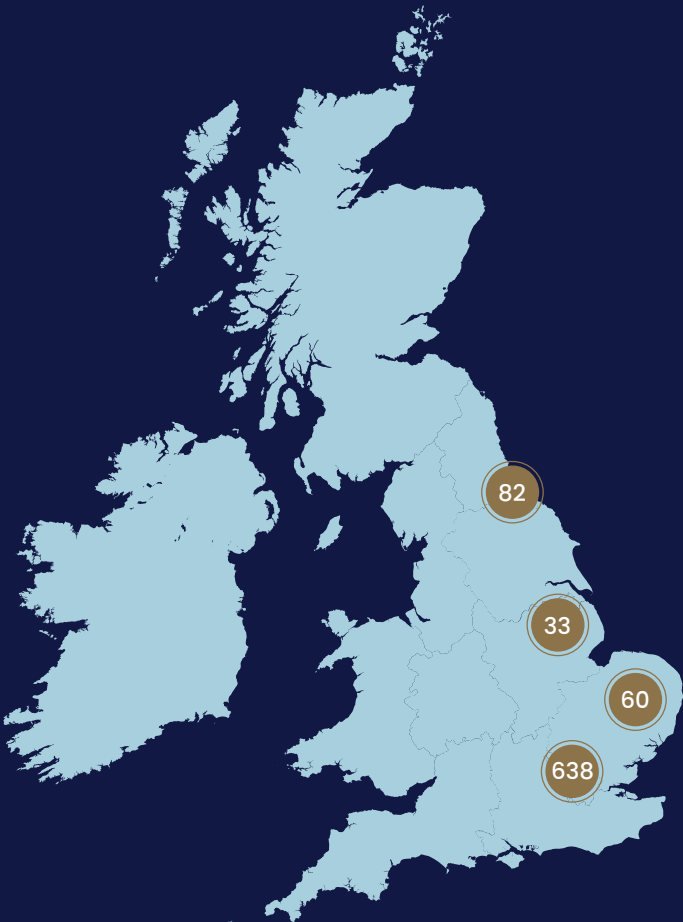
529

organisations

£8.5m

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

Company year end 31 December 2024



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.

We have published all grants made across our four main funding programmes, since our Philanthropy Framework was established in 2018, on 360 Giving.

Scan or click to view the data



Giving 2024-2025

From 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, through our Philanthropy Framework, we have awarded 140 grants to 124 organisations totalling £11.6 million with an additional £1.3 million awarded through direct company giving.

£12.9m

total awarded

£11.6m

awarded across four main funding programmes

140

grants

124

organisations

£1.3m

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

Company year end 31 December 2024

Scan or click to read 2024-2025 Grants (above £10,000) across our main funding programmes



Philanthropy Framework: 2023-2028

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.

We are halfway through our current Philanthropy Framework and it is yielding positive impact across our main funding programmes. As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, a mid-term review is being undertaken to evaluate progress against objectives to help shape future philanthropic work.

Over the coming year and as part of our wider ten-year strategy we are looking ahead to our 2028-2033 Philanthropy Framework. The Framework will continue to focus on tackling current need, achieving more through our funding programmes, improved use of data and measurement of impact, and working in partnership with other funders and sector organisations where appropriate.

Vision & purpose

We believe that opportunity and aspiration should be nurtured for all, so that a fulfilling life should be open and achievable for all

To empower people and help reach their potential by:

- Inspiring a love of learning
- Strengthening self-belief and wellbeing
- Creating opportunities to live a balanced, rewarding and varied life

Driven & supported by

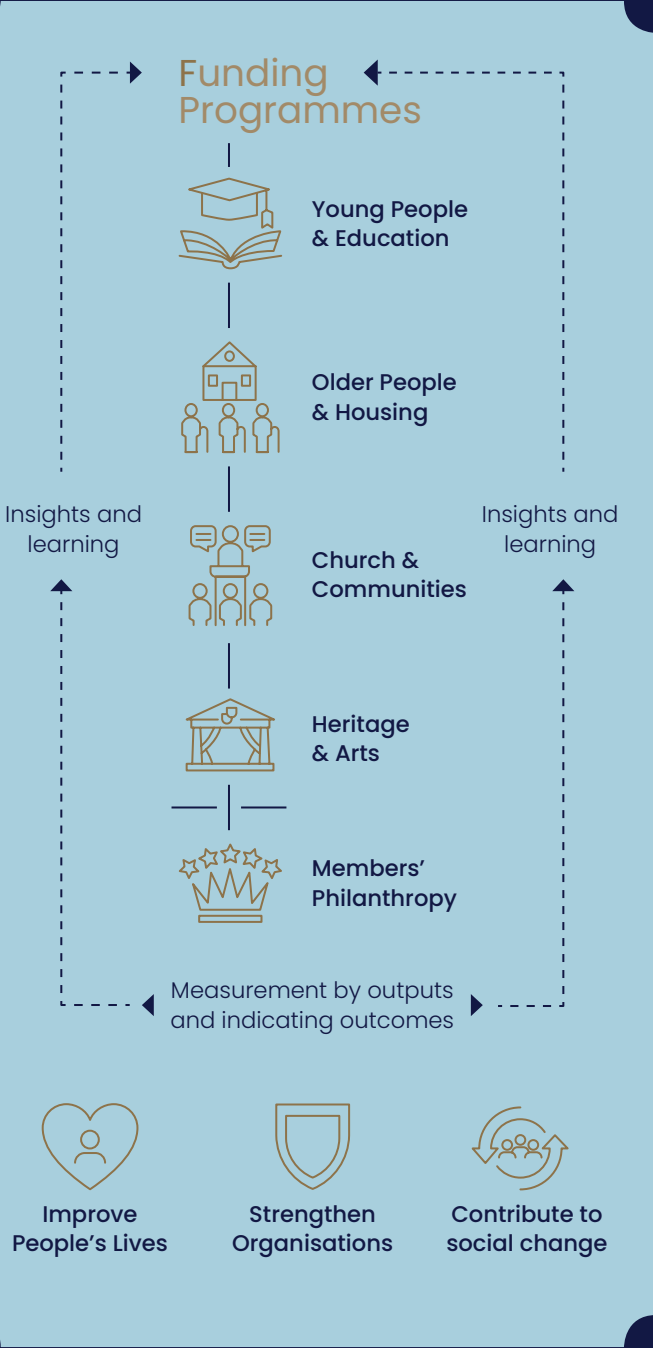
Collaboration
Charities (of which we are trustee) and the Mercers' Company

Our guiding principles

- Support disadvantaged people
- Fund based on impact
- Sustainable philanthropic results
- Build on strengths
- Stringent asset management and capital allocation

Relational approach
Build value added relationships with our grantees

In-depth knowledge
London, Norfolk, Lincolnshire and the North East of England



Our Philanthropy 2024-2025

Understanding the context: what we are seeing and learning

As part of our commitment to **IVAR's Open & Trusting grantmaking principles**, we continue to strengthen our learning culture, drawing from grantee feedback, programme evaluation reports and dialogue with our learning partners.

Together, these insights help us understand not only how our funding is experienced, but also what is working on the ground, where we can improve and how we can best support the sector through growing uncertainty.

A sector under strain

Charities and not-for-profit community organisations continue to operate in an exceptionally challenging environment. Organisations are reporting a rising demand for services, while core costs continue to surge, with many needing to use reserves to stay afloat. With public funding shrinking and some foundations stepping back, competition for grants has intensified. Across our own programmes, we know that on average only 1 in 7 applications is successful. These pressures are not short-term; they signal a sector grappling with long-term instability.

What we are learning

Evaluation reports across our Young People & Education, Older People & Housing and Church & Communities funding programmes paint a clear picture: success is built on values-led, person-centred delivery. Trusted relationships, empathetic staff and volunteers and inclusive, welcoming spaces help reduce isolation, improve wellbeing and strengthen self-belief and community connection for beneficiaries.

Organisations tackling disadvantage are seeing tangible, long-term impact, but call for more sustainable funding to meet scale and demand. Across programmes, grantees consistently ask for multi-year core funding, larger grant sizes, and more support for evaluation. Co-production is also a growing priority, ensuring people with lived experience shape services that affect them.



Several reports have been published during the year, highlighting the areas for improvement for future delivery which can be found on our Insights & Learnings page

Scan or click to view

Grantee and applicant perception survey

We commissioned our first grantee and applicant perception survey this year, delivered by independent researchers **nfpResearch**. Our aim was to understand how our funding is experienced and what the sector needs at a time of extraordinary pressure.

- **90%** of applicants say demand for services has increased
- **53%** of applicants needed to use reserves
- **98%** of grantees say our funding improves people's lives
- **93%** of grantees say we understand their aims
- **82%** of grantees say we are a good example of a relational funder
- **87%** of grantees rate our staff as very helpful

We were particularly encouraged that our relational approach, streamlined applications, responsive contact and trust-based partnerships have been recognised as examples of good practice.

We look forward to publishing the final report from our grantee perception survey over the summer.

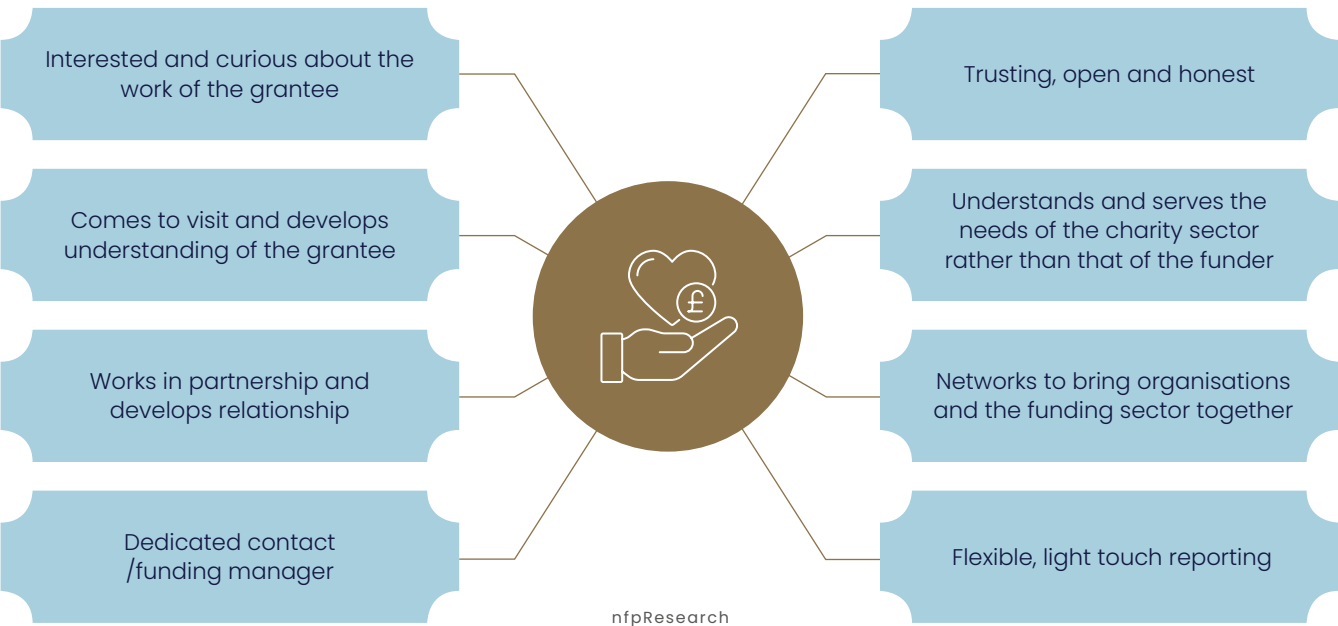


Seven years' into our Philanthropy Framework, our funding programmes continue to support organisations doing a wide range of excellent people-focused work. We firmly believe that how funders work is as important as what they support.

"Working with learning partners and evaluators such as Open University, SQW and Swain, Frost, Crowther & Cook is now embedded in our funding approach and provides our grantees with ongoing support and critique to foster a culture of continuous improvement."

Serena Hedley-Dent,
The Mercers' Company,
Deputy Clerk

What an engaged, supportive, relational funder looks like



Our Approach

We aim to proactively address critical issues facing our society.

Our Philanthropy Framework goes beyond financial support, emphasising building strong relationships with grantees, collaborating with learning partners and gaining insight from the frontline. As a funder, we leverage various tools, including grants, funder plus/ capacity building and social investment to create lasting impact.



Carers First - lunch bingo

Relationships

We are a relational funder, building open and trust-based partnerships with applicants, grantees and stakeholders. We aim to minimise the power dynamic in funding relationships by working as equals, being curious and respecting the expertise of those we support. This approach mirrors what we expect funded organisations to foster with their communities.

We maintain frequent contact with grantees through visits, events, learning opportunities and tailored support. We also nurture peer networks and collaborate across our Associated Schools & Colleges, Almshouse communities and church patronages.

An example of this in practice is our partnership with the Norfolk Community Foundation – See page 25 where we catch up with NCF on its Connecting Older People Fund.



We are open and trusting with funded organisations, are curious about them, seek to understand them and respect the greater expertise they have in their areas.”

Matthew Roche,
The Mercers' Company,
Head Grants Programme Manager

Funder plus

We help grantees build resilience through capacity-building activities such as training, strategic advice and development resources. This approach enables organisations to strengthen their operations and impact over time. Partners **Media Trust** and **Cranfield Trust** help deliver this support for our grantees.

Insights and Learning

We work closely with research and evaluation 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.

We actively seek to improve our practice through grantee feedback, learning partner reports and dialogue. This year, we conducted a grantee perception survey to better understand how our funding is experienced.



Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre



Open and trusting grantmaking

We are committed to open and trusting grantmaking and being a flexible funder. We have signed the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) **Open and Trusting Grantmaking Commitments**.



Scan to read our 8 commitments to open and trusting grantmaking

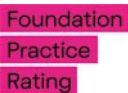
Diversity, equity and inclusion

Since January 2023, we have adopted the DEI Data Standard, collecting and tracking community demographics data across our programmes. This helps us understand who we are reaching, identify gaps and inform better decision-making.



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.



Foundation Practice Rating

For the fourth year, we participated in the Foundation Practice Rating, an initiative that benchmarks foundations on diversity, accountability and transparency. We maintained a **B rating** in 2025, consistent with our 2024 performance.



It’s a challenging time for charities, with rising need and diminishing resources available. We offer flexible, multi-year funding that supports collaboration and helps maximise impact for beneficiaries.”

Ann Wynn,
The Mercers' Company,
Lead Grants Programme Manager



Social investment

Social investment is a sustainable tool we use to support mission-driven organisations with repayable finance. It complements our grantmaking by helping organisations build resilience and scale their impact.

Norfolk Community Foundation

In June 2025, a £737,000 grant over three years was awarded to the Norfolk Community Foundation's (NCF) 'Connecting Older People Fund' from the Earl of Northampton's Charity. The fund will help our Older People & Housing programme reach and provide small grants to charities that support older people, facing loneliness and disadvantage.

Jodie Lancashire-Clark
Connecting Older People Fund Lead

Q: We have been working on NCF's 'Connecting Older People Fund' since 2019. What has this partnership meant for NCF and the elderly communities you support in Norfolk?

The fund has become a vital resource for grassroots organisations supporting older people across Norfolk. It has been a hugely positive partnership – enabling The Mercers' Company to reach smaller, often overlooked groups, while giving local charities access to a national funder.

Over five application rounds, we have awarded 91 grants worth over £600,000 to 56 different organisations. This level of funding has made a real impact in tackling isolation and hardship for older people in Norfolk.



Q: What difference do you think the grant will make over the next three years?

This new grant is transformative. The fund has been consistently oversubscribed. The extra funding will let us support more excellent and vital projects, and for the first time, we are going to be able to offer multi-year grants offering flexibility based on need. Funding is always a challenge, especially for smaller charities in remote areas. This is game-changing for giving security of funding, allowing them to focus on delivery rather than fundraising.



St Mary Magdalene PCC (Gorleston)



West Norfolk Carers

Q: How does funding like this help?

It meets people where they are. We are funding organisations in the heart of small villages, supporting older people who may never leave their area. From dementia-friendly hubs, sign language projects, advice services to local radio training for the elderly, by funding local charities embedded in communities, we can ensure support reaches elderly people who might otherwise be cut off.

Q: What do you expect this new phase of funding to support?

Much of the same, but more of it, and giving funding sustainability. We are aiming to fund up to 20 multi-year and 30 one-year projects over the next three years. The need is clear, and this funding will help ensure long-term continuity for vital services.

This is game-changing for giving security of funding, allowing them to focus on delivery rather than fundraising.

Q: Finally, what is the value of long-term, trusted partnerships like this?

It's holistic. We all play a part. The Earl of Northampton's Charity through the Mercers' Company provides the funding, we bring local insight, and the charities bring the expertise and relationships to make real change on the ground.

Young People & Education

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

Our priority is to support young people who experience disadvantage and as a result miss out on opportunities.

We provide funding and support for not-for-profit organisations in Greater London delivering programmes that focus on:

- **Early Years:** Aiming to increase children’s numeracy, literacy and language skills and improve school readiness.
- **Literacy & Oracy:** Helping children think of themselves as readers and writers with a voice. Funding aims to aid higher attainment and improved life chances.

- **Transitions from Secondary Education:** Supporting young people transitioning successfully from secondary education into positive destinations.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHWB):** Supporting MHWB community projects in Greater London through the **Propel** collaboration.

We also work closely with our **16 Associated Schools & Colleges (ASCs)** on whole school, preventative approaches to support pupils’ **mental health and wellbeing** and **School Leadership** initiatives which enable Headteachers and Governors at our ASCs to be confident, inspiring and successful leaders.

Alongside funding, we facilitate capacity building through funder plus initiatives, helping organisations that we fund to grow stronger and more resilient with access to training and support.

Where we fund



National Children Bureau (NBC)

2024-2025 highlights

£5.6m
awarded

40
grants

37
organisations
received grants

During the year £5.6 million was awarded across our Young People & Education programme. 17 not-for-profit organisations were funded for a three to four year period (2024-2028/29) across our Special Initiatives: **Early Years** (£2.06 million), **Literacy & Oracy** (£1.4 million) and **Transitions** (£1.15 million), supporting young people in London to have higher attainment and improved life chances, strong mental health and opportunities beyond secondary school.

This sees our Special Initiative programmes funded to 2028/9 with the final Transitions funding round to be launched in Autumn 2025.



Impact

Impact includes total figures provided from all reports submitted in 2024-2025 across the Young People & Education programme.



Improve
People's
Lives

6,508
people feel better connected

11,941
people's wellbeing improved

204
people have found work

11,510
people have improved their skills

56,072
people supported

12,357
people supported on a regular basis

100%
reported improving people's lives



Strengthen
Organisations

10
organisations leveraged additional funds totalling £357,572

1,395
volunteers have been supported

1,490
leaders have developed their abilities

100
leaders have improved their wellbeing

100%
reported that the organisation had been strengthened

42
organisations expanded their services

14
organisations improved financial sustainability

47
organisations developed the skills of staff/volunteers



Contribute to
Societal Change

33
organisations contributed to raising awareness around an issue

21
organisations influenced a change in practice beyond their own organisation

33
organisations helped to build an evidence base

5
organisations influenced local or national government policy

86%
reported contributing to societal change



Improve People's Lives

Transitions

Transitions to Employment

Blueprint for All provides careers support for under-represented young people aged 15 to 19, including those with diverse ethnic heritage, to help them prepare for a successful transition to professional life.

The Transitions to Employment programme was delivered across four schools to over 70 young people in Greater London. Materials and resources developed for the programme are being digitised and made available through the “My Blueprint for All” opportunities platform. This will enable young people across the UK to benefit from the programme’s resources.

“I can now consider apprenticeships in the future to help me with my future career.”
Programme participant



Blueprint for All

Impact

77%

of participants stated they had a better sense of their future

75%

believed they had a better understanding of how to access the world of work

90%

of participants found value in the programme, acknowledging the practical and applicable nature of the programme’s content

84%

of participants were in the process of applying to university*

*data taken from implemented long-term impacting tracking system.

My Blueprint for All video, made with Media Trust

Scan to watch



£319,200 grant
over three years (2022-2025)
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Supporting young lives, preventing suicide

Body & Soul’s mission is to transform the life-threatening effects of childhood adversity and complex trauma.

Its ‘You Are Not Alone’ (YANA) suicide prevention programme is ground-breaking in the treatment of complex mental health conditions and supports young people aged 16-35 who have attempted suicide or lack factors which protect them from suicide (75% of whom are from marginalised communities such as LGBTQ+ and BIPOC individuals).



Body & Soul

Impact

900

young people supported

95%

reduction in incidences of self-harm

91%

feel less alone

98%

decrease in presentations to A&E and crisis services

100%

reduction in self-harm behaviours

Zero

suicides

Award

bronze ‘Smiley Award’ for ‘Save a life from suicide’

“Body and Soul haven’t just changed my life, they saved it... Most importantly they showed me that whilst pain is real, hope is too.”

YANA graduate

Save a life from suicide video, made with Media Trust

Scan to watch



£273,966 grant
in 2023 via Propel Fund
Mercers’ Charitable Foundation



Strengthen Organisations

Literacy & Oracy

Transformative storytelling

Write Back delivers 10-week storytelling programmes for young people aged 13–16, building self-esteem and creativity. In partnership with local schools, the Find Your Voice programme promotes storytelling for young people in Barking & Dagenham and celebrates their writing.



£60,000 grant
over four years (2024–2028)
St Paul’s Schools Foundation



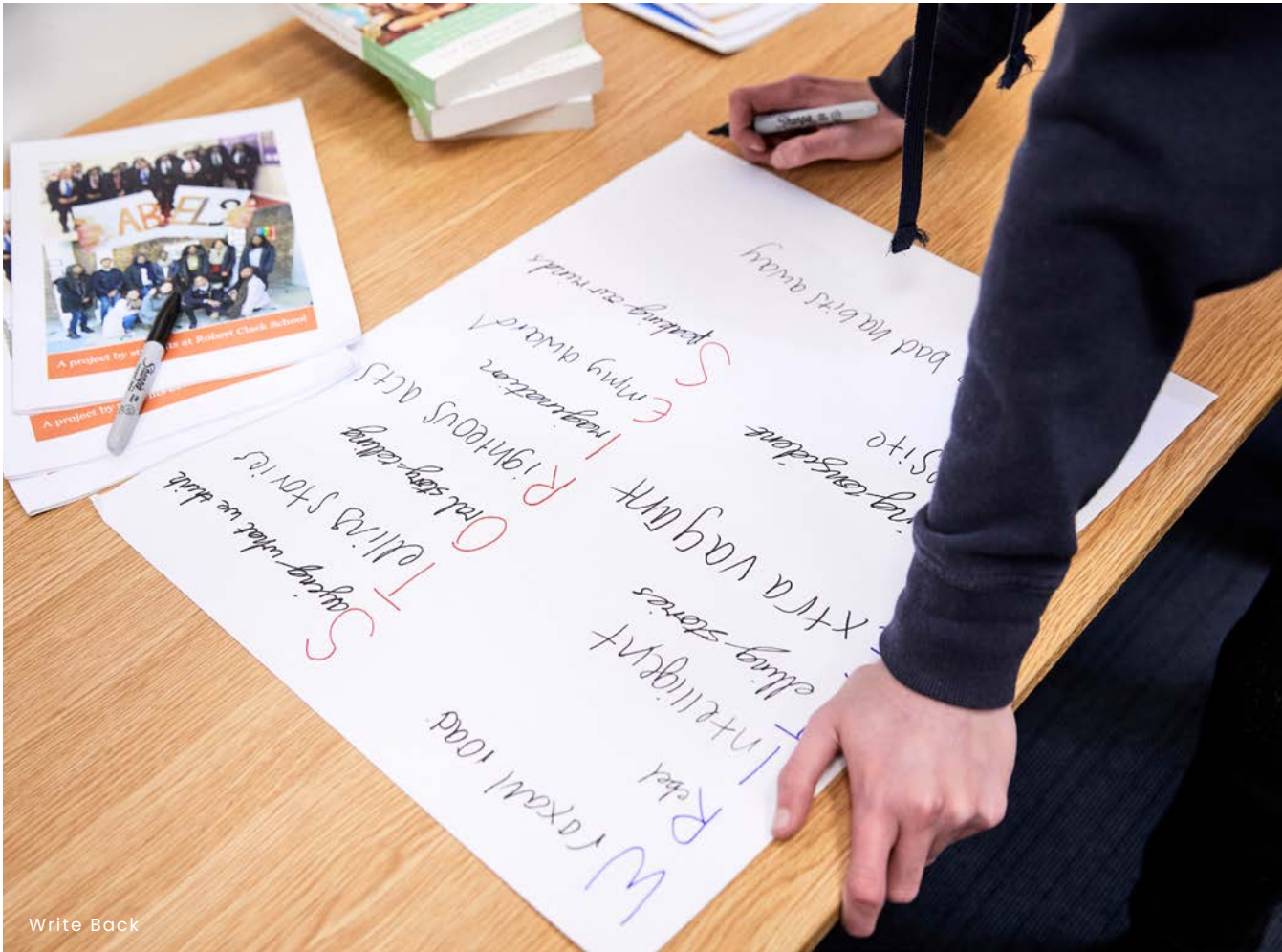
Write Back

The stability provided by the four-year grant has enabled Write Back to build capacity within their organisation and:

- Change and upskill its trustee board
- Onboard trustees with expertise in fundraising and HR
- Grow the staff team from 0 to 3 part-time employees
- Strengthen and expand governance
- Deliver programme ahead of schedule and run additional programmes for areas of need
- Launch an ambitious pilot project within schools in Summer 2025
- Deliver additional projects commissioned by the local authority

“I’ve started to enjoy school so much more... I don’t think about how everybody else perceives me anymore. I think about what I’m doing to better myself. My teachers have really recognised a difference in me because I’ve not only been more excited to come to school, but I’ve been so much more vocal and more attentive in lessons.”

Simi, Storyteller



Write Back

Impact

100

hours of storytelling programmes

50

young people’s work printed and celebrated

80%

of beneficiaries saw self-esteem improved by 16%

6

anthologies of young writers published

90

young people supported through storytelling programme

100k

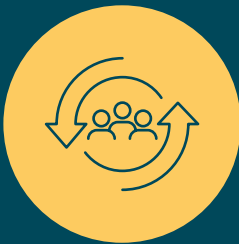
words published by young writers

90%

of beneficiaries with identified low self-esteem saw 50% improvement

300

young people supported through assemblies and workshops in partner schools



Contribute to Societal Change

Early Years

Raising early achievement in literacy

The **National Children's Bureau** drives change to build safer, more supportive systems for children. Funding supported its Making it REAL (MiR) literacy programme in Lewisham, empowering parents of 2 to 4-year olds with vital skills to develop their child's early language and literacy for a strong start in school.

MiR is now fully embedded in the borough and is a core offer through Lewisham's speech, language and communication pathway, a multi-agency approach with a shared vision and mission to support children and families in Lewisham.

Making it REAL has heightened our knowledge on how to include all families in the setting, through a nursery library box, literacy events, parental involvement."

Making it REAL practitioner

Supercharge your child's language skills

Scan to watch



Impact

60

early years settings

1,200

young children reached

776

parents supported

427

practitioners trained (MiR)

99%

of practitioners reported increased confidence and knowledge in working with parents to support communication and early literacy



£349,609 grant
over three years (2021-2024)
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington



Funder plus

Learning partners

Our **Early Years, Literacy & Oracy** and **Transitions from Secondary Education** Special Initiatives fund projects in Greater London that pilot new approaches to a specific issue or scale-up an existing approach.

Funding organisations for a three to four-year period, our aim is to increase sector knowledge and facilitate change. We do this through a cohort and learning partner approach that promotes collaboration and learning among the cohort and strengthens individual organisations' resilience. Our learning partners include **SQW** (Early Years), **Open University** (Literacy & Oracy) and **The Centre for Education and Youth / Causeway Education** (Transitions).

Capacity building

We provide our grantees with access to capacity building support, through partner organisations. **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 2024-2025.

Media Trust also provided the opportunity for grant holders to make a film. In September 2024, ten grantee organisation films were showcased at a celebratory screening at Rich Mix.

Media Trust films

Scan to watch



Associated Schools & Colleges

We support our 16 Associated Schools & Colleges (ASCs) in England which educate c.18,000 pupils. Our work includes:

- Supporting collaborative learning between our ASCs
- School leadership initiatives for Heads and Governors
- Appointing and nominating Governors
- Awarding grants to initiatives that align to our YP&E programme priorities

2024-2025 highlights

£422,600 has been awarded to support a wide range of projects at our ASCs including £180,000 for bursaries, £160,000 for YP&E priorities, £80,000 for mental health & wellbeing initiatives and £2,600 awarded for school prizes.

£422,600
awarded

17
grants

15
ASCs received grants

Impact

4,680
pupils feel better connected

10,374
pupils' wellbeing improved

6,493
pupils have improved their skills

39,164
pupils supported in total

7,596
pupils supported on a regular basis

173
pupils have found work

1,265
leaders have developed their abilities

89
leaders have improved their wellbeing

1,017
volunteers have been supported

2
schools leveraged additional funds totalling £126,500

School leadership

We support Heads & Governors and ASCs staff members through leadership development programmes with Windsor Leadership.

Our annual ASC School Leaders Conference, now in its third year, featured expert keynotes on **Gen Z recruitment** and **rethinking leadership**, alongside workshops and networking opportunities for school leaders to share experiences and practical solutions.



ASC School Leaders Conference

"I really enjoyed the networking opportunities and the space to think and reflect."

ASC School Leader

Governors Conference

We were delighted to welcome Governors and senior staff from our ASCs to our Governors Conference 2025, held at Mercers' Hall in April.

The event brought together a wide range of voices with this year's dual themes focused on Mentally Healthy Schools – emphasising staff wellbeing, safeguarding in the wider school community and partnership working across schools.

The day featured stimulating presentations, thought-provoking discussions and valuable opportunities to connect and reflect on the shared challenges and opportunities facing education leaders today. We were especially pleased to welcome a number of external speakers including – Professor Anna Lise Gordon and Dr Catherine Carroll from **St Mary's University Twickenham**, our mental health and wellbeing partner.



ASCs Governors Conference

Older People & Housing

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

We support organisations working with older people who are at high risk of **loneliness** and **poverty**.

We prioritise funding for disadvantaged neighbourhoods and minoritised communities including informal carers and those with long term conditions.

Alongside funding, we facilitate capacity building through funder plus initiatives. These help organisations that we fund, with training and support, to grow stronger and more resilient.



Wigmore Hall - Singing with Friends

2024-2025 highlights

£2.6m
awarded

28
grants

28
organisations
received grants

Our Older People & Housing programme awarded £2.6 million to 28 not-for-profit, community-led organisations in Greater London and Norfolk, focused on combatting loneliness and poverty faced by older people. Of the £2.6 million, £1.15 million was awarded to charities combatting loneliness, £1.12million to charities combatting loneliness and poverty and £114,998 to charities combatting poverty.

Approximately 1 in 6 (1.9 million)* pensioners are living in poverty with charities hearing daily from older people who feel overwhelmed by rising costs, anxious about their finances and increasingly isolated because they simply cannot afford to take part in social activities they once enjoyed. Poverty and loneliness often reinforce each other, creating a cycle of disadvantage which is why our Older People & Housing programme has increasingly prioritised grant funding addressing both poverty and loneliness. In the face of these issues we are really interested in funding charities that want to develop older people’s strengths and build community.

In tandem with funding and our funder plus approach, we facilitate capacity building for grantees of our Older People & Housing programme, helping organisations grow stronger and more resilient with access to training and support.



Resonate Arts

Impact

Impact includes total figures provided from all reports submitted in 2024-2025 across the Older People & Housing programme.



Improve
People’s
Lives

24,338
people feel better connected

22,524
people’s wellbeing improved

122
people have found work

4,719
people have improved their skills

33,575
people supported

19,342
people supported on a
regular basis

100%
reported improving people’s lives



Strengthen
Organisations

33
organisations leveraged
additional funds totalling
£2,564,661

2,899
volunteers have been
supported

226
leaders have developed
their abilities

219
leaders have improved
their wellbeing

100%
reported that the
organisation had been
strengthened

48
organisations
expanded their services

35
organisations improved
financial sustainability

46
organisations developed
the skills of staff/volunteers



Contribute to
Societal Change

36
organisations contributed to
raising awareness around
an issue

10
organisations influenced a
change in practice beyond
their own organisation

19
organisations helped to
build an evidence base

3
organisations influenced local
or national government policy

75%
reported contributing to
societal change



Improve People's Lives

Enabling independence and connection through community transport

North Norfolk Community Transport (NNCT) brings people together through safe, affordable and accessible transport services. For those without access to a car or public transport, especially older people and those living with disabilities, NNCT offers a vital link to the outside world.

In 2023, NNCT delivered 15,495 individual trips, helping people attend medical appointments, do essential shopping, and take part in community activities. Services like Access Car, Dial-a-Ride, and group trips empower passengers to maintain their independence and avoid social isolation.

Wheelchair-accessible vehicles ensure that all passengers can stay active and involved. One beneficiary now uses the service to care for their grandchild during school holidays, combining independence with meaningful family support.

“The grant has enabled people to live independently in their own homes... and given them greater social agency.”

Executive Lead, NNCT

“You make an enormous difference! I can get out and about from my home and I feel independent.”

Beneficiary

Impact

15,495

individual trips for individual passengers in 2023

91%

beneficiaries made new connections and friendships

96%

felt or were more independent



NNCT



£93,788 grant
(2020-2023)
The Earl of Northampton's Charity

£74,175 grant
(2023-2026)
The Earl of Northampton's Charity



Strengthen Organisations

Supporting people living with dementia

Participating in the arts can have a positive impact on wellbeing and reduce isolation for those living with dementia. **Resonate Arts** and **Wigmore Hall** are two organisations working together to provide creative opportunities and a support network for people living with dementia in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the City of Westminster.

Wigmore Hall – Singing with Friends

Singing with Friends is a choir for people living with dementia and their families and carers. The choir is delivered in partnership with Resonate Arts, bringing people together weekly to sing, share stories and co-create music.

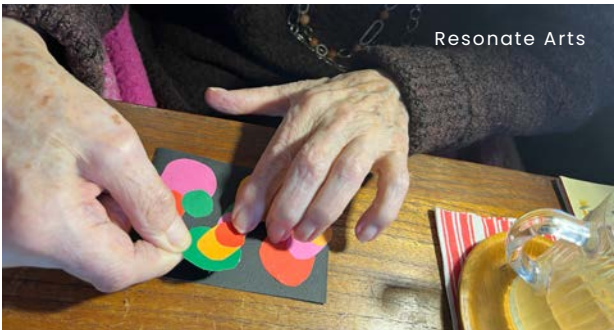
Wigmore Hall has been strengthened by working in collaboration with other partners, such as musicians from the Royal Academy of Music and Resonate Arts. By having support with the delivery of its project, Wigmore Hall has been able to provide higher quality sessions that encourage engagement and provide positive outcomes for participants.

“The choir grew together in community and connectedness... adding richness through new musical roles and mentoring opportunities.”

Music for Life Report



£60,000 grant
(2023-2027)
Mercers' Charitable Foundation



Resonate Arts – Creative Befrienders

This award-winning programme matches trained volunteers with people living with dementia for shared creative activities, such as music-making, drawing and gallery visits. The project's sensitive and person-centred approach empowers participants as co-creators, not just recipients of care.

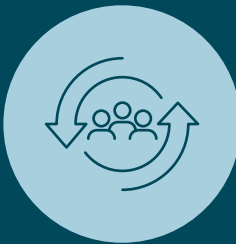
Resonate Arts was also winner of the 2024 National Dementia Care Award for Outstanding Approach Using Creativity and the Arts.

“The exceptional strength of Creative Befrienders is the thoughtful way they engage people who are very isolated and are often living alone in a very fragile world, to become involved as co-producers and artistic creators.”

Dr Beatrice Allegranti & David Truswell,
judges 2024 National Dementia Care Awards



£74,000 grant
(2023-2027)
Mercers' Charitable Foundation



Contribute to Societal Change

Supporting older people at risk of homelessness

In Harrow and Brent, increasing numbers of older people are facing eviction from private rental accommodation. Age UK Hillingdon, Harrow and Brent (HHB) is responding to this growing crisis by expanding its tailored housing support services directly into community spaces, helping older residents navigate complex housing challenges.


Over the past year, 416 older people benefitted from its dedicated housing support. A trained Housing Officer has worked to help individuals increase their income through benefits, resolve housing issues, prevent evictions and secure essential household items such as fridges and washing machines.

In addition, one volunteer was recruited and trained to accelerate support delivery.

By embedding services in libraries and community spaces and building strong partnerships with local authorities, Age UK HHB is creating more inclusive support pathways and raising awareness of housing challenges facing older people.



“This funding allows us to offer a wraparound service, helping older people stay in their homes or find secure alternatives, while supporting their wider wellbeing. It promotes independence, dignity and helps prevent homelessness.”
Project Lead, Age UK HHB



£107,317 grant
(2021-2024)
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington

£114,998 grant
(2024-2027)
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington

First year evaluation published



Our Evaluation Partners, Kerry Swain, Sarah Frost, Kathryn Crowther and Sue Cook, published the first-year evaluation of grants awarded through our Older People & Housing and Church & Communities programmes (2024-2029).

For Older People & Housing, the evaluation highlighted a shared commitment to person-centred, values-led work. Projects provided safe, inclusive spaces for older people, supported by empathetic staff and dedicated volunteers. Delivery was flexible and collaborative, tailored to the diverse and complex needs of beneficiaries. Many projects reported measurable improvements in wellbeing, health, and social connection.

Despite similar success factors to the Church & Communities programme, the context brought unique pressures: increasing demand, rising costs, staffing challenges, and broader systemic issues like housing insecurity and policy shifts.

Looking ahead, grantees emphasised the importance of sustained core funding, increased grant sizes, and greater support for evaluation. Extending the wellbeing offer and embedding co-production practices were also seen as key to ensuring older people can shape the services they rely on.



Scan or click to read the First Year Evaluation



Funder plus

Like our other funding programmes, we are partnered with Cranfield Trust who empower charities with the confidence and capability to thrive. Cranfield Trust has delivered a programme of capacity building webinars, peer support and consultancy projects. Grantees from our Older People & Housing programme said:

“Our volunteer mentor was very helpful and supportive and I’m taking the necessary actions.”
Finance Officer, Hackney Caribbean Elderly Organisation

“The peer-to-peer sessions were a genuinely valuable experience in a safe and supportive space to share challenges openly with peers facing similar issues around staff, volunteers, trustees, and governance. It was also reassuring to hear from a trustee on our panel that we’re not alone in these struggles. The structure encouraged reflection and offered practical tools we could take back into our work. I left feeling more equipped and connected.”
Arlene Coutts, FiSH Neighbourhood Care

Almshouses & Housing

Our four almshouses and two sheltered housing schemes in London and Norfolk are at the heart of our commitment to older people.

We provide high quality accommodation supporting independent living for over 200 residents, offering safety, security and a sense of community.

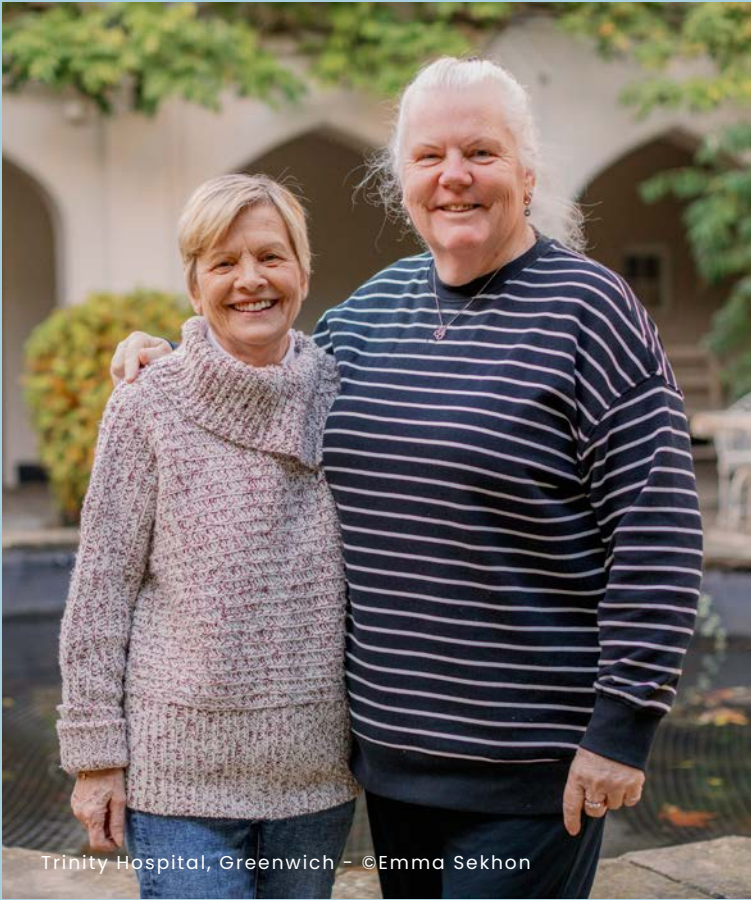
2024-2025 highlights

Our almshouses and sheltered housing schemes continue to provide quality, community-led living for older people. We remain committed to investment and innovation, working closely with grantees, local authorities and sector partners including the National Almshouse Association and EROSH.

Resident voice and engagement

This year's resident survey showed strong engagement, with 68% taking part. A clear majority (72%) still prefer direct contact, face-to-face or by phone, with many expressing appreciations for the presence and care of on-site staff.

The Master was also pleased to visit Trinity Hospital, Lady Mico's and Whittington College during the year, with residents welcoming the opportunity to speak directly and share their experiences. Resident forums and regular updates continue to play a vital role in shaping our services.



Sector collaboration and quality assurance

We proudly retained our Independent Living Standards accreditation with EROSH, with a new cycle due to begin in Autumn 2025. We continue to chair the EROSH London forum, supporting peer learning and shared best practice across the region.

Through the National Almshouse Association, the Housing Manager chairs a London-wide network of almshouse providers, ensuring collaboration and learning on legislative changes and operational practice.

In September, we successfully retained our BSI accreditation following audits at Trinity Hospital, Shotesham and Whittington College.

Grantee community activities for residents

This year we have continued our partnership with **Incommon**, bringing intergenerational workshops to our almshouses. Residents and schoolchildren connected through life story sharing, games and creative activities.

We also welcomed back **London Bubble** theatre, whose Older Adults Programme offered "Tea Break Theatre" sessions and performances of Beyond the Papers at Trinity Hospital, Greenwich. These sessions inspired reflection, laughter and community-building.

“Loved sharing life experiences with the children.”

“Made me get out and join others.”

“Wouldn't get these opportunities in most housing schemes.”

“I really enjoyed it; it gets the brain working and it was fun. Fantastic that we thought of all those characters.”



Church & Communities

We support churches and other faith & community-based organisations. Our programme seeks to build positive and inclusive relationships between people, increase a sense of belonging and reduce isolation with the following priorities:

Build stronger communities, supporting areas of deprivation, minoritised groups, refugees and people who are homeless.

Deliver better outcomes for families and unpaid carers facing poverty or other challenges.

We also provide support to strengthen organisations we fund through funder plus initiatives, offering training and support beyond funding.

Where we fund



2024-2025 highlights

£3.4m
awarded

70*
grants

*includes 30 grants to 17 Associated Churches

57*
organisations
received grants

*includes 30 grants to 17 Associated Churches

Our focus continues to be building relationships and partnerships ensuring our funding reaches communities facing most disadvantage across our priority areas.

During the period £2.7 million was awarded to organisations supporting **‘Stronger Communities’** of which £1.4 million was directed to disadvantaged communities, £677,700 to homelessness and £602,302 to refugees. A further £590,873 was awarded to bring **‘Better Outcomes for Families’** supporting unpaid carers and families facing disadvantage.

We have also continued to provide support to strengthen the organisations we fund through our funder plus offering, including:

- Partnering with **Cranfield Trust** who through their capacity building support, empower charities with the confidence and capability to thrive.
- Providing wellbeing funding to support the mental health and wellness of staff and volunteers, amid the sector’s growing pressures.
- Refugee “Boundaries and Good Practice Training” for staff and volunteers of charities who are supporting migrants and refugees.

Our Church and Communities programme proactively seeks to support organisations rooted within their community, which typically sees smaller community rooted organisations become grantees. 80% of grantees in 2024-2025 had a turnover of less than £1 million, ensuring that grants awarded are significant for grant holders and the communities they serve.



Impact

Impact includes total figures provided from all reports submitted in 2024-2025 across the Church & Communities programme.

 Improve People’s Lives	104,050 people feel better connected	108,792 people’s wellbeing improved
1,060 people have found work	12,593 people have improved their skills	192,172 people supported
94,931 people supported on a regular basis	100% reported improving people’s lives	

 Strengthen Organisations	58 organisations leveraged additional funds totalling £6,992,055	3,994 volunteers have been supported	510 leaders have developed their abilities	425 leaders have improved their wellbeing
51 organisations developed new services	60 organisations improved financial sustainability	81 organisations developed the skills of staff/volunteers	99% reported that the organisation had been strengthened	

 Contribute to Societal Change	75 organisations contributed to raising awareness around an issue	31 organisations influenced a change in practice beyond their own organisation	54 organisations helped to build an evidence base
18 organisations influenced local or national government policy	87% reported contributing to societal change		



Improve People's Lives

Fostering independence and life skills for carers

Bromley Mencap's Mutual Carers provides tailored support to people in mutually caring relationships, typically older parents caring for adult children with learning disabilities. These families often live with complex health and social challenges and risk isolation. Through regular activities such as cookery sessions, lunch clubs, coffee mornings and outings, beneficiaries build new friendships, learn life skills and foster greater independence. The project builds community, reduces loneliness and helps families plan for the future.



Impact

49

carers supported regularly, reducing isolation and improving wellbeing.

50+

carers reported improved mental health.

5

volunteers, including one with learning disabilities, supporting activities.

A lifeline for MD & TD

MD, 90, who lives with asthma, arthritis, depression and anxiety, and his daughter TD, who has a learning disability, care and support each other. **Bromley Mencap's** Mutual Carers service helps them manage their daily lives including arranging medical appointments, medication deliveries, social outings and events, as well as providing emotional support through regular home visits. Bromley Mencap has significantly improved MD and TD's quality of life, ensuring they feel supported, valued, and more prepared for the future.

"Everyone is friendly, it's a chance to chat, laugh, and share stories, which is important as I sometimes feel lonely and isolated at home. Going to these lunches helps with my depression and anxiety, as it allows me to get out and interact with others – Mencap is a lifeline."

MD

"Since attending cookery classes, I feel more confident cooking healthy meals for me and my dad."

TD



£53,950 grant
over three years (2023-2026)
Mercers' Charitable Foundation



Strengthen Organisations

Beneficiary voice

Haringey Migrant Support Centre (HMSC) is dedicated to improving the wellbeing and legal position of migrants by providing free advice on immigration, housing and destitution. Funding has supported HMSC to align its services placing the beneficiary at the heart of the organisation and strategy.

Increasing involvement of migrants in decision-making

- Broadened HMSC's impact, embedding lived experience at every level of decision-making
- Operates with greater accountability, inclusivity and long-term sustainability

Introducing Experts by Experience (EBE) group shaping policies

- Beneficiaries transition from informal input at community drop-ins to becoming an integral part of the organisation's governance
- Migrants with lived experience have a formal voice in shaping HMSC's strategy and activities

Directly engaging MPs – Voices for Equality campaign

- Raising profile of pertinent issues – long and expensive settlement routes, housing insecurity and access to justice
- Beneficiaries gain skills in advocacy and policy engagement, strengthening their ability to influence systemic change

By centring those directly affected by hostile environments, HMSC has evolved into a stronger, more resilient organisation, actively driving change and ensuring migrants' voices are heard at every level.

“Our grant has contributed meaningfully to increasing the participation of people with lived experience. The work carried out by beneficiaries is incrementally reshaping the direction of the organisation while empowering our wider community.”

HMSC



£72,800 grant
(2022-2024)
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington

£95,000 grant
(2025-2028)
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington

Supporting diverse communities in Sunderland

Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre (SBIC) provides a safe and secure community hub for the Bangladeshi and wider global majority community (including refugees) in the Sunderland area.

Multi-year core funding has given SBIC the space to drive organisational growth and development. A £1.2m extension to their community centre was completed and the organisation became an accredited training provider. Both initiatives increased the charities trading income, which has led to SBIC becoming more sustainable.

In January 2025, a further grant has been awarded to support the next phase of the charity's development, including plans for a new hub to support community enterprises.

SBIC owes its accomplishments over the last 36 months largely to the invaluable support from the Mercers' Company. This funding has empowered SBIC to expand, strengthen its foundations, and emerge as a resilient community organisation."

Abu Shama, CEO, SBIC



Beneficiaries supported

594

individuals through information, advice and advocacy support

£217,000+

secured through welfare benefits claims

1,031

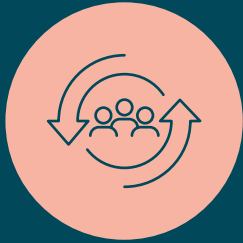
people attended community events



£77,000 grant
(2021-2024)
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington



£105,000 grant
(2025-2028)
Mercers' Charitable Foundation



Contribute to Societal Change

Tackling refugee homelessness in South Tyneside

Compact for Race Equality in South Tyneside (CREST) is a grassroots charity that seeks to improve the lives of people from a range of backgrounds by tackling race inequality and encouraging community cohesion.

With a steep rise in refugees facing homelessness, CREST launched a local campaign, improving the situation for refugees facing homelessness, raising awareness and driving change.

Developing a Coordinated Framework
CREST worked with local authorities, charities, and housing providers to establish a structured, Borough-wide response. This improved South Tyneside's response to the issue, ensuring a more coordinated and efficient approach to supporting those in need.

The new pathway ensures all organisations follow a clear, effective process, improving access to support for refugees.

Building Partnerships for Impact
By aligning resources and expertise, CREST strengthened South Tyneside's ability to tackle refugee homelessness. This approach streamlined services, reducing delays and inefficiencies in crisis response.

Sustaining Change
The framework is now embedded in local policy, ensuring long-term impact. The result: faster, more effective support for vulnerable refugees, reducing homelessness and improving lives.

Through our collective efforts, we have made a tangible impact on the lives of marginalised communities, demonstrating the power of collaboration and advocacy in driving positive societal change."

CREST



Beneficiaries supported

750

people through one-to-one support, events, workshops, classes, drop-in sessions, support groups and outings

160

one-to-one contacts on average per month

First year evaluation published



Our evaluation partners, Kerry Swain, Sarah Frost, Kathryn Crowther and Sue Cook, have published the first-year review of grants from our Church & Communities and Older People & Housing programmes (2024-2029). The report shares valuable lessons, highlights sector challenges and will guide our ongoing approach to funding.

Projects funded took a people-first, values-led approach, focusing on one-to-one support and building trust through empathy and listening. Success factors included safe, welcoming spaces, skilled and consistent staff, flexible delivery, and strong partnerships, especially with volunteers.

Despite sector-wide pressures like funding gaps, staff shortages and rising costs, projects made a real difference: improving wellbeing, reducing isolation, and helping people feel more connected.

Looking ahead, grantees stressed the need for continued multi-year core funding, larger grants to meet growing demand and co-production to ensure communities shape the services they need.



Scan or click to Read the First Year Evaluation



Funder plus

Our funder plus approach goes beyond financial support. By working with partners, we aim to strengthen our grant holders in key organisational areas. In challenging times we support growth, investing in staff and volunteer wellness and training to ensure long-term organisational sustainability.



Capacity building
Cranfield Trust delivered a programme of capacity building webinars, peer support and consultancy projects.

My mentor was exceptionally grounded in her approach, had depth and breadth in terms of relevant experience and I would highly recommend a mentorship through Cranfield Trust."

Nafsiyat Intercultural Therapy Centre

Wellbeing funding
Organisations applying to the Church & Communities programme can apply for up to an additional £5,000, ring-fenced to support the wellbeing of staff and volunteers.

The extra £5,000 we received towards staff wellbeing ... I think that is really forward thinking. Our staff currently work under strained and difficult conditions, and your support for wellbeing activities has been hugely appreciated."

Grantee feedback

Refugee Action
"Boundaries and Good Practice Training" aims to help organisations to understand what support they can provide safely and legally to beneficiaries. During 2024-2025 three sessions were delivered with 21 grant holders attending.

Church Livings

We share patronage of eight benefices of the Church of England.

During 2024-2025 £106,400 was awarded to 17 churches, including churches within our patronages and to our associated churches.

Appointment

We supported new vicar appointments to Aylsham & District Team Ministry in the Diocese of Norwich and the Pilgrim Group, The Washingborough Group and South Lawres & Barlings in the Diocese of Lincoln.



Clergy Day

We celebrate the work of the clergy associated with the Company. This year, we held our Clergy Day on the 6th of June 2024, with 36 attendees. The day involved a service led by the Mercers' Chaplain, followed by a discussion session led by Reverend Canon Professor Mark Chapman (Professor of the History of Modern Theology, University of Oxford) and a visit to St. Lawrence Jewry next Guildhall.

Thank you for organising a most enjoyable clergy day. Each part of it was perfectly judged."

Chaplain, Whittington College

£106,400
awarded

17
churches

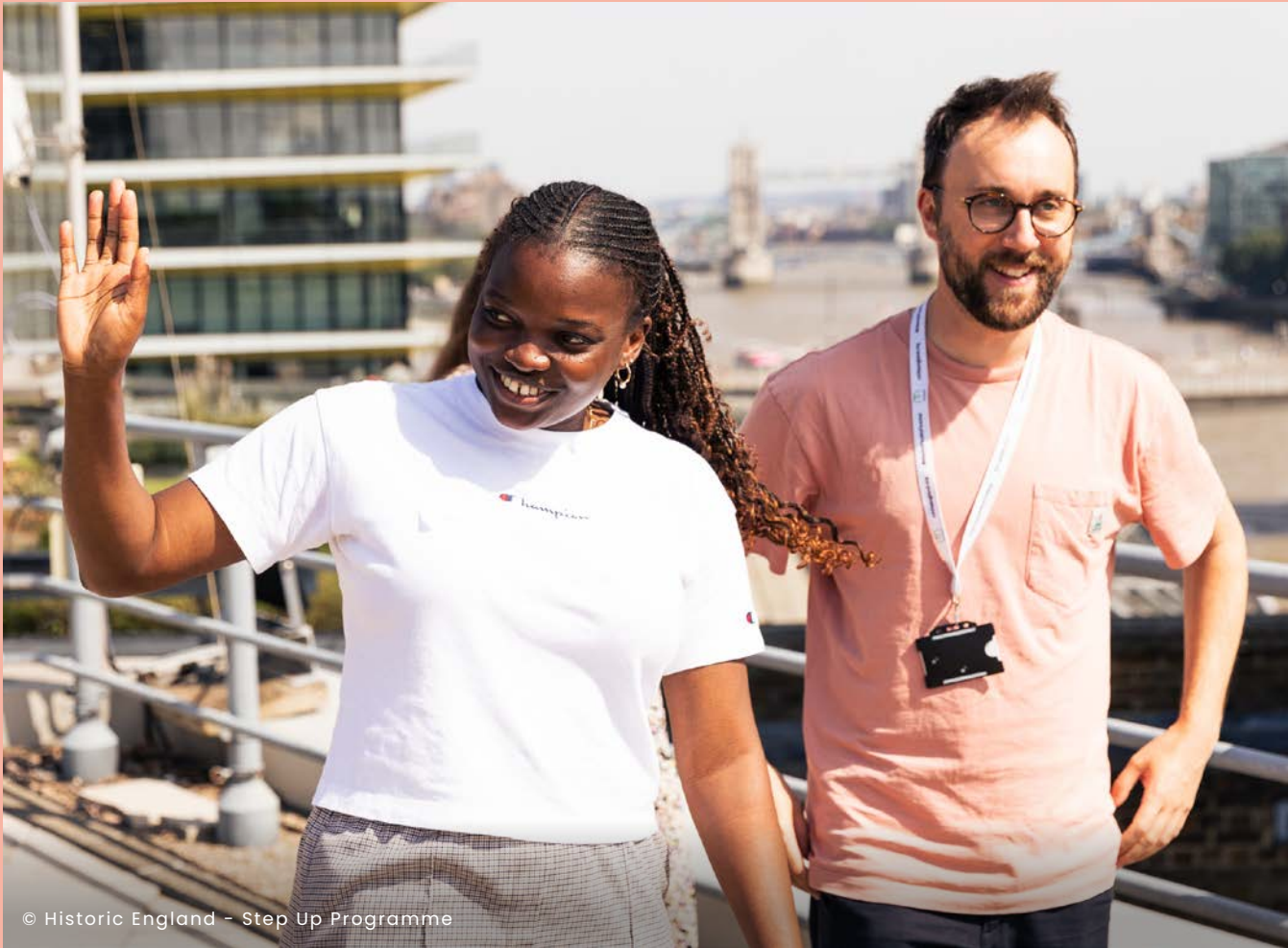


Heritage & Arts

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 identifies organisations and invites them to put forward proposals for funding.

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



© Historic England – Step Up Programme



Improve People's Lives

The Mercers' Arts Awards support graduating MA students from underrepresented or socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds at the start of their professional life. In its first year the Awards has distributed four £10,000 grants to graduates from **West Dean** and **University of the Arts London**. **Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance** is also a partner institution for the Mercers' Arts Awards.

Peon Boyle – art rooted in nature

Peon Boyle, a Master of Fine Arts graduate from West Dean, explores themes of materiality and embodiment through printmaking, drawing and installation. Her practice is grounded in a deep commitment to sustainability, using natural materials, papermaking, and repurposing techniques inspired by her observations of nature.

A Mercers' Arts Awards recipient, Peon is embarking on her first year as an independent artist since graduating in 2024. Peon's solo exhibition, 'Finding Meaning' and two group exhibitions in 2024, as well as a 2025 artist residency in Lisbon, mark exciting milestones on her artistic journey.



One day I may understand (2024) Peon Boyle
© Thom Atkinson



£10,000 grant
Mercers' Charitable Foundation



Textiles by Yasmin Swallow

Creativity helping mental wellness

Yasmin Swallow a Master of Textile Design from University of the Arts London, creates textiles to inspire mindful moments for herself and to encourage others to do so as well. Yasmin has developed a love of natural dyeing, creating lake pigments from natural matter to screenprint with. The receipt of the Mercers' Arts Award will enable Yasmin to develop her skills and knowledge.



£10,000 grant
Mercers' Charitable Foundation



Strengthen Organisations

Supporting early careers in fashion & textiles

The UK Fashion and Textile Association (UKFT) was awarded two grants. A grant of £3,000 for the development of its “Futures” website to support engagement with young people wishing to enter the textiles industry. A further grant of £4,000 was awarded for its UKFT Livery Textile Group Sustainability Conference ‘Tackling textile waste in the UK: Legislation, impact and solutions’, held at Drapers Hall, September 2024.



£4,000 grant
(2024-2025)
The Mercers' Company

£3,000 grant
(2024-2025)
Mercers' Charitable Foundation



UKFT Sustainability Conference



Contribute to Societal Change

Empowering women, transforming lives

Poplar Works’ Making for Change programme, delivered by London College of Fashion (LCF), provides industry-standard training to unemployed women. Participants gain qualifications, fostering economic independence in an empowering environment where self-esteem and self-confidence can flourish.

Ruma earned Level 1 & 2 Fashion and Textiles diplomas, became a trainee production assistant, and collaborated with Monsoon and LCF.



Ruma's 'Zero-waste' collaboration with Monsoon



Ruma at work

This experience significantly enhanced my understanding of the fashion industry. It boosted my confidence, enabling me to approach my work with greater effectiveness, efficiency and cost-consciousness. Now, when faced with challenges, I am better equipped to identify and capitalise on opportunities.”

Ruma



£127,444 grant
(2022-2025)
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington

Charities

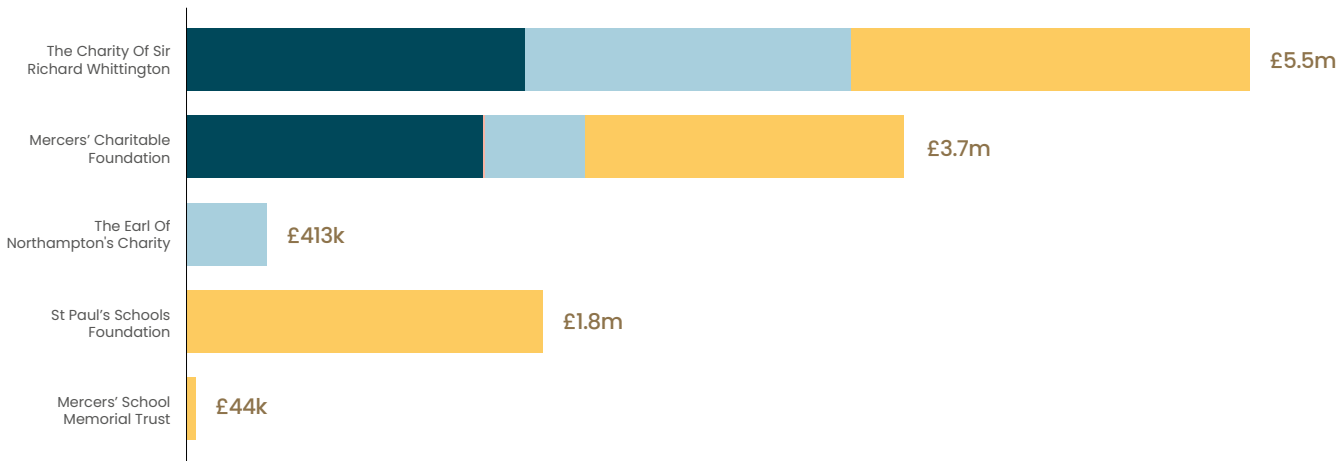
Over the centuries, we have been entrusted with significant gifts and bequests for charitable purposes from Members and other benefactors.

We are the corporate trustee of six registered charities and sole member of Mercers’ Company Housing Association. Five of these charities support our collaborative Philanthropy Framework funding the Young People & Education, Older People & Housing, Church & Communities and Heritage & Arts programmes.

- Young People & Education
- Older People & Housing
- Church & Communities
- Heritage & Arts

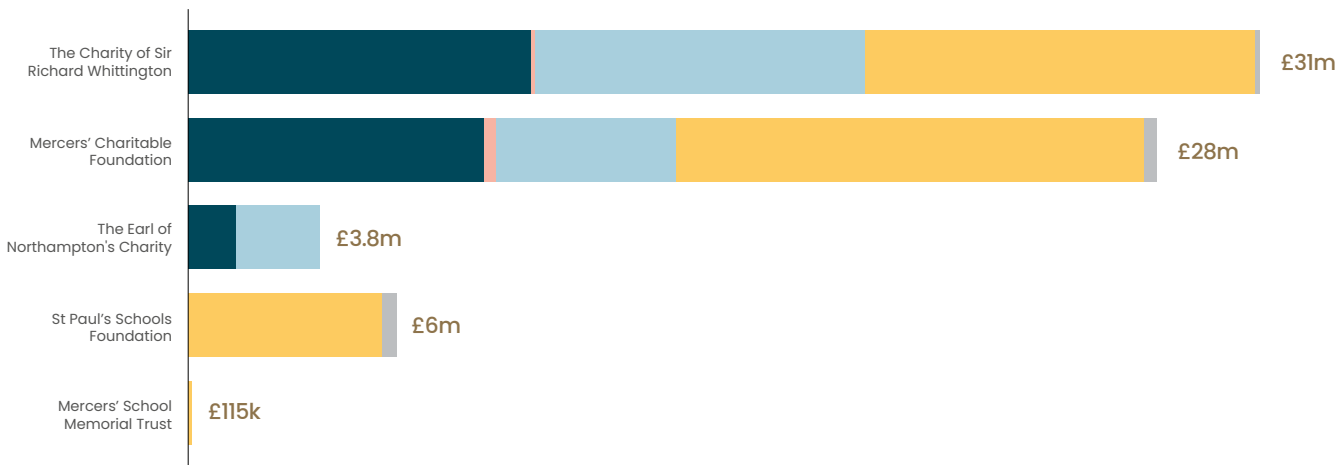
2024-2025 charity support

From 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025
the charities awarded **£11.5million**



7 Year charity support

From 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2025
the charities awarded **£68.9million**



Mercers' Charitable Foundation

Established 1983,
The Mercers' Company
is the Trustee.

The charitable objective of the Foundation is 'to promote in Greater London the education of boys and girls and, in particular, to assist in the conduct and maintenance of schools in or near Greater London.'

Provides: funding for the Church & Communities, Older People & Housing, Young People & Education and Heritage & Arts funding programmes.



The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington

Established 1424,
The Mercers' Company
is the Trustee.

Richard Whittington, four-time Lord Mayor of London and three-time Master of the Mercers' Company, bequeathed his estate to charity. The Mercers' Company was entrusted with the care of the charity in 1424.

Provides: almshouses and funding for the Church & Communities, Older People & Housing and Young People & Education programmes.



The Earl of Northampton's Charity

Established 1614,
The Mercers' Company
is the Trustee.

Founded by Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton (1540-1614)

Provides: almshouses and sheltered accommodation for the elderly and funding for the Church & Communities and Older People & Housing programmes.



St Paul's Schools Foundation

Established 1509,
The Mercers' Company
is the Trustee.

The charitable objective of the Foundation is 'to promote in Greater London the education of boys and girls and, in particular, to assist in the conduct and maintenance of schools in or near Greater London.'

Provides: support to St Paul's School and St Paul's Girls' School and funding for the promotion of education through the Young People & Education Programme.



Mercers' School Memorial Trust (The Merrett Bequest)

Established 1984,
The Mercers' Company
is the Trustee.

The Trust was set up as a memorial to the Mercers' School which closed in 1958 and although it has wide charitable purposes, it focuses on the advancement of education.

Provides: annual funding for the Mercers' School Memorial Professor of Business at Gresham College and funding for school prizes at the Associated Schools & Colleges.

Membership

Philanthropy and giving is a central tenet of being a Mercer.

Every year Mercers invest thousands of voluntary hours to support the Company and the charities of which we are trustee. Our Membership is the heart of the organisation and in partnership with the executive, deliver our purpose-led philanthropic work.

12142

Mercers serving on the Company's committees

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



“Our Members' generous contributions of time, skills, and diverse experiences are the driving force behind the success of the Company, the Charities, and affiliated organisations. Their dedication maximises the impact of our philanthropic efforts and directly supports those most in need. In return, we offer comprehensive training to ensure they feel confident and prepared in their roles.”



Anna Robinson,
The Mercers' Company,
Member Development

In memoriam

2024–2025

Adrian Peter Mark Watney
The Lord O'Hagan
Christopher John Pope Watney

In Focus

Three of our Members share their personal perspectives on what being a Mercer means to them, highlighting what they gain and the positive impact they generate through their volunteer work.



Laura Brewis

What first sparked your passion for working in the community and giving back?

My family has always had a keen sense of community, and my parents made a conscious effort to remind me that the opportunities I have had are largely the result of luck. I have always felt that if you have access to certain resources or breaks it is important to use them in a way that benefits others. I hope the work I do helps make life a bit easier for people who have not had the same chances that I've been fortunate enough to have had.

Through your role on the YP&E Committee, you have helped champion support for young people. What is one project that has stuck with you?

One moment that really stood out was when the committee reviewed a funding recommendation for **Construction Youth Trust**. When I worked as a child protection social worker for Southwark Council, I regularly referred young people there. I remember some went on to complete a full course through the charity and earn their CSCS cards. Seeing the charity being awarded funding under our Transitions from Secondary Education programme, felt like a full-circle moment as I've seen first-hand the difference they make.

“Seeing the charity being awarded funding under our Transitions from Secondary Education programme, felt like a full-circle moment as I’ve seen first-hand the difference they make.”

As a social worker (Young Lives vs Cancer), you bring a unique lens to the table. How has your day job influenced how you approach decisions on the committee?

I’m always thinking about whether we are effectively supporting the most disadvantaged people, and how we can best create meaningful change. I’ve seen a huge effort at the Mercers’ Company to think more deeply about diversity and inclusion, and how that translates into the way we allocate funding.

I am also really interested in how charities measure impact. Not all charities have easily quantifiable outcomes, but their impact is no less significant. I love reading impact reports and seeing how funding has genuinely improved lives. Beneficiary voice is so important.

I see this in my work with **Young Lives vs Cancer**, where we provide social work support in primary treatment centres for childhood cancer. Sometimes we are the one consistent point of contact a family has from the moment of diagnosis, through treatment, and even up to 18 months after a child has died. That continuity can be hugely meaningful for families, particularly during grief. And while that kind of support is difficult to measure, its impact is very real.



Outside of work, you give your time to causes like Rainbow Lunch Club. What does volunteering look like for you?

Rainbow Lunch Club offers a monthly lunch for LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers. For many, it might be the only time they have access to a proper, home cooked meal. But more than that, it is a safe, welcoming space where people can truly be themselves. Volunteers help cook, serve and chat with attendees, creating a real sense of community.

Another organisation that I support that does amazing work is **Together with Migrant Children**, who provide legal advice and support to families navigating complex immigration challenges. Their work is vital and is often under-recognised.

“I’m always thinking about whether we are effectively supporting the most disadvantaged people.”

What does being a Mercer mean to you personally?

Being a Mercer gives me the ability to support the causes I care deeply about much more effectively than I could on my own. Individually, my resources are quite limited, but being part of the Mercers’ Company gives me the opportunity through Members’ Philanthropy’s match funding for volunteered time to direct funding toward charities that are doing meaningful, often life-changing work.

If a member is considering taking on a volunteering role, what advice would you give to them?

Just go for it. I think especially for younger members, it is easy to feel that familiar imposter syndrome, wondering whether you have anything meaningful to contribute, but the executive team at the Mercers are brilliant at making you feel welcome and supported.



Lucy Vermont

As a geriatric and palliative care registrar, what’s one thing you’ve learned about how environment impacts older people’s wellbeing?

We know that being active, spending time outside and feeling connected to a community are all beneficial to older people’s health. Visiting some of the charities the Mercers’ Company supports has shown me first-hand just how powerful this can be.

At **Sydenham Garden**, a community space, older people are supported not just with activities, but with practicalities that make participation possible, for example, a volunteer-run taxi service. It removes the stress of organising transport, especially for those who struggle with executive functioning.

It’s not just about opportunities; it’s about removing barriers. Support with planning builds confidence and enables people to feel safe and stay active in their community.

How does that knowledge shape your work on the OP&H Committee?

It’s made me passionate about supporting charities that give people agency over the services they use. Empowering people is a fantastic way to get them to engage and to build confidence. No one knows what they need like the service users themselves, and sometimes that can get forgotten!

My clinical experience, alongside volunteering at **Sydenham Garden**, has shown me that listening to people, understanding their lived experience, and giving them a voice in decision-making is how services become truly impactful.

What’s a standout moment from your time with the OP&H Committee.

Meeting a real-life Pearly Queen at an almshouse visit to Trinity Hospital, Greenwich – I was completely star struck! What stuck with me was how passionate she and other residents were about giving back. It’s been a real privilege to hear so many inspiring life stories.

What motivates you to give back?

I’ve had a few opportunities to get involved in charities, and it’s amazing that you always seem to get more out than you put in. London can be quite an isolating place, and this was a wonderful way to feel part of my community.

It’s often seen as altruistic, but honestly, I get so much joy from it. Many of the service users are there for the same reasons I am – to feel more connected and to improve their wellbeing. I think there’s something beautiful about that shared purpose.

“Empowering people is a fantastic way to get them to engage and to build confidence.”

What does being a Mercer mean to you?

I think my perception of the Mercers’ Company has evolved as I have become more involved. I used to think it was about offering my own expertise to support the charity’s work. I now realise that it’s also a fantastic opportunity to be an apprentice in everything charity. I’ve learned so much about how charity funding and community organisations work.

Advice for a Member thinking about joining a committee?

I would say go ahead and do it. You learn so much and meet some fantastic people along the way. The time commitment is very manageable, especially with the option to join meetings online.



Will Hodson

You co-founded Look After My Bills to help people get fairer energy deals, how did that experience shape your passion for driving change?

As my fellow entrepreneurs in the Company will know, it takes drive and dedication to grow a business. It helps if you believe in your startup’s mission! Building Look After My Bills to over 600,000 users gave me a confidence that you can be true to your principles and make a difference at scale.

“As a philanthropic organisation with a significant position in property, it’s vital we play our part on climate change.”

You have been a visible advocate for consumers. How does the ‘fighting the good fight’ mindset carry into your role as a Mercer?

With the Mercers, you have an opportunity to serve a Company whose philanthropy is its very raison d’etre. That’s a privilege. But it’s not enough to fight the good fight: you must be able to demonstrate to others why what you are doing is right – even as a Mercer. Working as a consumer champion across the media has helped me make that contribution.

What drew you to the Members’ Philanthropy Committee in particular?

What I love about the Members’ Philanthropy Committee is the sheer number and diversity of organisations we manage to help. It’s also a wake-up call because these organisations often tackle problems that go under the radar of mainstream culture. Coming to understand those problems – whether it’s re-offending rates of newly released prisoners or the suffering of families dealing with illness – is sometimes harrowing. Meeting the organisations trying to help, however, is inspiring.

You also sit on the Environmental Working Group and Communications Advisory Group, how do you see those supporting our purpose?

A primary focus of the Environmental Working Group is the impact of our various properties. Worldwide, about 40% of carbon emissions come from buildings. So as a philanthropic organisation with a significant position in property, it’s vital we play our part on climate change. Happily, there are many areas where investing in our property portfolio can also help our long-term financial position.

The Communications Advisory Group is also hugely important. Any organisation must be able to tell its story to its stakeholders. For us, that includes our Members, our grantees and partners that help deliver our philanthropic work.

What does being a Mercer mean to you?

Being a Mercer is an opportunity to work alongside interesting people with diverse skills on issues that really matter. It means putting your shoulder to the grindstone with the weight of history behind you. It means finding your inner philanthropist and giving back, as so many have before.

What advice would you give Members thinking about a volunteering role at the Mercers’ Company?

First of all, shrug off any sense of impostor syndrome. Second, roll up your sleeves and be ready to learn.

This means speaking to your peers about the Company at Fellowship events. It means seeking out the Chairs of various committees, and drawing on the wisdom of their senior members. In short, engage with the Company’s work and don’t be bashful about wanting to build up your understanding of it.

Members' Philanthropy

Our Members' Philanthropy programme aims to build a culture of giving, advocating and supporting Members and the executive in their own philanthropic endeavours.

Funding helps a wide range of charities, particularly smaller, grassroots organisations in the UK and overseas where a comparatively small grant can make a big difference with a focus on improving people's lives.

Members and the executive can apply for matched funding from the Mercers' Company for their volunteered time, fundraising efforts and/or personal donations, as well as apply for grants for an unlimited number of charitable organisations.

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 executive team



Trevi Women, page 74

2024 highlights

Members and the executive continued to be involved with a wide range of charitable organisations that aim to improve people’s lives. 2024 saw an increase in the number of grants and donations to organisations supporting young people and organisations supporting older people. There was also a significant increase on the amount awarded for Volunteered Time (53%) and Personal Donations (31%) comparative to previous years.

From 1 January to 31 December 2024, we are pleased to have distributed:

£429,998

total of matched funding and grants awarded

184

donations and grants

155

organisations supported

85

Members and the executive participating

Donations and Grants awarded

£195,000	Young People
£80,000	Medical & Disability
£53,000	Communities
£21,000	Older People
£21,000	Families
£17,000	Heritage & Arts
£5,000	Aid, Relief, Emergency & Disaster
£2,000	Homelessness
£36,000	Other

Of the 85 Members, executive and residents who volunteered, donated or nominated an organisation for a grant – 14 were Members of Court, 33 were Liverymen, 21 were Freemen and 17 were the executive and almshouse resident groups.

Funding charities in the UK and overseas

£104,000	London
£77,000	South East of England
£76,000	UK wide
£64,000	Overseas
£46,000	South West of England
£28,000	East of England
£25,000	Scotland
£10,000	West Midlands
£700	North East of England
£800	Yorkshire and the Humber



Fundraising & Donations

£99,536

awarded by the Company to 114 organisations match funding Member and executive team donations

£29,130

awarded by the Company to 19 organisations match funding Member and executive team fundraising

Whittington Walk

To mark the 600th anniversary of great Mercer philanthropist Richard Whittington’s death, the ‘Whittington Walk’ took place in summer 2024.

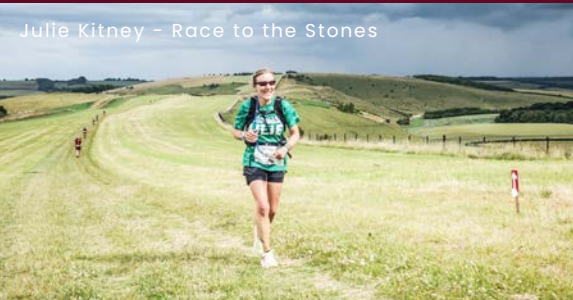
The 170-mile walk began at Whittington’s birthplace, Pauntley Court, Gloucestershire and ended at Mercers’ Hall. The nine-day walk was filled with fun, laughter and camaraderie, as over 30 Members, executive team, family, and friends took part or offered their support.

Tom Sheldon (Member) and Johnny Halliday (Beadle), raised funds for Bertie’s Helpers and Freddie Farmer Foundation, respectively.



Residents baking

In October 2024, the residents of Priory House hosted a coffee morning with a fantastic spread of delicious homemade cakes to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support.



100 km Race to the Stones

Julie Kitney (Reception and security) raised funds for Macmillan Cancer Support by taking part in the non-stop 100 km Race to the Stones challenge. She completed the distance in 11 hours and 32 minutes and came 63rd out of 3,000 participants.

Trevi Women

Gemma Prichard (Member) donated to an award-winning women’s charity for those in recovery in the South-west of England. The charity provides safe and nurturing spaces for women and their children to heal, grow and thrive.

“I have supported Trevi Women for the past few years, impressed with the services they offer women in early recovery and their children. Families affected by alcoholism and addiction is a matter close to my heart and I was grateful for the opportunity to support their work.”

Gemma Prichard, The Mercers Company, Member



Volunteering

£36,000

awarded to 15 organisations matching time volunteered by Members and the executive team

Dorcan Church, Swindon

Nathalie Marshall (Member) undertakes a number of roles in her church volunteering, including Senior Church Steward and Chair of the Church, running community gatherings and services.

Woking & Sam Beare Hospice

Sue Richards (Member) regularly volunteers at the Hospice's Furniture Upcycling project. Volunteers help upcycle donated furniture to raise funds for the hospice while also preventing unwanted furniture from going into landfill.



Woking & Sam Beare Hospice



Hedger's Almshouses

Hedger's Almshouses

Susan Martineau (Member) volunteers as the Almshouse Clerk for Hedger's Almshouses, Guildford, which provides accommodation for single older women of modest means. She manages administrative matters, including answering enquiries, paying bills, assisting with the preparation of the annual accounts and reviewing policies and the Residents' handbook.



Grants

£265,331

total of grants awarded

36

organisations received grants

Operation Reach

Young people from lower socio-economic groups remain consistently under-represented in top universities and professions. **Operation Reach** provides transformative adventures and mentoring for young people who might not otherwise have access to such opportunities, to build life skills and help them reach their potential.

As part of the programme, 'Reachers' undertake interviews, fundraising exercises and Outward Bound days to develop their resilience and communication skills. They develop essential team-working skills and cultural capital through a 7-14 day off-grid expedition (Himalayas) and volunteering for an educational NGO. Finally, the Reachers receive 18 months of mentoring and guidance from professionals which equips them with skills and ambition for university and their future careers.

75%

of inaugural beneficiaries now attend Russell Group universities

"I honestly believe that the trip we went on to India gave me the confidence to apply for Oxford. I never would have had the confidence without that remarkable and incredibly challenging experience."

Leila, Inaugural Reacher, now studying History & Politics at the University of Oxford



Operation Reach

Grants awarded

£10,000 2024

£5,000 2022

Sponsor - Tom Clementi (Member)

The Hope Foundation

Hope Foundation for Street Children provides essential services to street-connected children and underserved communities in Kolkata, India. Lavinia who lived in Kolkata for 16 years, supports the charity with a monthly donation and helped secure a grant for a project focused on rehabilitating and integrating children with special needs living on the streets or in slums.

Grant awarded

£10,000 2024

Sponsor – Lavinia Higginson (Member)



LIFT@Muirhouse
Millennium Centre

Based in the top ten most deprived areas in Scotland, the Centre provides a valuable space for low-income families to come together and access support and resources. The grant helped increase the opening hours of the food sharing shelf for those in need.

Grant awarded

£7,280 2024

Sponsor – Mary Begbie (Member)



Landworks

A specialist rehabilitation and resettlement charity in Totnes that provides supported route back into employment and community for people leaving prison and serving community sentences. The grant enabled Landworks to expand its provision of arts and craft classes, complementing its main training work and mentoring to trainees.

Grant awarded

£10,000 2024

Sponsor – Michael Dudgeon (Member)



Organisations recently supported through Members' Philanthropy include:



We thank our Members and executive team 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

Supporting charitable causes chosen by our Members

Charter 600 Charity (C600) welcomes participation and donations from Members, reflecting our shared values and deep commitment to giving back. The Members’ charity awards significant grants to grassroots organisations, where funding can make a significant difference.



Blenheim Palace Triathlon

C600 fundraising

On 7 July, 2025, 66 Members and executive took part in the Blenheim Palace Triathlon raising £2,000 for C600.

Charter 600 Awards 2025

The Charter 600 Awards 2025 are now underway, with £60,000 in funding to be awarded to two UK charities making a transformational impact.

This year's theme is **offenders and the rehabilitation of ex-offenders**, with two grants of £30,000 each available.

Grant recipients will be announced in Autumn 2025.

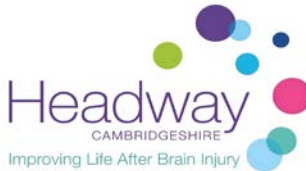
Charter 600 Awards

2025 AWARDS
CHARITY
NOMINATIONS
OPEN

NOMINATE BY 8 AUGUST

C600 charities supported

Since 2019, 16 charities have been supported through C600 with £303,367 awarded.



Heritage

Our Heritage Department manages our collections and illuminates the Mercers' Company's history.

Our mission is to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of our shared history, facilitate scholarly research and inspire creative engagement with the collections. Through careful curation and preservation, we ensure the long-term accessibility of records and objects for future generations.

Acquisitions & gifts

Oak Tree, Richmond Park (1991)

Laurence Wood received the Mercers' Award in 1986 allowing him to continue working in the Royal College of Art studios. Since then, his work has made its way into several publications and collections, such as the National Trust Foundation for Art and HM King Charles III.

The Oak Tree was completed in situ in Richmond Park, capturing the atmosphere and essence of the old enduring tree at the end of the Summer 1991. Laurence Wood gifted this watercolour to the Mercers' Company in gratitude for the Company's support of his early career as an artist.



The Oak Tree - by Laurence Wood



Laurence Wood and his family

The support from The Mercers' Company directly kick-started my career and helped sustain my international work in the creative arts and higher education for the past four decades. Thank you!"

Laurence Wood

Portrait of Sir Thomas Kitson

Sir Thomas Kitson (Kytson), a member of The Merchant Adventurers, became a freeman of the Mercers' Company in 1507 and served as Master in 1534-35. He was Sheriff of London in 1533-34 and was knighted at Anne Boleyn's coronation in 1533.

The Company acquired his portrait at auction, listed as '18th-19th century'. On acquisition, the Heritage Department noted features, such as wood panels, suggesting an earlier origin.

Conservator Polly Saltmarsh and dendrochronologist Ian Tyers confirmed the wood panel is 16th century, made from eastern Baltic boards.

Conservation revealed gold leaf and paint techniques typical of the 16th and early 17th century, as well as age-consistent craquelure. A discoloured varnish had dulled details, particularly in dark areas. On expert advice, the Heritage and Arts Committee approved varnish removal and minor retouching.



© Saltmarsh Paintings Conservation

A comparative image from the conservator shows the dramatic improvement after varnish removal on the left hand side. A conservation-grade varnish will be applied to re-saturate the paint layers.

Partnerships & collaborations



Uncovered artefacts - ©Louis Sinclair

Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA)

MOLA loaned the Company artefacts that were uncovered during the excavation necessitated by the development of the new Heritage Building.

The items were displayed in the new Education Centre and dated back as far as the earliest Roman occupation of the site at Frederick's Place. The items offered a glimpse into history at a key location for the Company but also within London, across time.

The artefacts have now been returned to MOLA so that curators can carry out post-excavation analysis, which will allow them to learn more about these objects and to explore their context within London's cultural past.

The Courtauld Institute of Art

Our Heritage Department engaged with the **Courtauld Institute of Art** to establish a long-term relationship, recognising the Statue of the Dead Christ in the Mercers' Chapel as one of the key objects studied on its MA programme. This collaboration enables students to access the Statue of the Dead Christ for academic study and to utilise the educational facilities in the new Heritage Building.

Teaching in front of the actual artwork or object brings several important benefits that go beyond what images in books or online can offer. It allows students to experience their physical presence and expands their contextual understanding, as well as developing sharper observational and analytical skills.

“Placing the object at the centre of the teaching helped to ensure that ideas around research goals and thoughts were easier to develop.”

MA Student

The Statue of the Dead Christ



In memoriam

Jane Ruddell

17 October 1958 – 24 April 2025

Our Company Historian, Jane, played a vital role in preserving and interpreting the Mercers' Company's history and heritage. With a distinguished career spanning major cultural institutions, including the Tate, National Theatre, and National Gallery, she brought deep knowledge, insight and warmth to all she did. Her love of history, cultural heritage, travel and much loved sense of humour shaped her 17-year tenure with us. Jane died in April after a long illness, and in July, Members, colleagues and friends gathered at Mercers' Hall to honour her life and legacy. She leaves behind a lasting contribution to the story of our Company.

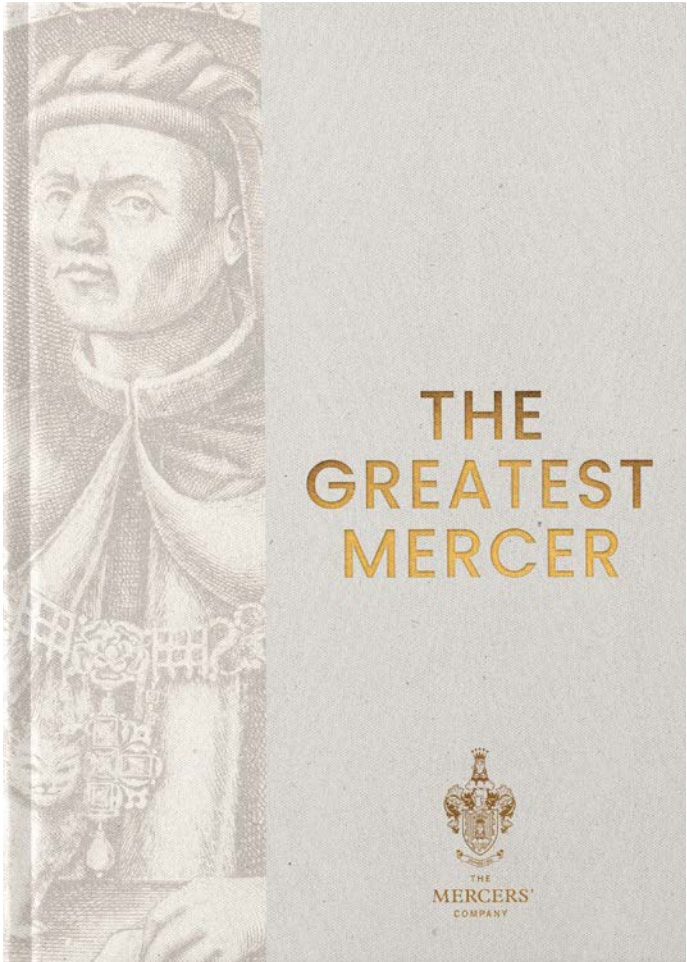


Jane Ruddell

The Greatest Mercer

Who was the greatest Mercer in history in the eyes of Members of the Company? Following research conducted by our late historian, Jane Ruddell, Members championed and voted for the Mercer they believed most deserved this honoured title.

Richard Whittington was ultimately named the Greatest Mercer, and *The Greatest Mercer*, a book written by Jane before her passing, will be published this Autumn. The book celebrates the exceptional qualities, achievements, and expertise of each of the 20 greatest Mercers, including Sir Thomas Gresham, Lord Baden-Powell, Sir Thomas More, William Caxton, John Dee, Inigo Jones and William Dauntsey.



Stewardship

We manage, develop, and maintain a strong property investment portfolio.

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

Revenues from our Covent Garden and City property portfolio, are reinvested in the estate, support the Company’s operations and, importantly, help deliver our purpose-led philanthropic work.

“I am delighted to join the Mercers’ Company at this exciting juncture, with significant potential in our Covent Garden estate and strong leasing performance in the City. We remain focused on maximising the income and future value potential of our property portfolio to maintain long-term sustainability and resilience to deliver on our philanthropic work.”



Richard Angliss,
The Mercers’ Company,
Property Director



The Yards - Mercer Street

Covent Garden

The Yards

Shopping, dining and wellness destination in the heart of Covent Garden

The Yards, an unmissable visitor destination comprises St Martin's Courtyard, Mercer Walk and Old Brewer's Yard. There is a unique selection of experiences throughout interconnected courtyards complemented by regular exclusive pop-ups and events.

In 2024, the Mercers' Company exercised an opportunity to acquire the remaining 50% of Longmartin Properties Ltd, from our Joint Venture (JV) partner, Shaftesbury Capital. The Longmartin JV had focused on the development of St Martin's Courtyard and Slingsby Place as a restaurant-led and shopping destination – now home to Dishoom, Bills, Brother Marcus, Abercrombie & Fitch and Lululemon.

The transaction secures full ownership of St Martin's Courtyard giving us greater critical mass, potential to expand our placemaking activities and optionality over the future of the Covent Garden Estate.



The Yards - Langley Street



The Yards - Long Acre

Key lettings & refurbishments

We continue to secure key lettings with recognised brands as our Covent Garden portfolio continues to take shape and we build a vibrant neighbourhood for office workers, residents, UK and international visitors. There is encouraging demand for both retail and office premises with potential for future rental growth. The following key lettings were completed during 2024-2025:



The team behind celebrated London cocktail bars, Bar Swift and Nightjar has relaunched its Oriole concept as an all-singing, all-dancing basement bar restaurant in The Yards, St Martin's Courtyard. The 3,900 sq. ft. Jazz bar and cocktail lounge opened in the summer of 2024.



Oriole

BROTHER MARCUS

Eastern Mediterranean restaurant, **Brother Marcus** opened a new 4,000 sq. ft two level venue at 23 Slingsby Place which includes two terraces overlooking The Yards' St Martin's Courtyard and features a bar on each floor together with an open kitchen. Complementing The Yards' day-to-night offer, the menu begins with breakfast, before moving into all-day mezze.



Brother Marcus

7-13 Mercer Street - refurbishment

The refurbishment of 7-13 Mercer Street will provide 5,000 sq. ft of self-contained modern office space. With excellent ceiling heights and dual aspect overlooking St Martin's Courtyard and the Guinness taproom, the space is expected to be completed for rental in Autumn 2025.



7-13 Mercer Street



Abercrombie & Fitch

Global fashion retailer, Abercrombie and Fitch opened its 8,500 sq. ft Covent Garden store on Long Acre in January 2025. The store will serve as a flagship-style retail hub designed to integrate digital and in-person shopping. Features include omnichannel shopping capabilities, enabling customers to seamlessly switch between online and in-store purchasing.



GUINNESS

The new destination micro-brewery and culture hub has entered the final stages of fit-out which will transform Old Brewer's Yard, offering a unique range of experiences in the heart of the estate. The brewery, restaurant and bar are set to open at the end of the year.



Guinness at Old Brewer's Yard



The City

Historic property regeneration for modern business

The core of our directly managed City portfolio spans the block bounded by Ironmonger Lane, Old Jewry and Cheapside. The main developments in 2024-2025 have been focused in Frederick's Place, providing well-specified office accommodation to secure new lettings on both traditional leases and to serviced office providers.

The Whittington Building

The Whittington Building, a Grade A, 31,800 sq.ft office named after great Mercer philanthropist Richard Whittington, was completed early 2024. A new lease has been entered into with leading international law firm Davis Polk. Designed by Stanton Williams, the sustainable five-storey scheme features private terraces and best-in-class environmental performance.



The Whittington Building, Frederick's Place

“We are energised about the continued growth and development of our practice in London and are thrilled to be able to welcome our Davis Polk community and clients to this fantastic space.

“It is important that our office spaces reflect Davis Polk’s commitment to excellence; with its strategic location in the heart of the city, cutting-edge design, and extensive amenities, The Whittington Building is the perfect new home to grow our team and continue to provide best-in-class service to our clients.”

Neil Barr,
Chair and Managing Partner, Davis Polk

Wild Tavern

A high-class restaurant with an open kitchen and bar concept is set to open in Autumn 2025 at 1 Frederick's Place, following the completion of current fit-out works.



Wild Tavern

Boutique Workplace

The flexible office provider signed a new lease for the 18,000 sq.ft Grade II listed property at 1-3 Frederick's Place, now redeveloped to include a new brick façade and premium workspace across seven floors, complete with a rooftop terrace.



Boutique Workplace

7-8 Frederick's Place

This building is now fully let, following the fourth floor securing a five-year lease to **Class NK**, an organisation committed to maritime safety and environmental protection.



7-8 Frederick's Place

Environmental Action Plan

We launched our inaugural Environmental Action Plan in June 2024, outlining our commitment to a 43% reduction in CO2e emissions across our property portfolio and operational footprint by 2030.



Reduction in absolute energy consumption through operational efficiencies – concentrating initially on Scope 1 & 2 targets



Electrification of the property portfolio



BREEAM building standards Excellent or Outstanding



Biodiversity, conversation and integrated approaches to land-use planning.

Carbon Baseline Assessment

A carbon baseline assessment across Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions was undertaken for the 2023 calendar year encompassing the Company's operations, the Estate, and our Almshouses. This workstream builds upon the initial carbon emissions review conducted in 2019 and reflects a continued commitment to increasing the accuracy and reliability of carbon emissions data, with a particular emphasis on energy-related emissions across the property portfolio.

To further enhance data quality, strengthen reporting capabilities and target future reductions we have initiated the implementation of an ESG data software platform. This initiative is expected to significantly improve the management and analysis of environmental metrics throughout the estate over the coming years to support the ongoing review of performance as we work towards reducing emissions across the property portfolio.

As part of our commitment to sustainability, we have embedded environmental enhancements into the design of our refurbishment projects, including, for example, the current works at 20-22 Shelton Street. Planned improvements include the installation of energy-efficient LED lighting, upgraded mechanical ventilation systems, and enhanced external wall insulation. The project has been specified to achieve a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating and is targeting an EPC rating of 'B'.



The 2025 Environmental Action Plan will be published in the Autumn. Read our inaugural Environmental Action Plan [here](#).



Scan to view our environmental action plan.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank our Members, executive team, 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.

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