



Leathersellers' Review

2021 / 2022

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
1926 – 2022

The Leathersellers' Company
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Leathersellers' Review
————— 2021/2022 —————

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Master's Welcome



It is a great honour to be Master of this Company, and my year has been extremely enjoyable. We have ancient roots, but what we do now is relevant and worthwhile. It has been heartening to learn on my visits to other liveries that many of them are also focused on education, charity, and supporting their respective trades and industries.

But we would not be able to achieve what we do without so many people contributing their time and effort. I am very grateful to the over 60 members who serve on the Court, on the various committees, as governors and as trustees, and the many others who offer support, such as volunteering to be mentors. In addition, Matthew Lawrence, our CEO and Clerk, heads an executive team that provides considerable support, advice, and care.

Our visits to Colfe's and the Leathersellers' Federation of Schools showed that we are very fortunate to have Richard Russell as Headmaster of Colfe's and Paula Ledger as Executive Headteacher of the Federation. They and their colleagues are producing excellent results.

On the charitable side of our work, our in-year giving focuses on grants to charities that deal with Adverse Childhood Experiences, although in response to the crisis we also donated funds to World Central Kitchen, which is providing meals to thousands of Ukrainian refugees. As part of

the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, the Foundation awarded £210,000 worth of additional grants to charities with excellent post-Covid 19 projects and during the year the generosity of members and staff enabled further donations amounting to £85,000 to four remarkable charities.

We continue to support the leather industry. There is a narrative that leather is unsustainable, but on our visit to the Scottish Leather Group in Glasgow we learned that they aim to be carbon neutral by 2025 and have a thermal energy plant that uses waste to power their operations. Also, during our visit to De Montfort University we saw how sustainability was a core theme of the students' end-of-year fashion show.

Last, can I offer warm congratulations to Clare Lennon, my successor, and the first woman Master in our history. Not a moment too soon. I am sure Clare will have just as enjoyable a time as me, supported as ever by our members and staff.

Gavin Bacon

Clerk's Introduction



My first whole livery year at the Company has been one bookended by significant challenges facing our society, Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. It has also seen us celebrate the life, and mourn the loss, of a remarkable monarch, who embodied the better side of our country and institutions.

The year, with Gavin Bacon as Master, the Court and Committees advanced the Leathersellers' commitment to supporting and enabling individuals and communities. Across the grant awarding Committees of what is now the Leathersellers' Foundation (the renamed Leathersellers' Company Charitable Fund), the strategic focus has been refined, defined and implemented.

There was much joy in being able to meet in person again after the restrictions of the pandemic, as a Company but also with our grantees and partners in the City of London and beyond. Some highlights included the Link & Learn event for our charity partners, our Social Mobility Seminar and welcoming our Student Grantees to use the Hall as a 'revision hub' during university holidays. These and many other initiatives, from events to individual member volunteering, are all part of our efforts to contribute and support our grantees beyond our financial giving. They have also created opportunities for us to share research and knowledge with other funders and actors in our areas of focus.

The Company has continued its commitment to ensuring it is a platform for opportunity by advancing its work on diversity, equity and inclusion as well as sustainability. This work has been undertaken alongside changes and additions to our systems and the ways we communicate, with the aim of enhancing engagement with our members, grantees and wider partners. Further, we have built a new Leathersellers' Alumni community that we hope will offer additional benefits such as mentoring to existing grantees, as well as enabling us to celebrate the achievements of those we have been able to support in the past.

I remain, as ever, indebted to a terrific team. I am so grateful to them all for their commitment to the life and work of the Company and Foundation.

Our collective continued effort means we can look forward to articulating and publishing a long-term strategy, informed and inspired by 600 years of enabling others and fostering opportunity.

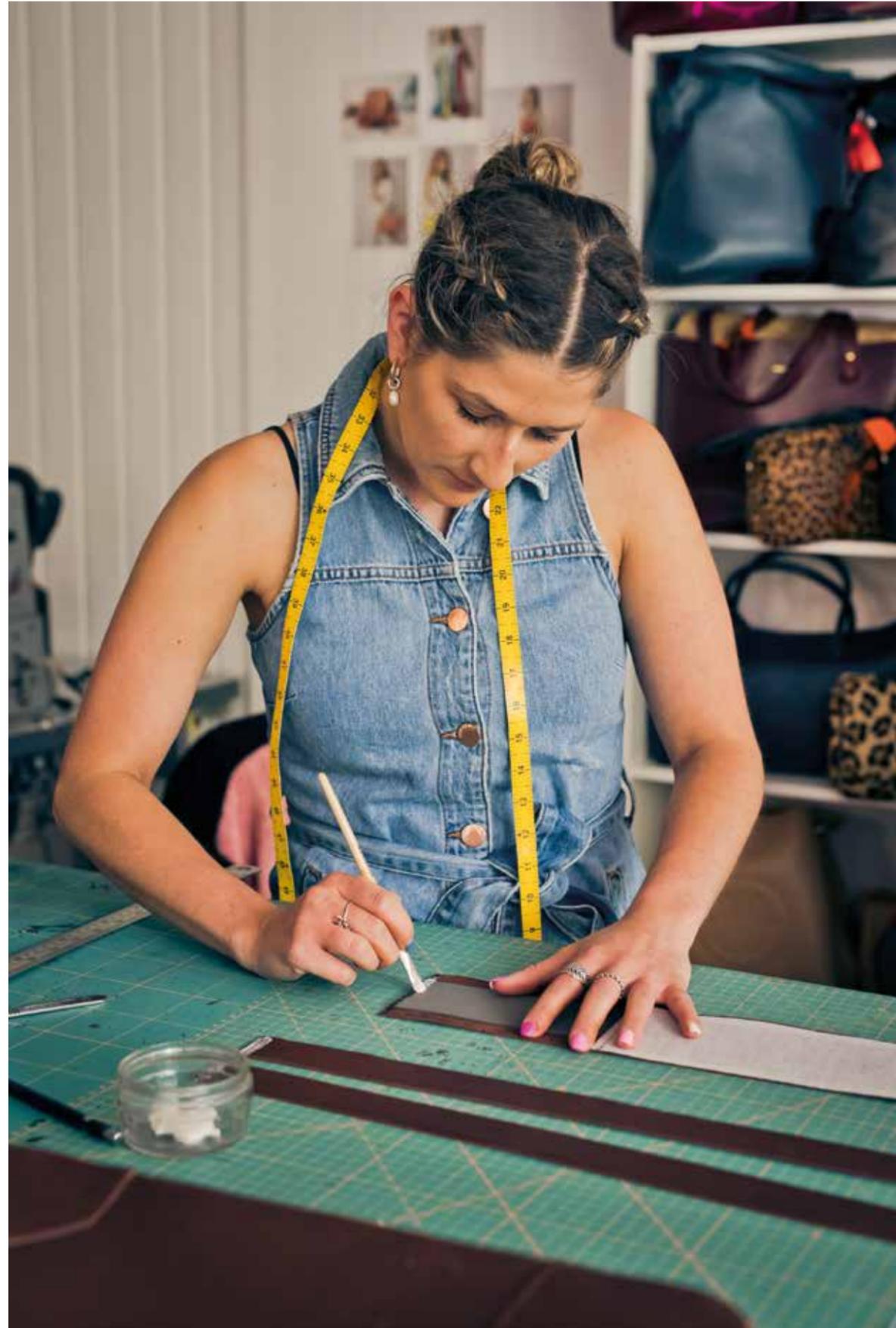
Matthew Lawrence



TANNERS OF TOMORROW

One might well understand a reluctance to enter factory industries once consigned to the shadows, but tanning has shed its old skin. The skill of the artisan and the creativity at the core of contemporary business is attracting a new generation of tanners. Photography by Paul Read

Background right: Cameron Dey, Buffing Department
Foreground: Sam Rowsell, Slocombe Staker (working
with mechanical and manual processes to soften and
stretch leather)



This page: Alice Chambers,
Accessories Design & Developer
Facing page: Charlie Toogood,
Grading and Measuring Team



Today the products of the leather industry are so ubiquitous that treatments might be assumed routine and repetitive. In many parts of the world, that's true. But leather is a natural product from diverse sources so each hide is different and its potential demands a trained eye. Modern leather production in the UK concentrates on quality and its reputation attracts a global market. Fine leather is one of the few commodities the Far East seeks from us. Yet the workforce is aging, and the survival of tanneries depends on young talent able and willing to learn.

Pittards of Yeovil in Somerset occupies an 8.3-acre site with 180 people in leather tanning, two-thirds in production and about 60–65 people in management, administration and sales. It's an old local company founded in 1826, which expanded in the 1950s–60s only to consolidate in the age of globalisation. The workshop was built in 1962–1963, its many gables covering 130,000 square feet, a monument to an era of optimism when around 700 tanneries operated in the UK.

Cameron Dey is 19 and was at college training as a plumber when the pandemic hit. He had never worked before the government's Kickstart scheme opened a door to Pittards in September 2021. He had passed by the factory countless times but never considered what happened within its walls. On his first day he found the workshop was zoned, the sound of radio music drifting out of the open doors on a warm day. Tasks were given to complex machines and expert hands, "To be honest, when I first came in, I struggled. The work ethic was something I grew into."

Pittards' CEO is Reg Hankey, he reckons that 50% of leather tanning is chemical treatment (which tends toward paints and resins rather than a currier's typical use of oils and waxes), and 50% is hand skills. All of it depends on a company strategy, and these are changing times.

The raw material for some of Pittards' leather is sheep and goat skin, much of it from East Africa, the hot-climate skins being tough with little insulative fat. Hankey contends that "the future is about being where the raw materials are found", so he has opened

four factories of a thousand staff in Ethiopia, one processing skins and three making gloves, shoes and bags, ensuring optimal efficiency for transporting the finished product.

Around 90% of Pittards' tanned and finished leather is sold from Somerset. "But we also started making products here in Yeovil", he says. This was once a town of 60 glove factories – Yeovil's football team is nicknamed 'The Glovers'. Pittards make military gloves, as well as gardening and sporting gloves and shoes, and satchels and handbags sold online.

Ben Johnson (33) is Head of Production and joined Pittards five years ago. He came to the leather industry from a career in Management Consultancy and Financial and Customer Services because "it's just more satisfying problem solving for something tangible. I gained experience at every stage of production, so I understand the process empirically [...] it's more real than pushing numbers and working in the abstract."

What Ben experienced in breadth, Cameron has plumbed in depth on the factory floor. He is

particularly skilled at smoothing the leather using belts of sandpaper.

"You have to have a sharp eye to see the damage from faulty sandpaper" explains Ben. "Cameron's much better at spotting it than I am." "And when you spot it you can put it right", Cameron adds.

Creative agency is also essential to Lily Cuthbertson (25) from Northampton, a graduate management trainee who has experienced the whole process of manufacture to prepare her for a role in the technical team. Interested in fashion, she had enrolled on the only course in Leather Technology in the UK in her hometown. But Pittards offers her a creative interface between clients and the raw materials. "If a designer wants a bright pink, I'll be mixing the colours, and creating a pattern to test what's achievable... through trials, we can respond to the enquiry." She aims to enter management retaining that creativity as "we all create our own trials."

Caitlin Hart is 19 and also from Yeovil. She took Accountancy at Yeovil College, "but the best thing is to get an apprenticeship" because "then learning

isn't in the abstract, you're in the culture of a specific business with a pattern of orders and sales. And in leather production you can understand what it is your selling. It's interesting."

Even in the Sales department, the creativity of transforming raw materials has its benefits. Harriet Teversham is 23 and a keen golfer who once sold Pittards' gloves at Yeovil Golf Club's shop. She says, "Clients tend to be long-standing; there's more repeat custom than new." A consistent character for appropriate qualities of leather is key to maintaining that customer base. But as Lily Cuthbertson found, she is often tasked with responding to enquiries about variations in materials and products, which is an engagement in the creative process.

All the young people who have entered the company reflect that they have found collaborations, a shared experience between departments. Reg Hankey admits that "we wondered what would happen when people in their fifties met with the influx. It might or might not have worked. But there's a mixture of energy and experience now that's really rewarding for everyone."



Above: Regan Slater, Tanyard
Below: Sam Rowswell, Slocombe Staker

Below: Caitlin Hart, Accountancy Apprentice





KEEP CALM AND CURRY ON

Through the art of hands-on heritage J E Sedgwick & Co are helping young people find a sense of purpose.

Photography by Paul Read

Among the associated trades of leatherwork, the purpose and value of the currier tends to be forgotten. These artisans command an array of traditional hand-worked leather treatments from which we all benefit. They receive hides from a tannery and then sort them, shave them to required substance, drum and samm/set them, then handset and dry the leather before finishing it through a process of buffing, colouring, printing and greasing. This gives the leather a high shine finish that protects it for its future use by the equestrian and leather goods manufacturing trade. Hand currying is crucial to the quality of the finest leatherwork. The problem is not just that the contribution of curriers tends to be overlooked, but that their trade has largely disappeared, their skills lost to automation.

Walsall in the West Midlands was the heart of English leatherworking. In the Middle Ages loriners (makers of small metal parts for horse apparel) used Walsall's local coal and ore to forge metalwork for the town's saddle makers. By the 19th century the town provided equestrian leather goods for the British Empire, the proceeds from which funded its Victorian urban core. Marsh Street hosted D Mason & Sons Universal Leather Works, incorporating the family's currying workshop, one of many. That firm is long gone, though the handsome red brick factory still stands. Much of Walsall's leather industry has disappeared completely. A museum of 2,000 objects remains to account for it, as if the Mary Rose had sunk here.

But there is a living legacy amongst the town's curriers and finishers. "I knew there was leatherwork happening in Walsall", says local 19-year-old Jack Rushton, who was on Universal Credit into the summer of 2021, "but I thought it was making saddles, or something. There was more involved than I thought."



Jack is one of three apprentices who have come to work at J & E Sedgwick, Walsall's last curriers and finishing factory. It's an old company, founded in 1900 and established in this building in 1956. The Clayton Leather Group, which owned Sedgwick's, faced administrators in 2018, but while their other workshops saw unsustainable losses, Sedgwick's books recorded a regular profit so the factory was saved from liquidation.

The current General Manager, Philip Bevington, has serviced that demand both before and after the UK's decision to leave the EU. The long-standing markets for the best British leather remain in Japan and India, where the best bridles are prized. Yet the workforce is ageing, and future orders may have too little labour to service them.

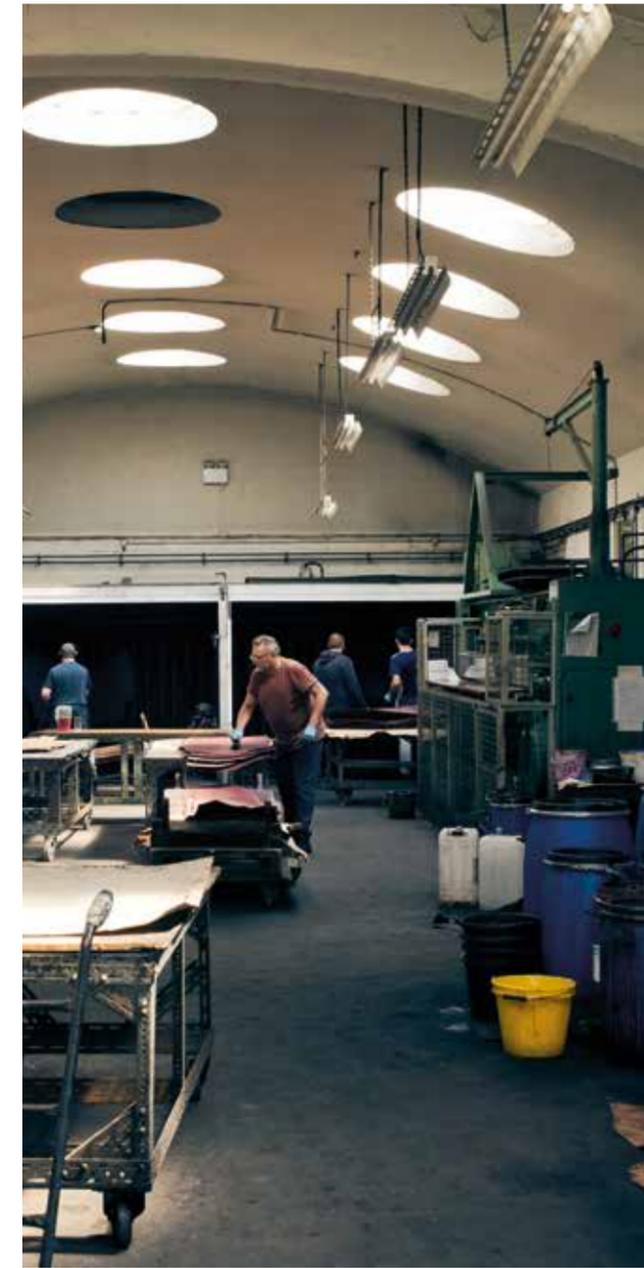
"Currying is hard work, treating a thick piece of leather the size of a desk. And they were all older guys when I arrived, in their 40s, and 50s", he explains. "We have a problem attracting young people."

He muses that school leavers are usually directed toward a college or university education, and don't expect the manual labour of factory work, hauling and pushing and stretching heavy skins. If artisanal trades are hands-on heritage, with the finesse and creativity of cooking, then prospective talent needs a pipeline of young people to learn on the job.

The Kickstart Scheme was brought in by the government to offer funding support for new jobs aimed at 16–24-year-olds at risk of remaining on Universal Credit. Philip Bevington approached Walsall Council about it. The main problem was assessing applicants' suitability to be trained for hard and detailed work, so an honest introduction was essential. Walsall College once offered courses in leatherwork, generating skilled graduates. Now, he says, "the best way to gauge whether someone will stay the course is through an interview that includes time on the factory floor."



“...But he found a particular satisfaction in the hand-brushed staining of the skins...”



The approach has succeeded. “I’d never done any work like this before”, says Kameron Tranter, 24. Kameron’s interests lay in creative arts, music mixing and sound production, but his previous jobs were temporary. For much of his youth he had moved around, between care homes and foster families in the Birmingham area and described teachers as “confidence-knocking”. But he is now settled into this job, as “it’s given me a lot of structure” and offers a variety of tasks that avoid monotonous routine. Once-strange machinery is now familiar. And he has a new way of thinking about his work. “If you make it by hand, you make it with pride. It’s always got your stamp on it.”

Lucy Burbridge is 21. She’s a natural maker with an eye for intricate detail, evidenced from her time working in stage and prop design. She recalls that “I signed up for Universal Credit, and my work coach sent the link to the Kickstart schemes. I really

“If you make it by hand, you make it with pride. It’s always got your stamp on it.”



Jack Rushton, Lucy Burbridge, Kameron Tranter

enjoy making the spray dye colours, which requires judgment and adjusting. There’s a physical aspect to it too, all day picking up, pinching, hanging, handling.”

Jack was less professionally focused: “I was open to anything, really.” His brothers worked in car parts, his mother and sister in care. He describes the cycle of currying, where 400–500 hides usually arrive at the start of a calendar month and take several weeks to process. The part Jack enjoys is ‘pebbling’, which leaves a high-shine greased finish to the surface. But he found a particular satisfaction in the hand-brushed staining of the skins. That engagement has meant Jack is 10 months in and counting.

The Kickstart scheme is now finished, but it has brought young people into the currying and finishing trade from varied walks of life. Each is making a distinctive contribution while gaining a satisfying sense of purpose. The challenge now is to build on that success and use these stories for more young people to reimagine a future based on the fundamental qualities of handmaking skills.



As part of our commitment to supporting a sustainable and flourishing leather industry, we are proud to have launched two new grant programmes in 2022, offering £5,000–£10,000 to tanneries and established artisan makers to take on apprentices and pass on essential skills to the next generation.



COLFE'S SCHOOL AND EDUCATING UKRAINE'S REFUGEE CHILDREN

Photography courtesy of Colfe's School

It's early morning and lessons have yet to begin at Colfe's, but the cafeteria is already alive with the sound of voices. Listen carefully, though, and the children at the school in south-east London are not speaking English but Ukrainian. Once a week at the special breakfast, the young refugees from the war in Ukraine put aside their daily battle with the English language and catch up with each other.

Colfe's was one of the first schools in the UK to offer an education to children escaping from the devastation of their homeland and now has 14 aged from 6 to 16.

"We all felt pretty helpless back in March and it was hard to know what to do to help", says Richard Russell, Headmaster of the independent day school whose governance was bequeathed to the Leathersellers' Company in 1658. "Very early on we were approached by a local family asking if we could offer a place to a teenage girl who had escaped from the war zone with her mother", he adds. Myroslava, 13, had escaped from the besieged city of Zaporizhzhia in south-eastern Ukraine where Russians occupied the nuclear power station.

After consulting the school governors and his staff the headmaster agreed that Myroslava should join the school, and soon there were more requests for places from local families and parents of Colfe students hosting Ukrainian children. The typical admissions tests were not appropriate in this case, he says. "They have come from a war zone; we are hardly going to sit them down for tests in maths and English", he adds. Instead, it was decided to prioritise refugee children living locally or with an existing connection to the school.

It was a risk and a step into the unknown for the school, but now, as the new academic year is about to begin, Mr Russell says it is "one of the best things we have done." It's not just the opportunity to provide a safe and secure place for the Ukrainian pupils, he says, it's also because of the level of engagement among other students. "So often massive global events can go right over their heads because they are lost in their own world, but now the school community is paying much more attention to these awful events happening on the fringes of Europe than would otherwise be the case. We are engaging and getting people out of their comfort zones", he adds.

The whole school has made the new students welcome, says Myroslava as she warmly greets the younger Ukrainian students devouring juice and croissants in the smart, modern cafeteria. "The teachers here are very kind. The way they teach is very different from at home – the student view is seen as important and I like that".

Involving the new students in extra-curricular activities not requiring a mastery of English has helped to make them feel at home. One of the boys in the junior school joined the swim club and within weeks he was swimming for the school, says Kate Bridgman, Director of Admissions.

Cricket has been a particular hit with the students. Three have joined the school's teams, including Alisa, 10, who loves games and says the sport is not played in her country, so it was exciting to learn a new one. She has got used to cars driving on the right side of the road and to British food, especially fish and chips. How



"We can't stop the dreadful events they are witnessing in their country, but we can give them the best education and support that we can."

“...For many of us it is a great relief to actually be able to do something to help. Parents say they are proud to have Ukrainian children in the school.”



does she find the lessons? “I like it because the classes are smaller. I didn’t know English when I came here but now I can understand the teacher because I’ve been given an iPad to help me,” she says.

Marian, 10, says his favourite subjects are PE and science, and he likes the teachers but thinks they could give more homework. Bohdan, 11, says he prefers the style of teaching, which is less formal than in it is in Ukraine. “When I came to England, I was sad because I left my father and my grandmother and grandfather at home. I still feel sad and miss them but now I feel happy here and safe and my English has improved a lot.”

Most of the children spoke no English when they arrived, posing a significant challenge for the school and its staff. Fortunately, a teacher in the junior school is trained in teaching English as an additional language, a recently retired language teacher from the senior school comes in to help and Maria Borshchyk, a local Ukrainian accountant hosting her sister and two nephews, also volunteers.

It has been a learning curve for the school welcoming non-English-speaking pupils for the first time, says Mr Russell. “The students themselves have helped; it’s been fascinating to see our stronger linguists using Google Translate to find the words in Ukrainian so they can communicate. You can see language being learned in a very different way to how it is taught in the classroom. There’s real incentive here because they want to communicate, which is very different from negotiating an imaginary situation in a boulangerie”, he adds.

However, learning a new curriculum in a language they do not speak is hard, especially for the older pupils, and this month (September) the school has employed a specialist teacher to work with them. The school also has a counsellor who is there to listen to and support the children who have suffered the trauma of the invasion and then displacement, leaving their fathers and other family members and friends behind.

Fees at the school are between £15,000 and nearly £19,000 a year, so how are the 14 students being funded? The school’s charity is absorbing the cost and generous donations from parents are taking care of extras, such as uniforms, meals, laptops and trips. “We have had some significant contributions”, says Mr Russell. “I shouldn’t be surprised because for many of us it is a great relief to actually be able to do something to help. Parents say they are proud to have Ukrainian children in the school”.

But though they say they are happy at the school and feel safe, it has not been easy for the students, whose lives have been turned upside down. Sophie, 16, says she is finding studying for GCSEs very hard. “This school is excellent, but it is still difficult for me in an emotional way to study a different curriculum in a language I have never spoken,” she says. An academic highflier in her own country, she planned on being a lawyer, but now fears that, though she has escaped the Russian invasion, it has left her future career plans in tatters.

The school will do everything it can to support Sophie and the others in their exams and career choices, says Mr Russell. “We can’t stop the dreadful events they are witnessing in their country, but we can give them the best education and support that we can and I’d like to see other independent schools doing more. As for our own students, it’s important they learn that global crises aren’t just things we see on the news or on social media – there are significant real-world consequences that affect young people just like them, and sometimes it is possible to make a difference.”

Colfe’s School is one of London’s oldest schools and has been closely linked with The Leathersellers’ Company since 1658, when the school’s Founder, Abraham Colfe, entrusted the school to the Company in his will. Since the school’s incorporation in 2005 the Company has served as its sole corporate member and nominates members to their Governing Board to support the continued excellence at the school.

To support social mobility, The Leathersellers’ Foundation provides fully funded Sixth Form scholarships to academically able pupils from neighbouring boroughs, who would not otherwise be able to access the opportunities offered by Colfe’s. In 2021–2022 20 students were supported by The Foundation across both years of Sixth Form. We also provide match funding to encourage charitable activities and fundraising to take place at the school each year. In 2021–2022 financial support for scholarships and match funding totalled £305,000.

BOOSTING OPPORTUNITY AT THE LEATHERSELLERS' FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS

School led and backed by research: a new social mobility project has created the dream job for Learning Mentor Cherisa Kya-Scott.

Photography by Jayne Lloyd



I've worked in education for many years and I've never seen a social mobility programme quite like this one", says Paula Ledger, Executive Headteacher at Leathersellers' Federation of Schools.

"Our scholarship project is different because it allows us to offer intensive one-to-one mentoring and support to a group of 12 students from disadvantaged backgrounds who lack motivation or have high levels of disengagement. In addition it will provide laptops, free wi-fi, residential trips, careers opportunities, extra-curricular activities and extra tuition.

"Backed by research, this project is only possible thanks to the extremely generous funding of £426,000 over four years from the Leathersellers' Company." The Company has been involved in education since the 17th century and currently supports the running of four schools in south-east London. The Leathersellers' Federation of Schools, which formed in 2008, comprises three of these and traces its history back to the founding of Prendergast School in 1890.

The scholarship project reinforces The Leathersellers' Foundation's long-standing commitment to social mobility. The Company and Foundation define this as the idea that every child or young person facing disadvantage is supported to realise their full potential, whatever pathways they choose to pursue.

Paula explains why the scholarship project is targeted at children in Year 8. "I noticed a pattern of disengagement for some students. They'd arrive at secondary school excited about the fresh start, even if they'd had a challenging time at primary school.

"They might start lacking motivation by the end of Year 7. The attainment gap would then widen as these students became more disengaged and more demotivated. I've seen several students on that trajectory. The resources you can fund and put in place don't always have the impact you're hoping for.

"I wanted to see what would happen if we invested a great deal of time, effort and resources in students, providing them with extra-curricular activities that would open their eyes to new possibilities and broaden their horizons." A key element of the project



“Seeing them light up is everything. I want to help students to work through their fears and celebrate their successes, so they understand that learning can be fun.”

is a Learning Mentor who acts as a motivational link that ties all the support together.

"When students become demotivated, it can be because they feel they've failed at a new challenge and don't believe they will ever succeed," says Paula. "In this project, a Learning Mentor will attend extra-curricular activities with children, support them when they feel demotivated, praise them when they learn something new, and – crucially – connect that learning back to the classroom.

"This might involve reminding a child that they've just done something they've never done before, and encouraging them to use that same attitude to tackle an academic challenge." The Learning Mentor also provides an important link to the students' parents, who may not be able to attend all of the activities outside school with their children.

In June 2022 the project appointed its first Learning Mentor, Cherisa Kya-Scott. "This is my dream job", says Cherisa, who has worked with children and young people in a variety of ways for 22 years. "This role allows me to use all my experience and creativity to inspire young people to achieve their goals. Seeing them light up is everything. I want to help students to work through their fears and celebrate their successes, so they understand that learning can be fun."

Cherisa will work closely with 12 Year 8 pupils at the three secondary schools in Lewisham that form the Leathersellers' Federation of Schools: Prendergast School, Prendergast Ladywell School and Prendergast Vale School. In the second year of the project Cherisa will stay with these students as they move into Year 9, and a new Learning Mentor will be recruited for the new Year 8 cohort.

The students in the programme have been carefully selected. "It was important to choose students who were lacking motivation but were still willing to engage," says Paula. Looking at the equality objectives of each school, Cherisa and the respective headteachers have focused on key underperforming groups such as Black Caribbean students. Many of these students do not attend any extra-curricular activities. "They go to school, they go home, they go

to school,” says Cherisa. “This project is going to open up a whole new world for these students and I can’t wait to be with them when that happens.”

The scholarship programme doesn’t officially start until September 2022, but it’s already causing a buzz. “The students in this project are amazing young people,” says Cherisa. “They’re all so excited about being involved. Right now, I’m getting to know their passions and their interests. One student wants to go horse riding. One wants to play basketball. Another is interested in debating classes because they want to be a lawyer. Students want to do drama, sing and dance. They all want to play an instrument; I’ve had requests for lessons in piano, drums, guitar and trumpet.”

The students’ parents are equally enthusiastic about the project. “They’re so happy, there are no words,” says Cherisa. “I’ve got tearful myself on a few of the calls. Parents are delighted that the school is helping their child. One told me, ‘My child really needs this. Their confidence is so low.’ Having a good relationship with the parents is vital. It will be amazing when the families are able to see the benefits as their child starts to engage more with learning.”

The initiative is also providing additional benefits to the schools within the Federation, as Cherisa is able to develop new connections that bring the schools closer together. The programme has been created with the support of Better Purpose, a consultancy that designs and delivers educational programmes.

“Working with Better Purpose has been brilliant” says Paula. “They’ve helped us devise a monitoring and evaluation framework so that we can measure the impact of the programme. As a result, if the programme is successful then we’ll be able to provide evidence to national organisations that this is a good way to improve young people’s life chances. So far, there’s no magic bullet to support demotivated, disadvantaged students. If we can show that this works, that has a lot of power behind it.”

Paula adds: “We’re so fortunate that the Leathersellers’ Company has supported this pilot. They’re so passionate about social mobility, fairness and equality, and they really believe in what we’re doing. In four years’ time, I hope that we’ll be able to share some truly extraordinary results.”



“Having a good relationship with the parents is vital. It will be amazing when the families are able to see the benefits as their child starts to engage more with learning.”

The Leathersellers’ Federation of Schools develops the vision of Joseph Prendergast, who founded Lewisham’s first girls’ secondary school in 1890, on a site provided by the Leathersellers’ Company. The Leathersellers’ Company and Foundation continue to provide support to the schools through nominating Foundation Governors, as well as offering regular financial support to maintain the quality of education, well-being and opportunity provided by the schools.

Grants in 2021–2022 not only supported the creation of the scholarship programme, but also enabled a broad range of additional activities to be offered to students, ranging from supporting academic achievement both for high achieving students and those in need of additional support, extra-curricular and employability focused opportunities, mental health support and specialist staff training. Annual Excellence Awards provide selected students with a leaving award in recognition of their achievements and commitment towards school life. In 2021–2022 financial support for the Federation schools totalled £179,287.

Dream Maker

IN HER SLEEP,
FRANCES PINNOCK FINDS INSPIRATION FOR HER FIGURATIVE
LEATHER SCULPTURES.

Photography by Paul Read





From her home studio in North London on one of the hottest days of an exceptionally hot summer, Frances Pinnock is contemplating over Zoom just how to explain her work: particularly her latest pieces, leather sculptures that came from her dreams. It was during lockdown, when life was “all sort of stressful and weird”, she recalls, that she began to have strange dreams, which in turn “fed into drawings and images that I recorded at the time.” She would make a quick sketch, something gestural to “act as just a mental trigger”, she explains. Her current work is now bringing to life the ideas she had experienced in sleep.

Pinnock, a recipient of the Leathersellers' Award at Cockpit Arts in 2019 and 2020, studied Modelmaking at the Arts University Bournemouth, graduating in 2014. With the help of a Leather Associated Student Grant from the Leathersellers' Foundation, she will embark on an MA this September at the Royal College of Art, and her intention while there is to realise her work – which until now often explored vessel-like forms – on a larger scale and “take it out into the room more” so she can have space to experience the sculptures.

During lockdown, she began to have strange dreams, which in turn fed into drawings and images.



Vessel pieces measuring about a metre high or more have taken around 80 hours of stitching. She can do six hours a day.



Frances had been “really interested” in extreme footwear as body modification while studying, and in her final year designed a pair of shoes based around the work of Kandinsky. It was a chance to use the workshop machinery and to play around with vegetable tanned leather while bringing in hand-stitched construction too, following an evening class in traditional hand-stitch construction. “Old school, all in your lap, there’s no machinery”, she says. And so she began to develop her craft. It’s one that requires a supreme amount of patience, careful consideration and some serious looking after of one’s hands, owing to using sole bend leather from the tannery J & FJ Baker. This is the solid, sturdy and hard leather you find on the sole of your shoe or which builds up the heel. J & FJ Baker leather is typically used in traditional bespoke shoemaking as it is of the highest quality.

Of her work, she explains: “I’ve spent quite a bit of time making vessel pieces and trying to translate the stitch constructions that we use in shoe making into making objects that are beyond a shoe.”

She’s a fan of the sculptors Dorothea Tanning and Barbara Hepworth, the latter of whose work she recalls seeing on summer holidays in Cornwall. Pinnock describes her own sculptures as being a little like “headless torsos”, which might sound a little uncomfortable, but you see what she means. “Subtly figurative” is another way she puts it. “Often related to the body.”

What she likes about leather – and specifically the type she uses – as a material is that “it’s immediately sort of ancient; it responds.” The leather she uses, taking 14 months to make, means that “you have to be really present when you work with it.” Mistakes are costly. “It’s kind of something that makes you really slow down whilst you’re working with it.” Preparation is an important part of the process.

“When I get it in, it’s rock hard. It’s like wood”, explains Frances of the leather. “And I have to soak it for 24 hours and if I leave it to dry out to about 50 per cent at that point it’s mellow so it’s malleable. You can cut it because you’ve then got a working window before it then dries out and you have to re-soak it. So it’s sort of learning what I can do within those parameters.”

She pulls a pebble-shaped, frisbee-sized piece into view, which took a couple of days’ work with four hours of stitching to create. Vessel pieces measuring about a metre high or more have taken around 80 hours of stitching. She can do six hours a day at the most, and during summer it’s harder, so she’s learning when and when not to do pieces. “The stitching is really tiring”, she says. But it’s something she loves. “Just to be able to sit and stitch the work and sort of working out the different stitch instructions that could create the forms.” She makes the holes individually and stitches each one as she goes. And what about looking after her tools, let alone her own hands? Taking breaks, stretching and ice cubes factor into it.

She is facing rather a creative conundrum currently: “There’s a lot of work in my head that I need to get out. And that’s kind of the point where it’s quite frustrating at the moment. Because my process is so slow, I know that if there’s something that comes up, it’s not going to be realised for at least two years.” She laughs. “I’m trying to be patient.”

But she also finds herself in a unique position. “I think this particular method, sole bend, hasn’t really been shown, so I’m not sure how it’s going to be received on the other side. It’s been really well received within contemporary craft exhibitions – people are very interested in the processing.” There’s an element of trusting the vision and seeing where the stitches take her next.

As well as being a former Cockpit Arts Leathersellers’ Awardee, Frances will be one of eight students The Leathersellers’ Foundation will directly support in 2022–2023 with a grant to study a leather associated course at university or college. These grants cover a range of subject areas, from using leather in fashion and design related courses to material conservation, PhD studies, and the more creative endeavours such as leather sculpture explored by Frances.



I CHOOSE FREEDOM



Portrait by Alex Board

Creating new lives for women and children escaping abuse.

Formerly known as Reigate and Banstead Women's Aid, I Choose Freedom is an independent charity providing refuge for women, families, and other high-risk individuals. A recent rebrand is a sign of the clarity with which they see their mission and purpose. Charlotte Kneer MBE is the charismatic CEO who joined the charity in 2009. She says, "Our new name references the person who comes into the refuge and chooses to do so of their own free will. It's the first step back to autonomy and independence. At the time, they may not realise that they're choosing freedom but it's the first step to building a new life."

And building a new life is as hard as it sounds. Charlotte and her team hold themselves to incredibly high standards, because they have to; their refuges only take people whose lives are at immediate risk. As Charlotte says, "The moment a woman thinks, 'I just can't do this' and goes back to the abuser, that's when we've failed." She continues: "When I started, as many as one in five women would return to the relationship after they arrived – in the last two years, only one woman has returned." She credits not just her dedicated team, but a complete focus on quality where every effort is put into making the service user feel as safe and as welcome as possible. "Imagine running a hotel for people in witness protection and you have some idea of what the challenges might be like."

Often it's the little things that make the biggest difference. "When you've been travelling for hours through the night with your young family to somewhere completely new, like refugees in your own country, and arriving to find a small vase of fresh flowers and a made bed with clean sheets – you would be so much more likely to stay and that's so important to us. We try to cover every little thing." When a family arrives, they are "wrapped in cotton wool" and looked after daily with a whole package of holistic care with bespoke therapy for different age ranges. They stay for six months with the goal of allowing them to begin their lives again with a new job and a new network, all without telling friends and family. That's the goal, at least.

A huge amount of time and effort is expended on advocacy and fighting for services they are entitled to, like housing, education, and healthcare. There is also a chance of re-traumatisation, as Charlotte explains. "The women themselves are constantly asked to retell their story to get what they need and one of the services we offer is to provide one account for them to share, so they don't have to constantly bare their souls for money or other essentials – that power dynamic is really not helpful and is something we want to change."

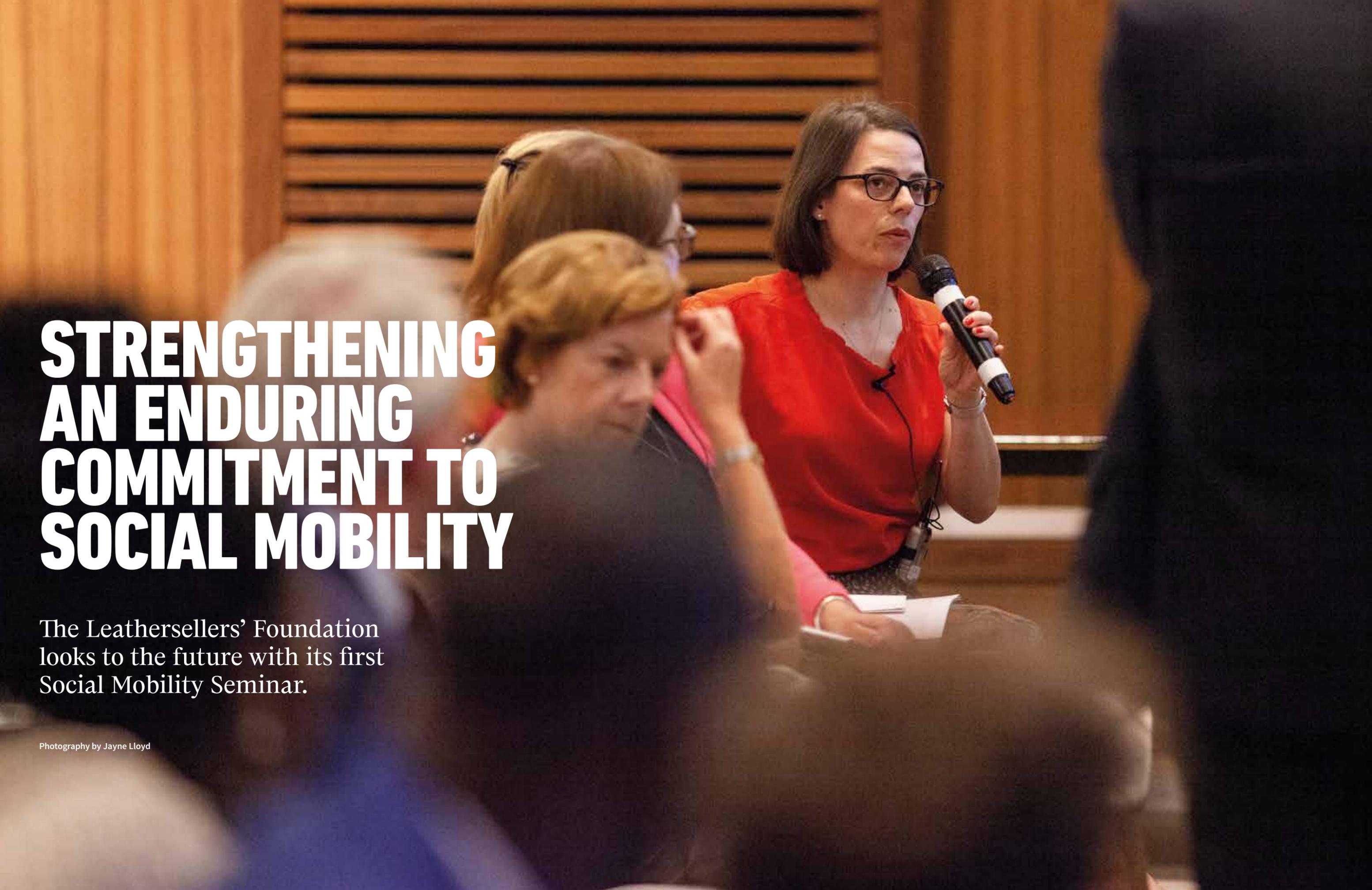
Another major challenge is managing relationships and mediating issues in the refuges. Families arrive from across the UK via the Refuge Network and share common spaces. "Sometimes it's catastrophic, other times it's absolutely amazing. When you see women from different backgrounds and cultures sharing stories and creating friendships, that's obviously a good day, but we can't expect to have issues with people who are experiencing the effects of trauma."

As well as creating a culture of details and diligence, Charlotte has led the charity through some difficult periods, particularly the Covid-19 pandemic when the number of safe places continued to decline. The Leathersellers' Foundation, which has been supporting the charity since 2018, awarded a grant to build a new refuge in a derelict building given by Surrey County Council. Amazingly, this was completed in just three weeks. The extra space means that currently there are 19 families and 40 children in their care.

But the mission is far from complete. "We're still turning away five out of six referrals", says Charlotte. "Of course, we want to provide as much accommodation as possible", she adds, but that's only one element of her strategy. The other is amplifying the charity's voice through campaigning for a change in the way society views domestic abuse and increasing education around healthy relationships – all of which will take time and a long-term vision.

Of course, this won't faze Charlotte. The passion and expertise with which she speaks about the work of the charity comes from surviving eight years of abuse from her former partner. The majority of her 22 mostly part-time members of staff are also survivors. The level of respect, care and empathy is imparted from shared trauma – it's what creates the trust needed to be invested so personally and emotionally in someone else's darkest hour. "There are no judgements here", Charlotte emphasises, but there is an irrepressible enthusiasm to bring peace and justice to broken lives.

The Leathersellers' Foundation has worked with I Choose Freedom on a multi-year and one-off grant basis since 2018, totalling £66,000. Multi-year, unrestricted funding is crucial to the sustainability and growth of incredible charities like I Choose Freedom that have lived experience at their core. Through our Main Grants Programme we provide up to four years of funding for charities and CIOs working to prevent or reduce the long-term consequences of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) which, as Charlotte outlines, are overwhelmed by demand.



STRENGTHENING AN ENDURING COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL MOBILITY

The Leathersellers' Foundation
looks to the future with its first
Social Mobility Seminar.

Photography by Jayne Lloyd

Fostering educational opportunities has been a core activity of the Leathersellers since 1602, when student grants were first awarded.

Over 400 years later, this commitment to social mobility underpins a considerable number of the organisations awarded grant funding by The Leathersellers' Foundation. This includes its role in supporting scholarships at Colfe's School and the Leathersellers' Federation of Schools in south-east London. To help better define long-term aims and understand the current complex landscape of social mobility research, the Foundation commissioned a Landscape Review from the education-focused consultancy Better Purpose.

This Review not only helped to bring about an agreed definition of social mobility – the idea that every child or young person facing disadvantage is supported to realise their full potential, whatever pathways they choose to pursue – but also provided a framework against which to consider how support can be directed more efficiently. To launch the publication of the Review, the Foundation held its first social mobility seminar, which welcomed experts, practitioners, funders and potential partners to consider the research, share insights and make connections. The keynote speaker was Professor Lee Elliot Major OBE, the UK's first Professor of Social Mobility at Exeter University.

Lee used his speech to discuss key things the audience should know about social mobility, including ingrained and intergenerational problems; policy; geography; measurements; changing class structure; upward and downward social mobility; family; education; and workplace divides. Unsurprisingly, though, the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated many of these problems by exerting pressures on the factors that negatively affect social mobility, such as family life, educational advantages, and learning deficits.

A perhaps obvious yet understated fact about social mobility is that in a world of expanding social mobility, you need someone to go down for someone else to move 'up'. For the youth of today to inhabit elite positions in society there must either be movement or a fundamental shift in the structure of society and the economy. But even to get to the level of possible displacement, the challenges are massive.

Sharing their powerful lived experience of what this means were two students who have benefited from the support of the Leathersellers' Foundation, Ralph-Lewis Ackah and Florence Ashaye, who were interviewed as part of the seminar. Florence grew up in south-west London with her mother and experienced a difficult start to her educational career. Having undiagnosed ADHD and two other learning

difficulties, she was labelled as a nuisance and not capable of concentrating. She was expelled and spent a year in a pupil referral unit, but eventually, as she says, "I beat the statistics, got my GCSEs and A Levels and got into university." As a post-grad, and after many rejections, she was accepted to study medicine.

Her grant has meant more time for her degree and for research. She is now looking into race and ADHD as a special research project, only possible with this extra time that otherwise would have been spent trying to earn money to fund her course and basic living costs. The funding also meant more headspace to focus on her mental health, which was further strained by the pressures of adjusting to university life. As Florence says, "I've had undiagnosed ADHD for so long, and got used to being told I'm the problem. Having experienced abuse, I've spent too much time worrying about things I shouldn't be worried about. Just being placed in a new environment meant adjusting was very difficult, but I had a good mentor to help me adapt to a new university and a new town."

Adapting to university life across the country can be daunting when the London landscape becomes so ingrained. Ralph was born in Lewisham, and being the son of Ivorian immigrants, he mostly spoke French at home. The support he received at the Leathersellers' Federation of Schools was invaluable. "My school was nurturing," Ralph says, "as was my home life where I was always curious – I remember asking my mum questions like 'why do I live on a council estate and why do my friends have nice houses?'" The issue of difference was marked by the election of Barack Obama. "When I was seven, I stayed up late to watch the US election and there was a black guy who just won, he had an African name, had lips like mine, he looked like me, could play basketball and I thought that's what I want to be." Ralph took up debating in secondary school in Year 7, going on to win an inter-school debating competition in Sixth Form.

Ralph laments that at university it was hard to make friends at first and it was difficult to get ahead when others had more evident social capital – indicative of how nuanced the issue of social mobility can be – particularly when individuals have life experience that needs to be considered.

Baroness Sally Morgan, a Labour peer and Master of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, was on the discussion panel following Ralph and Florence's interview. Praising their achievements, she said that the pair embodied the four key drivers of social mobility expressed in the Landscape Review: Ability, Aspiration, Awareness and Access. Basing her views on her experiences at Cambridge, Sally added:



Above: Florence Ashaye and Ralph-Lewis Ackah

Right: Keynote speaker Professor Lee Elliot Major



"Aspiration can mean being brave enough to look for potential – then the work begins." Maintaining commitment and focus to secure better outcomes for young people should be the result of this work and applying assistance via a long-term approach and evidence backed methodology. But as Lee reminded us in his keynote, noting the Bananarama principle "It ain't what you do, it's the way that you do it", research only takes us half-way and that implementation, or the "how" of it, is the other key part of the equation.

The seminar reinforced the fact that successful application of the multi-faceted options the research presents through specific interventions wouldn't be easy. Considering how best the limited funds available can be used to tackle such considerable challenges will need to be closely looked at. But through convening expertise and ideas, being open to collaboration, as well as listening to grantees and charity partners the Foundation can build on centuries of support to help enable more individuals to achieve their full potential.

An ambassador for women and diversity in engineering, Oxford PhD student and Leathersellers' Scholar Misha Patel heralds a new generation of engineers coming of age at the dawn of the climate emergency.

Turning the Tide

Engineering is about solving problems to improve lives", says Misha Patel, a PhD engineering student at St Catherine's College, Oxford and Leathersellers' Scholar. A simple premise, but one which belies the precise and almost obsessive nature of engineering; the transformation of theory to reality; the translation of the abstract into the material; and the unlocking of a greater sense of civic purpose. The mathematics may say that something is possible, but the job of the engineer asks not just whether it can be done, but what impact their actions, and the deployment of resources and technology, will have on the world.

On this relationship Misha says, "If I wasn't studying engineering, I'd probably have read philosophy and ethics." This keen interest in the ethical, the practical and the possible informs her current research. Her choice of topic was shaped by her time in education, which saw her intellectual ambition rub against the exhausting notion that science is not a career choice for women in post-secondary education. This was evident during her early school days where "girls were not encouraged to

pursue maths and science as much as boys" and "girls had to support each other if they wanted to succeed." It's not always possible to bend the universe to your will, but if something's broken, the engineer mindset gets to work and will find a way to fix it. Misha independently applied to the City of London School for Girls and was accepted.

This marked not just the beginning of her love of maths and science but also her independence, commuting to the City from her home in north-east London, spurred on by her parents, who worked in the education sector. A natural affection for the subject evolved; it didn't just appear out of nowhere in a moment of sudden self-realisation. It was, however, neatly packaged out of science and philosophy – all the more captivating when the physical is informed by the spiritual. In Raphael's (1483–1520) *School of Rome*, one of his masterwork paintings in the Vatican, Plato points up towards the heavens in reference to timeless concepts and unchanging, ultimate truths, whereas Aristotle has his right-hand palm to the ground, signalling that the only reality that matters is the one we can experience with our senses. In engineering, both can be right.

Her research project at Oxford illustrates how these driving intellectual forces have manifested in conscientious and innovative ways to solve problems. Misha's area of research is renewable energy. Put simply, she is trying to put a number on how much tidal energy we have in the UK. "At the moment", she says, "we have a wide-ranging resource assessment that needs to be updated and refined given the development of new technology and methodology. We need this data to make development decisions, i.e., where to construct underwater turbines for maximum output in the most sustainable way possible." One of the main challenges is bringing together and creating an accurate pyramid of constraints: accessibility of the site, fishing, conservation and technical limitations. Given all of these variables, there are a very limited number of economically viable sites for tidal energy, not to mention that there is no holistic assessment of all of these factors.

Of particular interest to Misha, as a workable case study, is Pentland Firth, a strait separating the Scottish mainland from the Orkney Islands, renowned for high

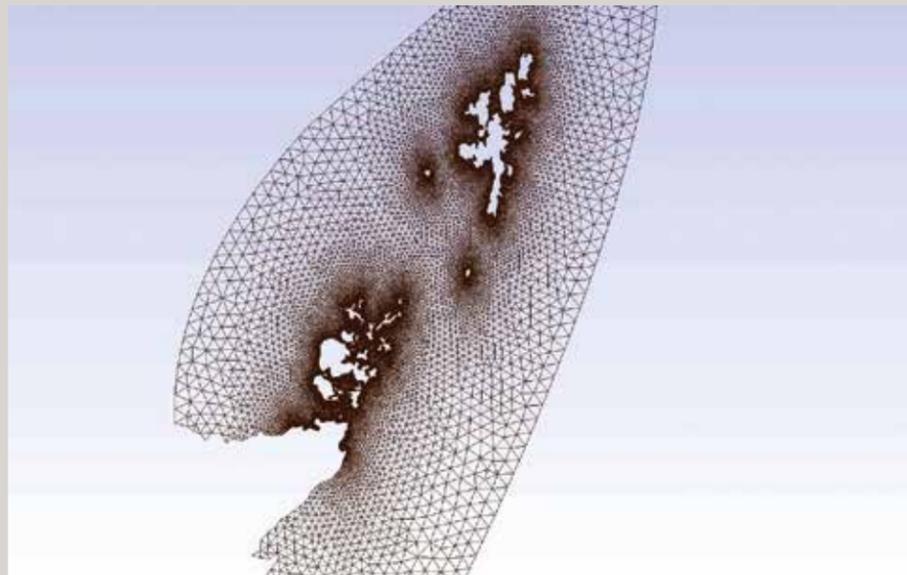
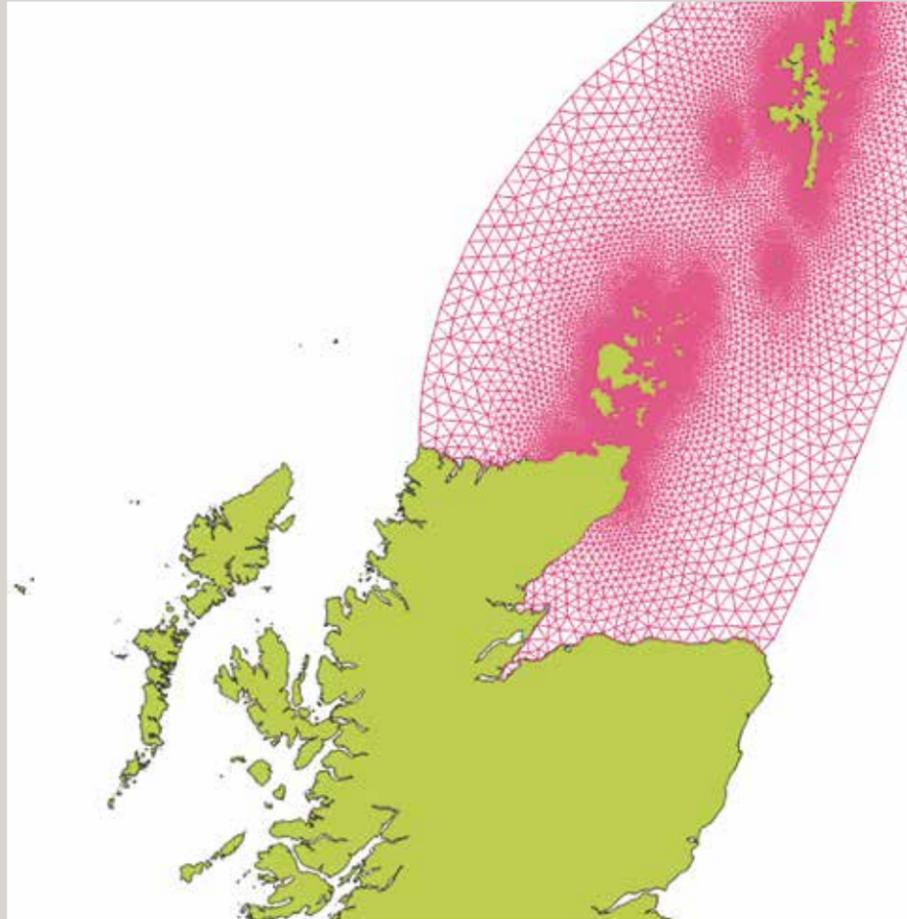


Portrait by Munirah Al Mehri

tidal speeds. “Only a general constriction is needed to have an increased tidal flow”, Misha says about the Firth. “Find a constriction in a channel or a headland and there’s potential for tidal stream power generation. The Firth is one of the best sites in the world to explore this kind of tidal development owing to its geographical features.” From this case study, a standardised model can be applied to multiple sites.

Tidal stream generates energy by placing turbines on the seabed in the best possible configuration that doesn’t end up having adverse effects on the area, such as slowing down the tidal speed; the other relies on artificial barriers across an estuary, creating flows of dammed water through a turbine. Viability is essentially a study in quantifying problems. As Misha says, “In engineering it’s your job to think of potential problems and it’s only really worth it when the benefit outweighs any potential impact.” It may sound morally grey, but numbers seek to navigate the best path around any ethical difficulties.

“We know the equations [for modelling] work; it’s just a case of building accurate models and running simulations to get assessments of the flow as the model adapts to different datasets. Simulations are needed to answer many of the viability questions, for example what happens if we add one more turbine in a certain location



Tidal simulations demonstrating areas of maximum flow and potential viability for development

with this layout at this depth?” There’s a framework to build from, but adding so many variables is as time-consuming as it is essential to the project; or as Misha puts it, “Calibrate and validate.”

Fundamental to all of this is the separation of funding from the interests of the developer and why sources of external funding are so important. This is not to say that it’s not important to work closely with industry seeking to develop or currently developing engineering solutions in the Firth, but it’s also important that her research is completely contained from potential bias. At this stage, keeping the interests of industry and academia separate will yield better results in the long term that can help benefit the sector in general.

As an example, take the fact that the seabed around the British Isles (up to 12 nautical miles – the territorial sea limit) is leased to industry from the Crown Estate. Currently there are dictated lease sites for tidal energy development, and development is limited to these predetermined sites. However, these sites are not chosen by the highest potential yield of resources. “Suggesting new areas to develop, based on resource potential, makes much more sense if we’re looking to become as sustainable as possible”, and if there’s profit to be made, it also makes sense to reinvest in similar sustainable projects.

“In engineering it’s your job to think of potential problems and it’s only really worth it when the benefit outweighs any potential impact.”

Creating a circle of positive reinforcement seems to cut across the things that matter to Misha. At Oxford she has so far taken on the role as Co-convenor of the Black, Indigenous and People of Colour in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network (BIPOC STEM) 2022–2023, as well as being Vice President of the Women in Engineering Network 2020–2021, which was relaunched and now has over 200 members across the department. Her focus in these posts continues to be recruitment, outreach and retention, helping women and BIPOC members stay and thrive in engineering, in secondary and higher education. Creating a community of people that feel included and confident is as important to her as it is for the future of the sustainable energy industry. With turbulent times still to come, the wider UK economy could do with a dose of problem-solving tenacity rooted in the spirit of the engineer.

But there’s something else of equal importance: Misha’s ethical grounding gives us hope. Whereas engineering in the 20th century was defined by domination and exploitation of nature, engineering in the 21st century will be driven by long-term co-existence.

Misha is the recipient of one of four post-graduate grants of £3,500 a year provided by the Leathersellers’ Foundation through St Catherine’s College, Oxford. These grants are combined with those offered by other funders to enable important research to take place. In recent years this long-standing partnership has focused on supporting the areas of science and mathematics, with annual support of £17,500 given to a Mathematics Fellowship.

Leathersellers' Student Grants



A Q&A with **Zakaria Ali**, former Leathersellers' Scholar at Colfe's School, current grantee of the Leathersellers' student grants programme and undergraduate at Fitzwilliam College Cambridge.

Can you tell us a little about your background, family and what growing up was like for you?

I once called myself a grandchild of India's partition, referencing how my paternal grandmother was born in India, got married in Pakistan and later identified with Bangladesh. In this context, my parents were unable to gain formal academic qualifications because their youth was often categorised by instability and change. Whilst my father worked multiple jobs to make ends meet, both my parents instilled in me a love for an education that they were denied. As I educate myself, I hope that they too feel like they are on this journey with me.

Do you feel there were certain factors that would have impacted your social mobility?

Having a Leathersellers' scholarship at Colfe's meant I received significant help in my application process for university. However, unlike most students I was unable to ask family members for advice on making applications for highly competitive institutions, so I found myself looking to YouTube and social mobility charities for support. Whilst I was extremely appreciative of receiving an offer, this opened a new wave of emotions as I began to question whether I would fit in or even whether it was all a mistake. More importantly, I wondered whether I could afford to make this move possible, especially with the pandemic and the economic turbulence that came with it.

How has the student grant from the Leathersellers' Foundation assisted with this transition?

The grant not only allowed me to purchase essential equipment, it also allowed me to have the time and freedom to pursue extracurricular activities – not to mention helping to cover the general cost of living. I am immensely grateful for this. Having completed my first year at Cambridge, I can honestly say that I have made an amazing group of friends and a plethora of incredible memories.

Are you part of any clubs or societies related to study interests?

In Easter term I joined the Cambridge University Majlis to help lead its archives team and uncover the society's ground-breaking impact on South Asian politics. Active past members of the society included Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, all of whom arguably changed the face of the region. Being able to write essays about post-colonial independence and then work for a society that was instrumental in the fight for South Asia's formal independence is surreal.

How has studying Human, Social, and Political Sciences helped answer your original motivating interests in the subject?

The subject is intersectional in nature and has allowed me to consider forms of identification that we take as given and analyse them from multiple different perspectives. Contemporary anthropological understandings of race and how it is naturalised differently within different contexts has proved to be an area of study that I continue to find fascinating. Studying HSPS has also allowed me to delve deeper into what it means to be intersectional as I consider how forms of identification such as race and class are connected, with anthropology proving to be a productive lens to consider how such relationships operate in different social contexts.

What does the future look like for you?

While I have tried to keep my career options open, the study of such topics informs my desire to work within an international setting and work towards the eradication of the barriers I have also tried to overcome. As I resume my studies I hope to carry on my access related work with the university and continue to provide application advice to those who were in a similar situation to me, only a few years ago.

Zakaria was one of 86 students supported this year through the Leathersellers' Student Grants programme in 2021–2022, forming part of our total giving for Social Mobility and Education. Individuals can be supported for up to four years with a maximum of £5,000 a year, although the average amount is around £3,500, and they can use the money for any purpose to assist with

their studies and living costs whilst at university. In recent years this support has been targeted at undergraduate students whose personal circumstances would otherwise prevent them achieving their potential at university, and whose ambitions are likely to have a positive impact on society in the future.



MAGIC EYE

Carl Fox creates puzzle-like pieces of interior art by using offcuts from luxury leather fashion brands.

Photography by Paul Read

Three years ago Carl Fox hadn't even touched a piece of leather. Today, from his studio in Deptford, it's his sideline obsession. "My little babies", he says of his geometric pieces of art: squares and rectangles of leather in pleasing jarring shades, fixed onto wooden canvases. Some are large, some are small, and some feature panels of wood with commanding grain. Titled 'Unsteady Giants', they are his first leather and marquetry series.

"You will not see a dolphin", he says, following a comment on their overall magic eye puzzle quality. The pieces draw you in. Some viewers have seen poodles, faces and "ant people" in the wood grain – which he laughs has totally ruined the meaningfulness of the artwork. But for him, "the grain is very much about emotion," and it contrasts with his passion for the solid blocks of leather.

It was when the Surrey-born maker made a gift for a friend with some leather offcuts that his new-found passion and career segue began. "I started off as a bit of a weird teenager back in a little village in Surrey and really just wanted to get out", he says. "I was quite good at education and I really wanted to work with my hands." He became a hairdresser and a colourist. It was, he says, a stable job. "You would never have any excuse to leave that job, even though I wanted to work with my hands" – namely to explore craft, he says.

Then along came the pandemic. He was furloughed. "And I had the opportunity to further myself." Cue the gift for the friend and discovery of leather. It was the first time he'd worked with it and it proved a turning point. Carl says he "devoured everything" he could get his hands on and taught himself leatherwork. He established his brand, Paulo Vulpes, meaning "little fox" in Latin, in April last year, and specialised in creating accessories to a high standard. Soon after, a bag design of his was featured by Forbes.

“My passion has always been furniture and interiors, mid-century aesthetics and that kind of classic 50s 60s gentleman’s feel – think Tom Ford’s cinematic adaptation of Christopher Isherwood’s ‘A Single Man’, for example.” He loves Brutalism and Modernism. Over the years he has learned a range of skills, spanning interior design and furniture restoration.

“I was quite aware that I wanted to do an art series that combined what I was doing with an idea of mental health as well, and when I looked at these Brutalist buildings they’re like this sturdy structure but they’re sort of blocky. And this might sound weird but if you take one away the whole thing will come tumbling down and I liken that to my own mental health”, he says, and notes that he felt it was a significant thing for many people during the pandemic. “So the blockiness was built from that idea.”

The Leathersellers’ Award at Cockpit Arts, which he applied for in October last year, has enabled him to make the leap from accessories to interiors. “That gave me the opportunity to think outside the box.” He explains that most of his work – which he is now moving to creating under his own name – is inspired by architects, especially American architects, or furniture makers, name-checking Frank Lloyd Wright.

“I never really saw myself as an artist before. I saw myself as a craftsman and the whole thing has ended up merging into one.” He found that the highly structured ideas he had in the beginning would often take a new direction along the way.

It was during lockdown – when he also undertook a psychology degree – that he really learned his trade: from YouTube videos and reading as much as he could.

“I had always worked with other materials but I think leather just seemed out of reach. You grow up with luxury leather brands and when you’re younger they’re slightly untouchable and seen as this really challenging thing, but actually once I got hold of this material I realised it is tricky but I just loved the process.”

Part of Carl’s process is to use offcuts of leather so that nothing goes to waste. It’s something that stems from his job working with the sustainable cosmetics company Aveda.

“I wanted really good quality leather and materials, but I was aware that those materials could be used in fast fashion, the over-production so I wanted to find surplus material.” All his leathers are surplus from luxury good brands. There are rolls of

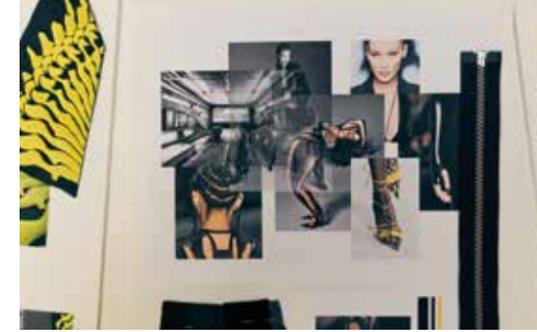
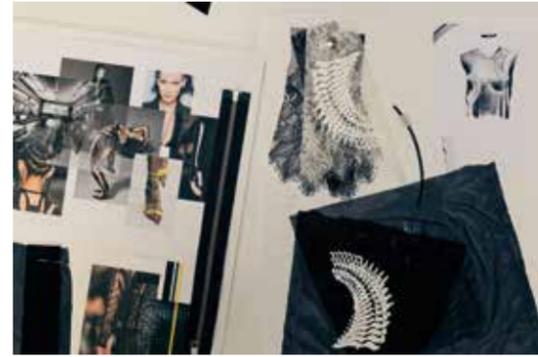


them in yellow, pink and blue beneath the workbench, waiting to be used, but the rest of the space is spotless and clean.

Having always viewed leather as a material for high-end handbags and therefore limited in scope, the more Carl got into it the more he has found new ways of using it. “Marquetry is traditionally a wood-based craft”, he says. And this is the twist he added to his work, with veneer and texture. Every single piece of leather is cut by hand, with every bit of wood and leather measured and worked to be at the same height so that the pieces are essentially seamless to the touch. Fox takes a week or so to complete a piece – accounting for the fact that he still has a day job. His next steps involve looking for some representation as he continues to explore where the Uneasy Giants series might go.

He describes his work as being part fashion, part furniture, part heirloom. “To have a piece of leatherwork you can have around forever,” he says, “that gives the work depth and meaning – it’s satisfying to give a material a new image.”

Carl was supported by a Leathersellers’ Award grant through Cockpit Arts. This partnership has supported makers working with leather at Cockpit since 2012, with 25 individuals having benefited, most over several years. Each award year provides a studio cost subsidy and engagement with the business incubation services, as well as a Leather Hub manager and maintenance of the Hub itself. This year a further grant was offered, committing our continued support to makers in this way until at least 2025.



Photography by Paul Read

A new wave of design graduates from De Montfort University are ripping up the rule book on one of fashion's most directional materials with cutting-edge designs and state-of-the-art printing techniques.

A



CUT ABOVE



Fashion is a fickle business, and with the current buzz around plant-based 'leathers' you could be forgiven for thinking that the future for traditional hides was less than bright. Not so. With beautifully tailored statement leathers making headlines in the autumn/winter 2022 ready-to-wear shows, and revered accessories designers such as Anya Hindmarch and Bill Amberg fronting the new Leather Truthfully campaign that seeks to dispel misconceptions about leather production and its role in a sustainable economy, the possibilities are endless for this timeless material.

All eyes are on the latest crop of graduates emerging from De Montfort University. The Leicester-based university is home to fashion, textiles, footwear, and intimate apparel design degree courses. DMU's links with industry and its commercially focused courses create highly employable graduates who have gone on to work at companies including Alexander McQueen, Victoria's Secret and Nike, to name but a few.

As Gillian Proctor, Associate Professor for Enterprise at DMU, notes: "Students on the fashion course aim very high and want to be the next big thing. There's always that draw toward the luxury marketplace and as we know, leather is a beautiful commodity, so we've seen a lot of our people go on to work with global brands."



DMU footwear design graduate Sam Lilley was spotted by a leading luxury house earlier this year. In the short space of time since completing his degree in May, he has started work as a graduate trainee men's footwear designer at Alexander McQueen. During his time at DMU he received a long list of accolades, including Cordwainers National Footwear Student of the Year 2022 and winner of the Fashanne Footwear and Accessories Award 2022.

For the Cordwainers' competition Lilley presented prototype sketches for a pair of men's shoes that would harmonise the themes of neo-futuristic architecture, aesthetics, ethics and innovation. "The idea was to create eco-friendly componentry on the heel and platform, using 3D printed recycled poly-filament and to then wrap this in graphane", says the designer, who once toyed with the idea of becoming an illustrator before deciding to switch track and study footwear design at DMU.

With regards to the shoe's sculptural heels, he adds: "Without the graphene the 3D printed materials would snap under pressure. Men's feet are bigger, along with having a bulky design, and using traditional materials would lead to a heavy shoe, so the use of these materials means it would be very light."

Revolutionary fashion fabrics aside, Sam remains passionate about leather. "Since first developing footwear, I quickly realised the importance of using great quality leather. No other material has such a unique patina and durability. I know a lot of designers are now using the vegan alternative, but I just don't see anything else coming close to the real thing."

Meanwhile, the partnership between DMU and the Leathersellers' Company continues to go from strength to strength thanks to Gillian Proctor, who first established links with the Company in the early 1980s. Today, her role also includes working with suppliers and tanneries to support disadvantaged leather students and overseeing the prestigious Leathersellers' Design Award, which encourages students to innovate and evolve the use of leather in a commercially viable product.

The university also runs a week-long Leather School in September, aimed at students who are going into their final year. The school includes a visit to the fashion department of the Institute for Creative Leather Technologies (ICLT) at Northampton University to learn all about leather design and understand the workings of a tannery, learning about products and design techniques like embossing. This year, in addition to hosting fashion and textile students, the summer course will be open to DMU art, design and architecture students for the first time.

“The graduates who scored highly and won prizes at this year’s Leathersellers’ Design Awards all took part in the leather school last September. They all put their success down to what they learnt from working with others,” says Proctor.

Speaking of teamwork, Textile Design, Technology and Innovation MSc graduate Ellie Jones won the 2021 Leathersellers’ Award by utilising the latest GRDXKN® printing technology to create a hooded cowl-neck playsuit and hooded cropped jacket from pig suede leather.

Ellie’s captivating surface print design was inspired by the relationship between the Fibonacci sequence and the skeletal structure. She found that by applying GRDXKN®, also known as ‘grid-skin’ to a traditional material, she could achieve a 3D embossed effect with non-slip, stabilising, sound-refracting, insulating and shock-inhibiting qualities.

Now an MA student at DMU, she discovered the technology through Pinterest and after she approached its creator, Munich-based Bastian Müller, he agreed to support her studies. The collaboration consisted of months of video calls, learning about the grid-skin print process, design development, sampling and final print production, as well as shipping fabrics and prints between countries. Not bad considering that all this was achieved during a pandemic.

Ellie is also keen to develop her understanding of sports performance fabrics and finishes and to widen her skill set ready for entering the industry. This year alone, her MA interests have included wearable technology for sports performance tracking, biotechnological innovation and digital fashion design. “I’m fascinated by the material innovation

sector and working with living organisms to develop breakthrough technologies”, says Ellie, who sees herself working as a garment technologist or fabric researcher and developer in the future.

Meanwhile, sustainability remains at the core of DMU’s design courses. It is the only UK university aligned with the United Nations designated Global Hub for Sustainable Development and remains committed to addressing the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals in its research, teaching and enterprise activity. DMU’s upcycling category and cross-disciplinary category have also enabled students to work with designers from completely different sectors and incorporate leather into a wide range of products.

Rachel Revell, a recent DMU Fashion Textiles Design graduate and winner of the 2022 Leathersellers’ Design Award, says that the course allowed her to manipulate her textiles into fashion pieces in unique and experimental ways and ultimately led her to specialise in knitwear.

In answer to the brief Rachel submitted her final major project ‘Undercover’, which is themed around “a sense of espionage, uncovering the coding, armour and structures that reflect the depths of warfare as we struggle together as a society through a pandemic, an environmental crisis and wars constantly on the horizon.”

Rachel takes inspiration from photography and creates her own exquisite watercolours that ultimately affect her choice of yarn. In this instance she looked at Samurai armour and translated that into knitwear fusing sculptural off-cuts of leather and a type of nylon made from recycled plastic bottles, alongside viscose. By inserting contrasting leather strips inside the knitting process it forced the surface to protrude and created a texture she could then manipulate and pinch together to form contemporary tailored garments such as dresses and corset-style tops.

With regard to the future of leather, Rachel concludes, “Obviously, leather is a biodegradable material, but it’s also incredibly durable so including it into my work in an innovative way was something I was very keen to explore. I’d like to see consumers moving away from fast fashion and investing in beautifully crafted leather pieces that will survive the test of time.”



Ellie Jones and Rachel Revell

The Leathersellers have been supporting De Montfort University since 2011 to develop excellence in leather-working and raise the aspirations and craftsmanship of avant-garde and commercially viable collections produced by students in the Fashion and Textiles Department. The Leathersellers’ Awards, totalling £5,000, are given to students across fashion, textiles, art, design and architecture courses for products using leather.

A Box of Two Tales

Selected photography by Mark Witter

Newly on display at Leathersellers' Hall is an intriguing item hearkening to the Company's centuries-old charitable giving, its historic internal discipline and its legal authority. This object is a wooden box, beautifully restored in 2006, with a money slot in the lid and three locks. Brass plates inscribed with the word 'Master' or 'Warden' are affixed below two of the keyholes, whilst the keyhole in the middle is unlabelled but may originally have been for the Clerk.

Most likely dating from the 18th century, this was a poor box, used to collect money to give to those less fortunate. The use of poor boxes was widespread in society – particularly within the City of London – from the Middle Ages onwards, kept by many different institutions from churches to hospitals, local government institutions and guilds. From its early days the Leathersellers' Company supported those of its members who had fallen on hard times, raising the money for this partly through fines as well as other means including, most likely, freely made donations. This giving was additional to the alms distributed to the poor through charitable trusts administered by the Company.

Current Company members may be surprised to hear that in previous centuries members could be fined for any of a host of different reasons including missing or arriving late for meetings, refusing to pay quarterage or reviling another Company member with "unfitting language". On 21 April 1736 a Mr Richard Holland was fined £10 for reviling the Master and proposing a mutiny in the Hall on Lord Mayor's Day! Some fines were specifically allocated to the use of poor members, according to Company ordinances. For example, the ordinances of 1634 specified that if a Liveryman wore "undecent apparel" (a light-coloured suit or falling band, or white or russet boots) on any occasion when livery gowns were worn, then they had to pay two shillings for each offence and the money so raised was for the use of the poor of the Company.

The ways in which the Company used its poor box within the context of its corporate giving to the poor both internally and externally over the centuries are not always clear, but certainly by the 1820s it felt the need to regularise the system. The Clerk, Bury



Hutchinson, was asked to report on use of the "Poors Box", and accordingly in August 1823 reported that donations to this appeared in Company minutes as far back as 1664, but he had "not found that any distinct appropriation had ever been made of the Benefactions so received to the poor of the Company." In the previous 15 years the average annual income from the poor box had been five pounds, nine shillings and sixpence, equivalent to over £300 in 2022. The Court ordered that casual donations to the poor box be discontinued and that in lieu of this £1 should be added to the Livery fee and five shillings on admission to the Freedom, to be applied for the benefit of the poor.

Open up the box and its interior reveals a hidden story. In March 1805 the Company paid 15 shillings to have a mahogany lining partition put in at the end of the box, lined with plush, "to hold Company's Seal", as recorded by a bill receipt in the Company archives. The seal matrix concerned still survives in the collections, though superseded by the present-day matrix in 1885. It was commissioned in 1634 to replace the Company's old seal, which depicted the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and was therefore unacceptable to Puritan-leaning members during the period of religious and political turmoil leading up to the Civil War. It has an adventurous history; we owe its current survival partly to the good eyesight of the Company Surveyor, who rescued it after spotting it lying in ashes and debris a few weeks after a fire burned the third Hall to the ground in August 1819. How the matrix had become separated from its box is unknown.

The Company's use of a common seal is an ancient legal privilege granted by its founding charter of 1444. As the means of validating legal documents a seal speaks of authority and legitimacy and is a visual symbol of the authenticating body, so the Company's seal matrix has always been an important item. Its importance is reflected by the harsh penalty the 1634 ordinances ordered to be inflicted on the Master and Wardens if the seal was ever used without order of Court: a huge fine of £100 each. Unsurprisingly, the Company has a long history of storing its seal matrix securely in a box with multiple locks – a box that could only be unlocked when all those who had keys were brought together. As far back as 1487/8 a Warden's inventory records that the Leathersellers owned "A gret rownde box with the seale of the Crafte and jiii [4] keys therto." The same box was recorded a few decades later, in 1505–1506, shortly after the seal's iconography changed to reflect the amalgamation of the Glovers' and Leathersellers' Companies.

Personal giving is still important to the Company today, though no longer are any funds for this acquired through fines for members' misdemeanors and nor are these collected in a physical box. The giving is voluntary and the funds – amounting to £85,500 in 2021–2022 – are allocated to a number of recipients such as The Hardman Trust, which supports prisoners planning for life beyond prison, and S.H.E UK, a charity helping survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

This page: Poor box turned seal box

Facing page: The old seal box keys
Receipt for adapting the poor box to hold the seal
The 1634 seal matrix



Crown and Company

Monarchs have had an enduring influence on our Company – our structure, organisation and purpose enshrined in Royal Charters. As such we share a covenant with the monarchy, an unbroken historic bond dating back to 1444.

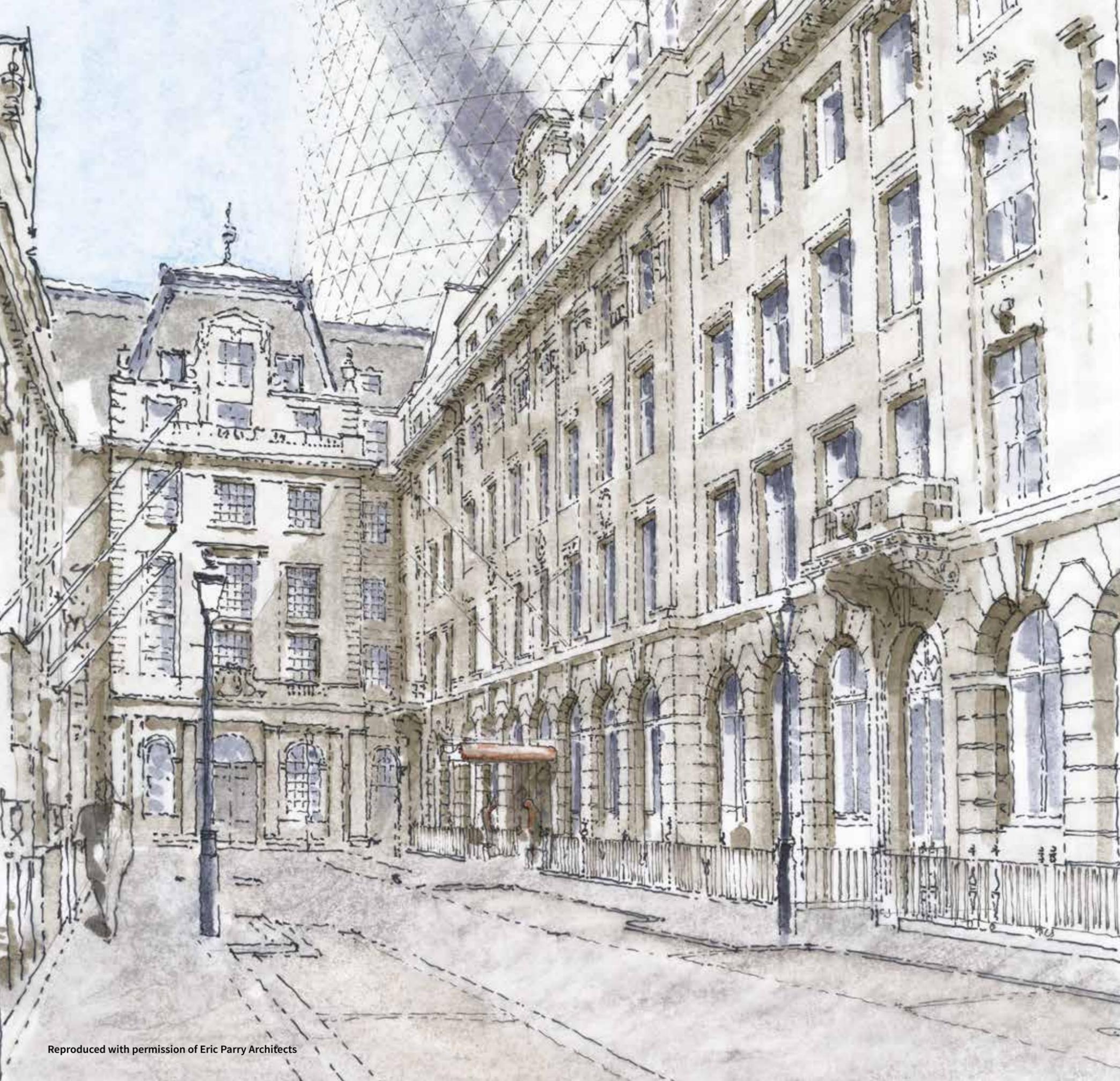
The day after Her Majesty The Queen's death on 8 September 2022 we joined individuals and organisations across the world in expressing publicly our condolences to His Majesty The King and the Royal Family. Reflecting on our history, Company Archivist, Kate Higgins, recommended that this picture of the heraldic achievement of James I be used to accompany messages on our website and social media channels emphasising our historic links to the Crown, The Queen's national legacy and identity, and Her Majesty's inspiring commitment to enduring values and service. James I granted the Company its currently operative charter in 1604.

This watercolour dates from the 1950s and is a design for part of the carpet now in our Court Room. Instead of the standard royal heraldic motto James I's personal motto, "Beati Pacifici" (Blessed are the Peacemakers), is used. As James was the first king of both Scotland and England his heraldic achievement includes the unicorn and thistle of Scotland as well as the lion and Tudor rose of England.



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St Helen's estate has been home of the Leathersellers since 1543, when the Company acquired the former site of the Priory of St Helen. St Helen's Place was laid out as a street in the early 19th century and was then redeveloped in the 1920s. This architect's sketch was created in 2015 while the Leathersellers' new, Seventh Hall was being completed.

The Leathersellers' Foundation

Charitable Giving 2021–2022

2021–2022 proved another challenging year for charities across the UK as they grappled with the opportunities and challenges of reduced Covid-19 restrictions, trying to balance the continued health risks with ensuring that they continued to benefit from the flexibility and learning gained during the pandemic.

The Leathersellers' main charitable funding programmes stayed true to our giving principles of providing and honouring multi-year commitments, supporting charities transforming the lives of those most disadvantaged in their communities and continuing our efforts to improve our own approach and processes.

With around £1.1 million pre-committed to unrestricted core funding grants with our existing charity partners, the Charity Committee sought to make sure that the remaining funds had significant impact over the last year.

THE THREE TYPES OF ACEs INCLUDE

NEGLECT



Emotional



Physical

ABUSE



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Mental illness



Mother treated violently



Incarcerated Relative



Substance Abuse



Divorce

Targeted New Funding: Charities focused on preventing and mitigating the impact of ACEs

ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) is a research-informed area of work with a global body of evidence. This shows the lasting impact that traumatic experiences as a child or young person have on the rest of their lives, not simply affecting future behaviour or emotions but also mental or physical health and educational and career success. People who have experienced six or more ACEs have a life expectancy 20 years lower than that of the average population. Multiple ACEs prevent individuals from achieving their potential, in opposition to a core aim of our Foundation's work.

Recognising the need for the more intensive and targeted support that charities provide in this area, we invited applications from charities focused both on preventing ACEs and on mitigating the impact where they have already occurred. In just six weeks we received almost 150 applications, demonstrating the need for support in this area. These groups work not only with children and young people but also with families as a whole, together with older people who previously experienced ACEs. As such it is a focus that allows us to support a varied portfolio of giving, whilst building greater knowledge and understanding and also engaging with organisations focused on a particular discipline.

Following in-depth assessments and visits involving Committee members and the Grants team, 21 new multi-year grants were recommended and approved by the trustees. The successful groups were able to demonstrate evidence of the effectiveness of their approach and how lived experience informed and improved their work, as well as the need for their support geographically or demographically. We look forward to supporting them for the next four years, learning and sharing more about their inspirational work.

Jubilee Fund

£210,000 single-year grants

In 2022 Queen Elizabeth II became the first British monarch to celebrate a platinum jubilee following 70 years of service. In recognition of this, the Foundation chose to run a celebratory jubilee funding programme to support further our existing charity partners and highlight the remarkable impact they have on their local communities. The total of £210,000 represents three contributions of £70,000 from from The Foundation, the Charity Committee budget and the Leathersellers' Company to celebrate this historic occasion. In all, 23 new single-year grants were provided to existing charity partners who made an excellent case to explain how an additional one-off sum would help them to rebuild, strengthen and/or adapt their services using their learning from the previous two years. A special celebratory report was produced and is available on our website.

Added Value

Beyond distributing much-needed funding, we implemented some new initiatives to improve the experiences of charities and other partners who work with us.

As shared in the last Review, at the start of this Livery year we publicly committed to the Flexible Funders pledge in order to provide a framework to hold ourselves accountable. In doing this we joined many other trusts and foundations including a number of Livery Companies' charitable funds. These examples show how we work with grantees rather than imposing systems on them:

- > Having conversations instead of requesting written reports, allowing the team to understand both the challenges and opportunities faced over the last year and those in the future.
- > Providing open and transparent data about all main and small grants given via 360 Giving, and publishing full grant criteria, assessment priorities and timelines for funding rounds.
- > Holding a number of events for grantees, providing safeguarding training online and a fundraising-focused Link and Learn event encompassing workshop training and a panel of national funders.
- > Advertising new volunteering opportunities with our grantee charities to members of the Livery.
- > Welcoming some of our student grantees to the Hall to use our meeting rooms and resources for revision during university holidays.

Looking Ahead

2021–2022 provided another busy year of learning and improvement opportunities in collaboration with our charity and funding partners as we honed our main grant strategy for the future. Using the sturdy foundation of existing experience whilst being open to change and development, we are confident that the new five-year strategy now agreed for 2022–2027 will enable greater learning and ensure that our funds remain relevant and impactful in an ever-changing world.

A two-strand approach will allow us to build upon the strength of having the majority of funds channelled as multi-year grants under the umbrella of ACEs, whilst retaining a proportion of funds to allow flexibility to emerging needs and current themes of importance. Taking this longer-term approach means that we can build on the positive initial steps we've taken over the past year, build relationships with other funders working in this area and look to add greater value as we understand where the gaps are. We look forward to sharing developments on how we plan to support those most in need across the UK and how our Livery Community can be involved.

Natalia Rymaszewska Head of Grants

Total charitable giving		
Funding Category	Amount (£)	%
Education (via institutions)	750,957	22
Domestic and sexual abuse	460,025	13
Student grants (to individuals)	293,575	9
Community support	288,199	8
Leather associated	242,626	7
Health (including mental health)	240,507	7
Homelessness	226,125	7
Recreational and out-of-school activities	223,854	7
Advice	149,650	4
Disability	142,775	4
Criminal justice and rehabilitation	114,318	3
Creative arts	104,750	3
Food and essentials provision	62,090	2
Heritage and environment	55,765	2
Employability	42,500	1
Uniformed services support and rehabilitation	33,810	1
Total Grants	3.4m	

Education 2021–2022

With the Foundation’s charitable giving in the field of Education in 2021–2022 once again exceeding £1 million, our longstanding commitment to supporting education as a means to improve social mobility remains clear. Recognising the sizeable monetary commitment we have made and are continuing to make, as well as the considerable time given by our members as school governors, student grant review and interview process contributors and elsewhere, over the past year we have taken the opportunity to reflect, learn and consider how we can best use our resources for the greatest impact over the coming decades.

Social Mobility: the Leathersellers’ Definition “Social mobility is the idea that every child or young person facing disadvantage is supported to realise their full potential, whatever pathways they choose to pursue.”

Utilising the support of a specialist consultancy in the education sector, we commissioned a rapid landscape review to provide greater context of different approaches to social mobility over the years. A summary and full report were produced and shared with our members, other livery companies and funders at a seminar in June 2022; it is also available publicly on our website.

An in-depth portfolio review followed comparing two years of our education focused grants, providing useful insights to the Education Committee. We will use this to continue to develop our strategy and create a framework to measure the impact going forward. We are also in discussion with other funders to explore the possibility of jointly commissioning an evaluation of historic programmes, in order to provide practical learning points and improve understanding of our future practice.

Our Schools

Our partnerships with Colfe’s School and the Leathersellers’ Federation of Schools continue to flourish. As can be seen on page 26, 2021–2022 saw the development of an exciting new initiative at the Federation schools in the form of a new Leathersellers’ Scholarship programme, together with continued support for a variety of activities to help pupils flourish both academically and in extracurricular activities and to support good mental health and wellbeing. Our thanks go to the Governors, the staff and teachers at the schools, and not least the pupils who have overcome so many challenges in the last year. The Leathersellers’ Sixth Form scholarship programme at Colfe’s continues to offer immense opportunity for local pupils in Lewisham and Greenwich, and we are encouraged by the enthusiasm with which those alumni are now getting involved with our Leathersellers’ Alumni Network.

Our Students

Our flagship Student Grants programme continued in 2021–2022, supporting 91 students undertaking a range of courses at 51 different universities across the UK. As ever, their tenacity and ambition continue to impress us as they progress through their courses, and the figures below provide a snapshot of the impact our support has had on those now graduating. Launching our annual round of recruitment for new students in January 2022, we provided open and accessible webinars for Federation Sixth Form students and any interested parties to attend, which saw high attendance figures.

The need for these funds continues to grow, with almost 600 applications received from undergraduate students across the country whose personal circumstances may otherwise curtail their ambitions to study at university level and contribute to society. With such a high standard of applicants to consider, and available funds allowing for only around 25–30 new students to be taken on each year, we continue to look for other funding partners to work with to increase the available pool of funds. Meanwhile, we sought to support our existing student grantees through a new career and skills focused mentoring pilot programme, offering training for both parties and recruiting a cohort of mentors comprising both members of the Livery and student grantee alumni. With over 30 pairings made from the initial round, this is an exciting development and we look forward to seeing those partnerships develop over the coming months, learning from their experiences and improving the programme for the future.

Our Further Education Partners

We continue to support the impressive contributions made in the fields of science and mathematics by eight post-graduate students at St Catherine’s College, Oxford and Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, and a Mathematics Fellow at each College. Five exceptional students, whose talents are clear but whose financial background means they would otherwise be unable to access this world class education, were again able to attend the Guildhall School of Music as a result of our scholarships.

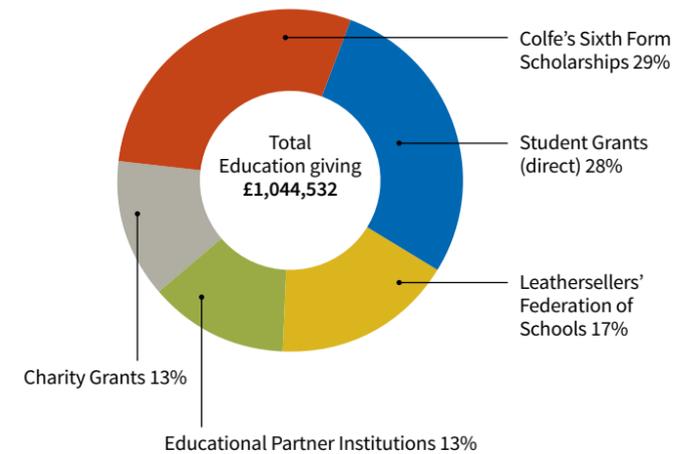
Reflecting the difficult times experienced by many at present, City University sought our assistance with providing emergency accommodation support for their students who find themselves homeless. The three Leathersellers’ funded rooms have unfortunately been in almost continual use over the last year.

Also reflecting the changing needs of our partners, our most recent grant to the Royal College of Nursing Foundation focused on providing nurses working in a different specialism with access to mental health training, which will enable them to support children and young people struggling in that area before they are able to access specialist services.

Our approach to the field of Education with our focus on improving Social Mobility continues to mean that we support a range of activities and interventions for people of different ages and abilities. With many long-standing commitments and partnerships any change in this area is likely to be gradual, but the increased emphasis on evidence-based decision-making and targeting funds where they are most needed is continuing to shape our portfolio. Developments continue, and with the shared experience and knowledge of partners, both historic and new, these will ensure that we continue to improve for the benefit of future generations.

Natalia Rymaszewska Head of Grants

Total Education Giving £1,044,532



Student Gender Balance		
Answer choices	%	Responses
Female	72.73	48
Male	22.73	15
I prefer to self-describe as below	4.55	3
Prefer not to say	0.00	0
Total		66

Student Grants Ethnicity		
Answer choices	%	Responses
Arab	3.03	2
Asian / Asian British: any other background	7.58	5
Asian / Asian British: Bangladeshi	4.55	3
Asian / Asian British: Chinese	-	-
Asian / Asian British: Indian	-	-
Asian / Asian British: Pakistani	3.03	2
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: African	28.79	19
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: any other background	-	-
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: Caribbean	1.52	1
Kurdish	1.52	1
Latin American	-	-
Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: any other background	-	-
Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	-	-
Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	3.03	2
Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	-	-
Persian	4.55	3
White: any other background	1.52	1
White: English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	33.33	22
White: European	1.52	1
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	-	-
White: Irish	-	-
Any other ethnic group (please specify)	6.06	4
Prefer not to say	1.52	1
Total Respondents		66

Leather 2021–2022

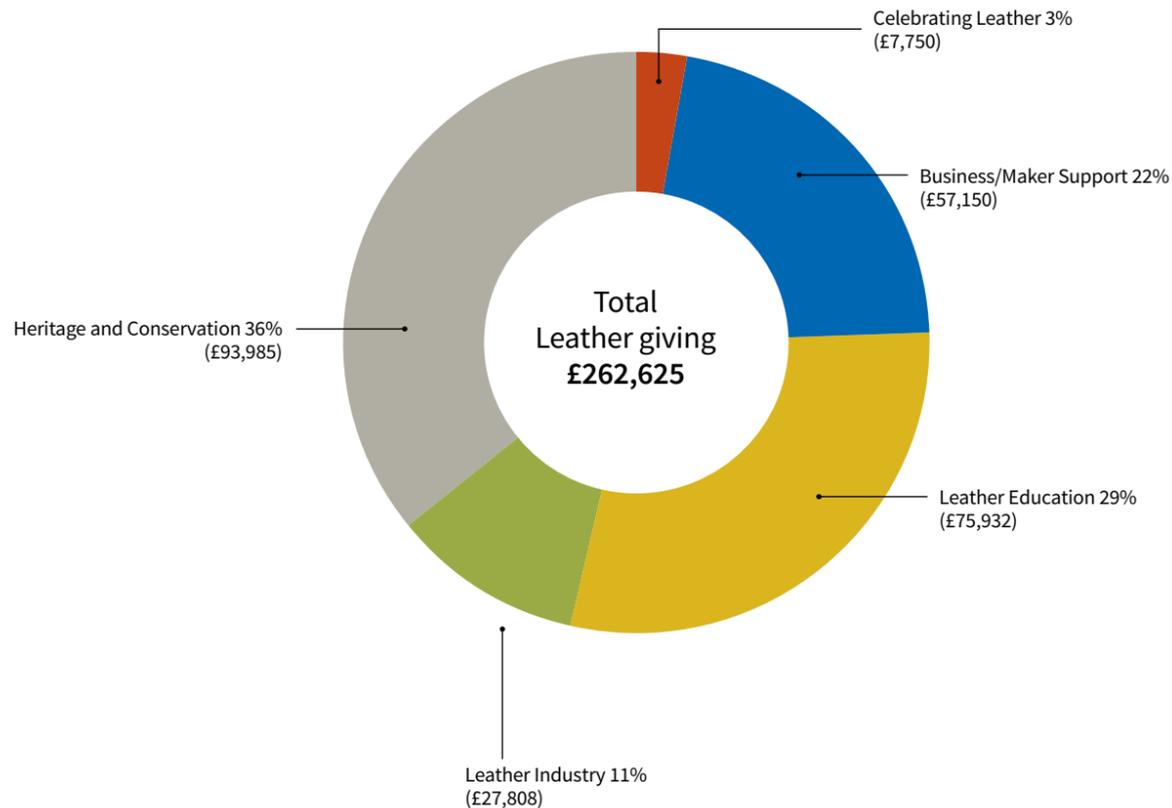
2021–2022 saw the formation of a Leather Strategy that encompasses charitable giving from The Foundation, related minor trusts and the Leathersellers' Company, and considers how best to support both its historic industry and those who use the material of leather. The Leather Trade Committee will focus on five areas over the next two lively years, with learning from this to be taken to form the basis of a longer-term strategy from 2023 onwards.

Five pillars

- 1 – Celebrating Leather
- 2 – Business/Maker Support
- 3 – Leather Education
- 4 – Leather Industry
- 5 – Heritage and Conservation

Total Leather Giving **£262,625**

LCCF and minor trusts	£191,875
Leathersellers' Company	£70,750



1 – Celebrating Leather

The Leathersellers' Company wishes to champion the sustainable and ethical nature of the material. Whilst championship could be interpreted in a wide variety of ways, our focus is on increasing student knowledge and access to leather in order to ensure that the designers, scientists and buyers of the future are aware of the credentials and versatility of leather.

An exciting new initiative has begun as the result of a collaboration between Leather UK, Abbey Partnership and the Leathersellers. This will boost student access to leather through a positive cycle of tanneries donating surplus items and our wholesale partner managing the distribution of these to our partner university departments, enabled by the Leathersellers through funding and connections. The first packages should be distributed in September 2022.

2 – Business/Maker Support

We continue to support makers and small businesses across the UK who use leather and ensure that leatherworking skills are taught and maintained. This is largely through the Leathersellers' Awards at Cockpit Arts in Deptford; however, a recent innovation has been to support four new Leatherworking apprenticeships covering a broad spectrum of education and skills, from saddlery and bridle making to boot making, accessories and interior design.

3 – Leather Education

Our partnerships continue to support students learning leatherworking and tannery related skills through four key partners: the University of Northampton, the London College of Fashion, De Montfort University and the Royal College of Art. We also supported a number of students directly in 2021–2022, and following a further round of applications, another five students were identified for support in the coming year, including a leather sculptor highlighted on page 32. Those working with leather form a sizeable component of the Leathersellers' Alumni Network that has been developing over the last 18 months, and we look forward to engaging with them further for the benefit of generations to come.

4 – Leather Industry

A key challenge for the industry at the moment, along with many others, is difficulties with recruitment. Our new Tannery Apprenticeship Programme has provided grants to enable two UK-based tanneries to take on their first apprentices. They are currently being recruited and we look forward to supporting their training and educational journey into this field of work.

5 – Heritage and Conservation

Alongside our longstanding support of the Museum of Leathercraft and the Leather Conservation Centre we also provided a number of new grants to assist museums with the conservation of leather items within their collections, varying from assisting with the restoration of a Tudor manuscript volume to identifying salvageable items from a Roman shoe collection. We have also supported a student of Material Conservation and a PhD candidate focusing on the history of the leather industry.

Natalia Rymaszewska
Head of Grants

Personal Giving Appeal 2021–2022

The Oliver Emley Awards

Whilst the forbearance of our predecessors allows for the majority of our charitable giving to be awarded from the Foundation's assets, we also offer the Leathersellers' community an opportunity to make their personal giving mean more through our annual appeal. In this, the fourth year of the initiative, we invited members of staff to donate alongside members, with all contributions to this central fund then match funded by the Company.

In recognition of the sizeable amount raised in recent years, four charities were nominated by the Small Grants Committee, selected from those that had received a small grant in 2021. These charities support differing areas of need within our communities across the UK, with a range of approaches showcased, but each demonstrates great fortitude and strength in tackling the growing needs experienced as the cost-of-living crisis exacerbates existing challenges.

Total raised **£85,468**

The Oliver Emley Awards

The Company was deeply saddened by the death of Liveryman Oliver Emley early this year. The 2021–2022 Awards are named after, and given in memory of Oliver.

Grants awarded

The four inspirational charities were:

The Hardman Trust **£38,968**

Supports prisoners planning for their future beyond prison. They empower men and women to achieve self-set goals, both through giving financial awards at the point of release to help individuals prepare for the transition to civilian life, and through offering practical information about sources of funding and prospects for education, training and employment. This benefits not only the ex-offenders but also their families and home communities.

S.H.E. UK **£17,500**

A specialist support service based in Nottinghamshire that empowers adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse and sexual violence to improve their self-confidence and mental and physical health. A range of support services are offered including crisis intervention with practical advice and sign posting, as well as long term 1:1 therapy/counselling and peer support groups to help people build healthy relationships, develop coping strategies and improve their confidence.

The Feast **£16,000**

Brings together young people of different faiths, cultures, and backgrounds, helping them to build meaningful friendships with people different from themselves and to discuss beliefs and challenging issues, and encouraging them to be committed to living well with their neighbours. Working in schools and in the community, their work enables young people to become more confident in their identity and more resilient in the face of radicalisation, segregation and prejudice.

Connors Toy Libraries **£13,000**

Supports families and communities. As well as being able to borrow toys, families also receive early intervention support from staff or volunteers to assist with challenges they face that are exacerbated by poverty, disability and isolation. More than 1,000 families, including more than 1,600 children, use the charity's services each year.

Small Grants

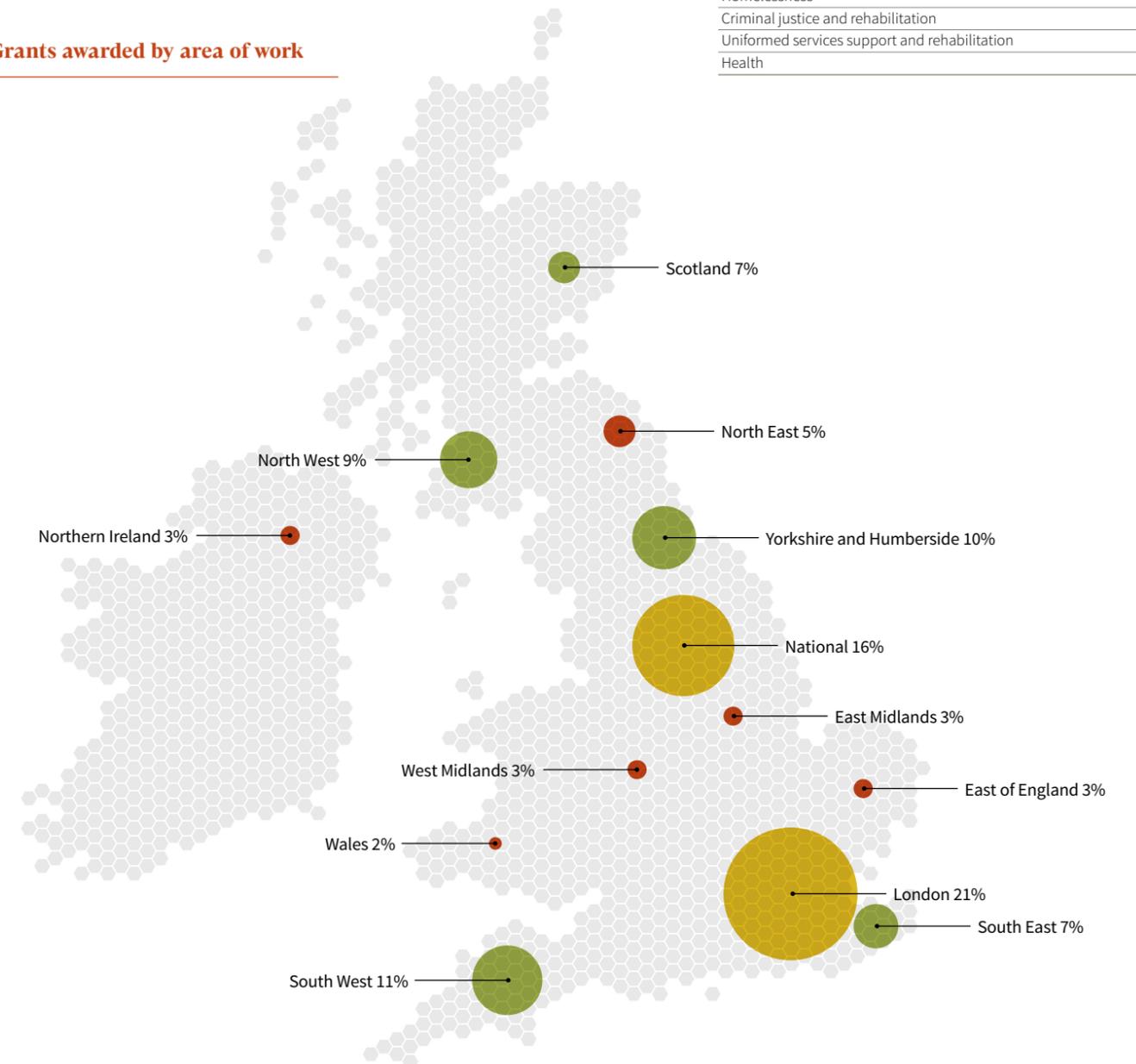
The provision of small grants recognises the crucial services small charities provide to local communities throughout the UK.

This year, we allocated £200,000 to support a broad range of activities delivered by small charities, working to support and enable individuals and communities across the UK.

Natalia Rymaszewska

Head of Grants

Grants awarded by area of work



Providing wide-ranging support to over 117 exceptional small charities, working to support vulnerable people in their local communities.

Colfe's School

Matthew Pellereau
Chairman of Governors

I am delighted to report that the past year has seen a return to normality for the pupils, parents, staff and governors at Colfe's. After a cautious start, as pandemic restrictions began to lift, school trips, productions, sports fixtures and parent events all made a welcome return – with gusto! It has been a year of joyous success across the board, starting with outstanding GCSE and A level results.

At GCSE level 63% of pupils secured the top 9–8 grades. Despite reports of a national drop in grades 7 and above nationally, over 80% of grades achieved by Colfe's pupils were 9–7, by far the highest proportion in the history of the school.

Above: Student double bass players contribute to a wide and varied programme of co-curricular music
Below: Colfe's students perform *Grease!*



At A level Colfe's students and staff are celebrating record A-results (2021 not included). The results are particularly well deserved because this was the first set of public examinations for the year group after the disruption and uncertainty of the previous years. The vast majority (88%) of grades awarded were A*–B with 71% A*–A; 18 students achieved straight A*. Nearly all (98%) of students will attend their chosen university, including Oxbridge, Russell Group, and other leading competitive universities.

There were too many achievements across the year to list them all. In brief: U15 mixed water polo National Champions; A Level photography work exhibit at Tate Modern; three National Youth Theatre places; National Reading Champions; productions of *Cinderella*, *Grease!* and *Into the Woods* (with live audiences); outdoor pursuits trips to the Lake District, Snowdonia and Dorset; and musical performances at St Alfege in Greenwich, St Mary the Virgin in Lewisham and Buckingham Palace for the Queen's jubilee celebrations.

The school also welcomed 13 Ukrainian refugee pupils this year, aged 6–16 years, on full scholarships. I am immensely proud of the staff and pupils who have made these children and their families feel safe and valued, and I look forward to seeing them flourish. Their presence at Colfe's is of great benefit to us all.

Leathersellers' Federation of Schools

Andy Rothery
Chair of Governors



After the last couple of years were interrupted by Covid-19, the 2021–2022 academic year happily saw a return to our schools for students and staff, which restored some much-needed normalcy.

Students were able to participate in a wide range of activities for the first time in two years, including trips and visits enriching their cultural capital and much-enjoyed competitive sports against other schools. Highlights included the Prendergast Vale School trip to Barcelona, several year group champions for both boys' and girls' football teams in the highly competitive Blackheath Cup at Prendergast Ladywell School, and the first-ever Prendergast School film festival showcasing the work of Sixth Form film and media students.

Our thanks go to all our staff who yet again showed outstanding commitment to supporting our students despite the resurgence of Covid-19 causing staff absences. We should not forget how demanding this year has been for them all.



Prendergast Sixth Form film students take part in the first Prendergast School film festival



Despite this, it was a fantastic year for students who sat their GCSEs. At Prendergast Vale students, teachers and family members were joined by Vicky Foxcroft, MP for Lewisham, Deptford, for GCSE results day. The last two years have seen major disruption within the education sector, but students have posted results that show a good upward trajectory in exam grades and progress. Results for the most demanding GCSEs (also known as EBacc) have increased over pre-pandemic levels, with English results at 79% at grade 4+.

Also overcoming challenging circumstances of the past few academic years, students at Prendergast Ladywell achieved their best-ever GCSE results. Over half (57%) of students achieved GCSE grade 4 and above in English and Maths and 37% grade 5+. These are the best headline results in the history of the school.

It was also a record-breaking year at Prendergast School with their best ever GCSE and A Level results. At GCSE 87% of students achieved a grade 4 and above in English and Maths and 73% at 5 and above. Nearly all (94%) of students achieved a 4+ in English and Maths results rose to 91% 4+. Achievement in the EBacc (English Baccalaureate) at 5+ has increased by over 10% to 50%, and once again continues to be well above the national rate. At A Level 42% of results were A*–A and 68% were A*–B. Many students have accepted places at some of the top universities in the country including Cambridge, Bristol, King's, UCL and Manchester. These results come following the release of the Year 6 results in the summer term, which placed both primary phases significantly above the national average.

We are extremely proud of staff and pupils across the Federation.

Against this backdrop of sustained achievement our schools continue to thrive and are all oversubscribed. I would like to thank my fellow governors for their hard work this year and the Leathersellers' Company for the outstanding support they have provided to the Federation, not only financially but also through the provision of governors and access to their educational and cultural networks.

Leathersellers' Close

During another year with Covid-19 very much present but no longer overriding every event, September 2021 saw the residents of Leathersellers' Close attend the Hall for their annual outing. After welcome drinks in the reception room they enjoyed a talk by the Archivist regarding the history of the Company's almshouses, illustrated with original documents and items from the historic collections. This was followed by a delicious lunch with entertainment provided by World Heart Beat Latin dancers and band. Our gratitude goes to all the Hall staff who helped to decorate the area and make it Fiesta ready.

The Macmillan Coffee Morning was once again organised by resident Alan Malin, and the amount raised was match funded by the Company. This has now become a regular annual event supported by the residents, indicative of the community spirit prevalent at the Close.

The Christmas carol service was cancelled for the second year in a row to protect against a resurgence of Covid-19 infections. However, Christmas hampers were delivered and well received. We look forward to their next annual Hall visit as a chance to celebrate their community and relationship with the Company.

2022 was of course the Queen's Platinum Jubilee year and the residents were keen to mark this once-in-a-lifetime occasion with a party held at the Close on Wednesday 1 June.

Our thanks go to Harrison Housing for taking care of the almshouses, and in particular their on-site manager Sam Wood, whose steadfast presence provides support and reassurance to our residents during uncertain times.

Lynne Smith
Grants Manager

Residents of Leathersellers' Close
celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee



Leadership Awards

The Leathersellers' Award for Outstanding Leadership

The Leathersellers have three key military affiliations across the Armed Forces: 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, British Army; HMS *Audacious*, Royal Navy; and 230 Squadron, RAF. Each year the Company seeks to support these through the Leathersellers' Award for Outstanding Leadership, which recognises excellent examples of young leadership.



1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Citation report by Captain Edward Hind

Corporal J Harrison

As the Echelon corporal of C Squadron, Corporal Harrison was required to coordinate logistic support across the task group including logistic echelons, the Light Aid Detachment (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers) and the National Support Element. Above and beyond his routine role, Cpl Harrison has been instrumental in the echelon's logistical delivery mechanisms and operation, helping to sustain the task group and ensure that the non-combat attachments are appropriately supported by his experience and capability.

The demanding nature of long-range patrols tests the non-combat elements of the task group considerably. Corporal Harrison independently identified the possibility of assisting the non-combat support personnel within the echelon and sought to ensure adequate routine provision and support. An example of this is the support he routinely offers to the Ground Manoeuvre Surgical Group (GMSG), a group largely made up of highly specialised clinicians at Lieutenant Colonel/Colonel level to which Corporal Harrison reports daily, to assist with battlefield administration and the maintenance of kit and equipment. Harrison's most impressive display of support to the echelon came alongside the period in which he stepped up to command the C Squadron Logistic Group.

In the words of Officer Commanding GMSG: "Professional, selfless and motivated, he has been consistent in the successful creation of a surgical facility, understanding its importance within austere conditions and temperatures averaging up to 45 degrees. He has become a 'loyal and adopted' member of my staff and has become highly respected by all."



HMS *Audacious*

Citation report by Commander J Howard

Local Acting Petty Officer Engineering Technician M Goodman

Since joining HMS *Audacious* at the end of a busy maintenance period, LAPOET Goodman has demonstrated outstanding drive, technical acumen, leadership and adaptability in the face of adversity. Whilst deployed on sensitive operations his determination and initiative have proved essential in ensuring that HMS *Audacious* can remain at sea to deliver vital Defence Tasking. Despite being a relatively junior technician he has a mature and focused personality and has been appointed as the Head of the Ship Electrical Section, with responsibility for ventilation systems, air purification, hotel services and the control and indication of hydraulics, air and the steering and diving systems. His initiative and diligence have been instrumental in developing ship staff's understanding and flexible application of several novel and technologically advanced systems. His calm and assured management of complex air purification defects has provided the Commanding Officer with tactical flexibility and demonstrated his superb professional diligence.

LAPOET Goodman is an inspirational young leader on board HMS *Audacious*. He has earned the respect and admiration of his subordinates, peers and superiors alike and is a very worthy nominee for the Annual Leathersellers' Award.

HMS *Audacious* departs Souda Bay in Crete ahead of NATO training and operations in the Mediterranean. The Astute-class submarine began her first operational deployment in January 2022. *Audacious* can be seen flying the NATO pennant on her departure from Crete.

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230 Squadron RAF

Citation report by Squadron Leader Paul Blundell

Corporal Jake Irvine

Newly promoted on arrival in theatre, Corporal Irvine instantly took the lead on unexpected aircraft major maintenance. He completed the full main rotor gearbox replacement with an inexperienced senior aircraftman, overcoming significant challenges presented by the operating environment and with minimal input from management. Using unfamiliar equipment in extremely austere environmental conditions, he overcame every challenge with professionalism, humour and an awareness of airworthiness far beyond that expected at his rank.

His ability to communicate confidently and appropriately at all levels enabled the full integration of the detachment into the British Army Training Unit Kenya, something the previous detachment had not achieved. He facilitated access to infrastructure and personnel, which significantly improved both the engineering output and welfare provisions of the detachment.

Corporal Irvine added immeasurable value to this engineering team and he is an asset to any engineering detachment.

"It's a pleasure to be recognised formally for my role on operations. Our achievements in Afghanistan, during almost seven years of operations, is something to be proud of. Thank you for your support!" Corporal J Irvine

Property

Covid-19 restrictions were lifted in the course of the last year, but with subsequent variant outbreaks caution was in the air and this has resulted in a reduced number of office workers returning to their places of work. Despite reduced usage of offices by the Company's tenants I am pleased to say that the latter are secure and have no rent arrears or bad debts.

Above: Topping out. Left to right: Charles Barrow, Nick Dart and Graham Horwood
Below: The Property Committee and the Collins team



3 St Helen's Place

As reported last year, in 2020 the Company took the decision to press on with the much-needed refurbishment of 3 St Helen's Place. Despite the pandemic and general material and labour shortages in the industry the project has remained on budget, but the programme has slipped in part because of the complexity of the scheme. Practical completion is now expected in November 2022.

Last year it was reported that all the demolition works had been completed. That left a skeletal frame with the protected Portland Stone front façade. The building has now been rebuilt to include new flooring where the lift shaft and stairs once stood; a new mezzanine floor; a sixth floor with a terrace overlooking St Helen's Church; and a new rotunda building at the rear, which now contains the new lifts, a staircase and toilets where once there had been an undeveloped and underutilised rear yard. A new brick façade at the rear will replace the white glazed brick elevation of the former inter-war building.

As part of our commitment to sustainability and facility provision the building will have 46 photovoltaic panels, a sedam roof, 100% LED lighting, 58 cycle spaces, lockers, charging points for e-cycles, changing rooms and showers, the last of which addresses the growing demand for good end-of-commute facilities.

The 100-year-old wooden front doors, which are being replaced, have been reclaimed and will be relocated to a church in Stroud.

Letting and marketing will commence in autumn 2022, but it has already become apparent that a significant element of the market requires fitted-out floors ready for immediate occupation. This so-called CAT B specification is a new venture for landlords and the Company has decided that two floors should be fitted out at any one time to accommodate this demand. Encouragingly, the Company has already received interest in the top floor.

On Monday 11 July 2022 a topping out ceremony saw the Chairman of the Property Committee, Charles Barrow, pour the last section of concrete into the roof slab. The whole of the Property Committee were present as well as the professional team and a group from Collins including their Divisional Director, Bill Bowers, and their Project Manager, Graham Horwood.

5 St Helen's Place

Despite skeleton numbers in their offices, four out of five of the tenants at 5 St Helen's Place have agreed not to break their leases and instead will remain for another five years up to the expiries of their leases in 2027. The other tenant's break option is next year and whilst we do not know their current intentions, there have been no indications that they wish to leave. We also welcome one new tenant, solicitors Shoreside Law, who took up occupation of the top floor of the building.



New offices for the Head of Grants and Head of Property

7 St Helen's Place

On the mezzanine floor at Leathersellers' Hall desks and cabinets have been reconfigured and new office rooms created for the Head of Property and Head of Grants, which has enabled the Grants team to be located with the rest of the office staff. This reconfiguration provided an opportunity to thin down files, and the number of filing cabinets was reduced by about a half. As part of the works the former Grants office on the first floor has been turned into a meeting room for use by the Company and partners – most recently, when unoccupied, for visits by student grantees.

17 St Helen's Place

WeWork have completed their fit out and the building is open for business.

100 Bishopsgate

At 100 Bishopsgate 94% of the tower is let with one new suite under offer. Two of the retail units have been let to Fazenda, and Watch House coffee shop have taken the small unit on St Mary Axe.

Nick Dart
Head of Property

From the Archivist

Life as the Archivist is never dull and there is always more to explore, manage and make available for the use and interest of Company members, colleagues and external stakeholders.

Physical care and conservation of the collections has been a focus this year. Professional conservators undertook a condition survey of many items across the Hall including all displayed oil paintings, the charters, leather items and a sample of 50 books from the Colfe Library, the wonderful collection of rare books founded by 17th century Vicar of Lewisham Abraham Colfe with the help of the Leathersellers' Company. This provided useful data for a review of display conditions and recommendations for future action. Our most iconic painting, the 16th century portrait of Henry VI that hangs in the Court Room, has already benefitted from this attention. A significant split in its wooden panels has now been repaired. Additionally, damaged paint has been consolidated and retouched and a new structural support has been created to form a sealed microclimate that will protect the painting from low humidity and environmental fluctuations going forward. The frame, which had suffered from wood movement and loss of gilding, has also been repaired. In a different area of conservation activity several items, including our 1508 Company ordinances, have been received back from the Leather Conservation Centre after being beautifully conserved for future generations. The LCC also treated a Leathersellers' Technical College leather satchel and several 17th century deed boxes that had unfortunately been affected by mould in off-site storage.

Explorations in the muniments rooms have continued together with the listing of uncatalogued material discovered there, which has increased discoverability and will help prepare for future work

'Before' and 'after' conservation images of the Henry VI painting.
Britta New Conservation Ltd



on the archive catalogue. Other ongoing records-focused work has included processing the acquisition of many internal transfers of archive material, with the necessary appraisal this involves.

Planning has begun for future digitisation of archive, library and object collections material, which will allow content to be unlocked from analogue formats and make items more accessible and usable while also helping to preserve the physical items for longer.

Hall tours have continued throughout the year, including those for groups of interested visitors to Leathersellers' Hall during the Open House London festival in September 2021 and Colfe's Year 7 in June/July 2022, both for the first time since 2019. It has also been a pleasure to set out displays of archive material for occasions ranging from the Wardens' briefing and Common Hall to evening receptions for Colfe's Year 8 parents and Leathersellers' Federation of Schools governors and teachers.

As suggested by the above, educational provision has been another area of activity in the archive and collections, and one in which the Company adds value to what it offers its associated schools. Work has been done this year to provide Prendergast History department with digital images of many of the most historically important items in the archive and collections, which are being used in the school's learning materials. In addition, the Archivist welcomed enthusiastic Year 12 students to a learning/document handling session to understand more about the importance of primary sources and what the work of an archivist, curator and librarian entails.



Answering research enquiries from Company members, colleagues and external enquirers has formed a core part of work, together with supervising researchers who consulted the archive and Colfe Library – again for the first time since before the Covid-19 pandemic began. Research visitors included an academic transcribing all surviving evidence of music, drama and ceremonial activity in the City of London between 1558-1642, as part of the major international *Records of Early English Drama* project, and a local resident of Lewisham working to register ancient woodland in the area. A register of researchers has been set up to record data that can later be used to inform planning in areas including conservation, digitisation and outreach.

Visitors to the Hall will notice that new displays have been installed in several of the vitrines, two of which contain material loaned by the Museum of Leathercraft. Loaned items include a magnificent 18th century serpent (distant ancestor of the tuba, but made of wood and leather), a miniature globe of 1818 with a beautiful leather case, and a pair of intricately embroidered man's gloves dating from the 16th century – a time when the Glovers' and Leathersellers' Companies had temporarily merged. These will be with us until July 2025.

Kate Higgins
Archivist

Left: Newly listed documents discovered in the archives
Below: Prendergast Year 12 students looking at historic records from the archive



Gifts and Acquisitions

Portraits of UK black female professors

To mark the end of his year as Master, Gavin Bacon has generously presented the Leathersellers' Federation of Schools with a set of 30 photographic portraits of black female academics who were professors at UK higher education institutions 2016–2019. These portraits were taken by photographer Bill Knight and until November 2021 formed part of the Southbank Centre's exhibition *Phenomenal Women: Portraits of UK Black Female Professors*, that was commissioned by Dr Nicola Rollock to showcase the achievements of black female scholars, an underrepresented demographic in academia. It is intended that initially ten portraits will be displayed at each of the Federation schools on a rotating basis.



Professor Dorothy Monekosso PhD is Professor of Computer Science in the School of Arts, Engineering and Technology at Leeds Beckett University. She can fairly be called a rocket scientist.

Professor Monekosso loves anything that works by itself, such as robots and self-driving cars. She is currently developing smart homes that learn about and adapt to the inhabitant, particularly as they grow older.

In the image she is holding a part of a system that uses video analytics, developed by her, to support upper limb rehabilitation of

stroke patients at home. Professor Monekosso began her career in space technology research at Surrey Satellite Technology, developing on-board computers and control systems for spacecraft.

She became interested in Artificial Intelligence during her PhD research at the Surrey Space Centre, applying machine learning methods and techniques to autonomous spacecraft. On the basis of this work, she was awarded the Royal Academy of Engineering's Engineering Foresight Award and spent a year at the Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena, California.

Leather jack

On his retirement from the Court this summer Past Master Nigel Pullman kindly presented the Company with an historic leather jack, which has a copper-lined interior and a silver rim and escutcheon newly engraved with Past Master Pullman's name and the dates he was bound as an apprentice, was elected Master Leatherseller and became a Sheriff of the City of London. This jack had been in the Pullman family for many decades. Silver markings indicate that it was made by the American firm of silversmiths Gorham Manufacturing Company, quite possibly in its English factory that operated in Birmingham 1909–1914.



Selected photography by Mark Witter

Platinum Jubilee mug

To celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee this year the Company commissioned this decorative yet practical mug to distribute to our members, staff, friends and partners. The exterior sides of the mug display Her Majesty's cypher alongside the Company's ancient heraldic symbol of a roebuck, while the inside bears the Company's motto *Soli Deo Honor et Gloria* ("Honour and Glory to God Alone") as a tribute to Her Majesty's long reign. Made of English bone china, the mugs were designed by Susan Rose China in Northamptonshire, a county with which the Company has strong links owing to the leather trade.



Clerks' board

We now have a new Clerks' board to pair with the existing board that records the names of Company Clerks up to and including David Santa-Olalla. The name panel from the previous board was preserved while a new oak frame was created for it to match that of the new board. Both frames contain a painted roundel depicting the Company's heraldic shield, which shows three roebucks passant guardant (in a walking position and looking backwards). The name of the current Clerk, Matthew Lawrence, is the first to be inscribed on the new board.



Court and Membership

Master and Wardens



Clare Jane Lennon

Master 2022–2023

Clare Lennon was brought up in Sussex and educated at Queenswood School. Daughter of Past Master and Common Councillor Richard Scriven, she was admitted to the Livery in 2006 and in 2013 was the first woman to be elected to the Leathersellers' Court of Assistants.

Clare's family has been linked to the leather trade since 1880, but after leaving school she trained and worked as a chef in several overseas countries. She then retrained and continued her working life as an interior designer, working for Colefax and Fowler and other design houses. More recently Clare worked for The Royal British Legion as Special Events Manager, setting up the Pedal to Paris bike ride and running other high profile fundraising events. She left in 2000 to look after her growing family.

She enjoyed four years as a Governor of the Leathersellers' Federation of Schools in Lewisham and sits on the Company's Charities Committee.

Clare lives in South Oxfordshire with her husband Peter, a retired Partner of PwC. They have three sons: Ed works in the Tech industry; Tom is training to be an accountant; and Will is undertaking a law conversion course. Clare's interests include golf, tennis, music, bridge and gardening.

I cannot stress enough how privileged I feel to serve as the Company's first female Master in its 600-year-old history.

The coming year will see further articulation of our vision and how all of us can play our part as custodians to deliver our long-term objectives of enabling people, fostering opportunity and supporting a sustainable UK leather industry.

The next Livery year is an historic one for the Leathersellers following the election of our first lady Master. I am delighted and honoured to have been elected as one of the three Wardens supporting the Master as she leads the Company during her year in office.

I look forward to gaining a much-expanded view of all that the Leathersellers does and meeting many more members who give their time and expertise to support the Company's work.



Mark Graham Williams

Second Warden

Mark is the son of the late Francis Williams (Second Warden 1979–1980), grandson of John Graham Williams (Master 1959–1960) and great-grandson of John Henry Williams (Master 1922–1923). He was admitted to the Livery in 1987 and was made a Court Assistant in 2011, having served as Fourth Warden in 2008–2009.

Mark was educated at Sherborne and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, from which he was commissioned into the Royal Regiment of Artillery. This entailed ski racing and playing rugby as well as the odd visit to the Arctic and South Atlantic. After 14 years' service, ten changes of address and, by then, a wife and three children, Mark moved to the commercial world. Having worked for major technology companies such as Lucent Technologies and Adobe, Mark now advises and helps founders of, and investors in, early-stage high growth technology companies.

He has been married to Jane for over 40 years, his three daughters are all Leathersellers and there are currently seven grandchildren. Mark is an avid sports fan and still ski races – increasingly slowly. His other interests include sailing, wine, military history and barbecuing, though not necessarily in that order.



Angela Beth Brueggemann

Third Warden

Angela Brueggemann joined the Company as a Freeman by Redemption in 2015 and was made a Liveryman in 2016. She has served as a Colfe's School governor since 2010 and will be stepping down in December 2022. She served as Steward in 2018–2019.

Angela is a Professor of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at the University of Oxford. She has worked at Oxford since 2000 across four different departments and two colleges, initially as a doctoral student at Green College and then progressing through several research fellowships and teaching posts. She has been a Fellow of St Catherine's College since 2007. The Brueggemann research group investigates bacteria that cause diseases such as meningitis and pneumonia, the impact of vaccination and antimicrobial resistance.

She is married to Matthijs Branderhorst, who is a partner at Marks & Clerk intellectual property firm. They have two sons, Maurits (13) and Hugo (ten), who are choristers in Christ Church Cathedral choir. When not working or listening to their boys perform they are happiest spending time together as a family, walking at Shotover Hill in Oxford, hiking in Yorkshire, or relaxing at the beach in Zeeland, the Netherlands.

I am delighted to be Third Warden this year. I look forward to working closely with and supporting the Master, getting to understand better the functioning of the Company and how the work of the Leathersellers significantly impacts the lives of individuals and communities.

I was humbled to be asked to serve the Company as Fourth Warden this year and am very much looking forward to helping contribute to the tremendous work done by the Company, particularly in the areas of education and philanthropy.

This year will present so many challenges for the disadvantaged in society, and I am proud to be associated with the Company's work to support its causes and its focus on social mobility and adverse childhood experience.



Andrew Philip Rothery

Fourth Warden

Andy is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and spent 27 years at Deloitte and Arthur Andersen where he was a corporate finance partner heading up Deloitte Real Estate. He currently works at QSix, a specialist real estate investment adviser, where he is co-head of the affordable housing team that seeks to bring private capital to work with the public sector to help address the temporary accommodation crisis across London.

He is the Chair of Governors of the Leathersellers' Federation of Schools that provides a state education to over 3,000 young people in his home borough of Lewisham, one of the most deprived in London. Andy is also a trustee of two local community charities, the New Cross Gate Trust and Deptford First.

Homeless at the age of four and then growing up on a council estate in south-east London, Andy understands the power of education to transform lives. He was grateful to receive a scholarship to Colfe's School from the Leathersellers' Company at the age of 11 and went on to study Politics, Philosophy and Economics at St Catherine's College, Oxford. Andy has four grown-up children and a teenage grandson and is a keen Millwall fan.

Stewards

Our Stewards for the coming year are **George Barrow**, investment analyst and son of Past Master Charles Barrow; **Harriet Stewart**, product developer at Decoded and daughter of Past Master Matthew Pellereau; and **Sophie Binyon**, television director/producer and daughter of Liveryman Michael Roger Binyon.



Harriet Stewart, George Barrow, Sophie Binyon
Photography by Mark Witter

Election Day Service 2022

This year saw the Leathersellers' first annual Election Day Service since 2019, the Covid-19 pandemic having caused its previous years' cancellations.

Held at St Botolph's without Bishopsgate, the service was led by Rector of St Botolph's, Father David Armstrong, with the sermon given by the Leathersellers' former Honorary Chaplain Reverend Christopher Strong. Reverend Strong's sermon focused on the theme of sacrificial loyalty and service, illustrated by the eminent examples of martyrs St Alban and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the people of Ukraine's fight against the Russian invasion of their country, Her Majesty The Queen's coronation oath and life of service, and the sacrificial commitment inherent in marriage vows.

During the service members and staff enjoyed pieces sung beautifully by a joint choir formed of pupils from Colfe's School and the Leathersellers' Federation of Schools.

Admissions and Retirements

This year saw one retirement from the Court: Past Master **Nigel Pullman**, who had been an Assistant since 2004, served as Master in 2010–2011 and Fourth Warden in 1995–1996, and has been a Liveryman for 47 years after being admitted to the Livery in 1975. We are grateful for his many years of dedicated service to the Company.

We are delighted to welcome as new Assistants **Caspar Williams**, **William Cock** and **Alistair Tusting**. Caspar is the grandson and great-grandson of Past Masters of the Company and served as Fourth Warden in 2018–2019, having been a Liveryman since 1990. He is an integrative psychotherapist in Hungerford. William, Director of a legal headhunting firm in London, joined the Livery in 1991 and served as Fourth Warden in 2019–2020. Alistair is the son of Past Master John Robert Tusting and was Fourth Warden in 2016–2017. He has been on the Livery since 1990 and works as a leather goods manufacturer as Director of J R Tusting & Co.

One Liveryman has retired this year: **David Bailey**, who was admitted to the Livery in 2001 and served as Steward in 2007–2008. We are pleased to welcome **Parminder Nahl** as a new Liveryman.

Six new Freemen have been admitted this year. **Frederick Preston** (son of Nicholas Preston) was admitted by Patrimony and **Fergus Hamilton**, **Edward Lennon** (son of Clare Lennon, Master 2022–2023) and **William Capel** were admitted by Redemption. In addition we admitted two Honorary Freemen, **Rachel Garwood** and **Murray Craig**. Rachel was Director of the Institute for Creative Leather Technologies 2011–2021 and Murray served as Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court 1997–2022.

Deaths

Anthony Hugh Hier Noel

(1938–2021)

Anthony Noel died, aged 82, in November 2021. He was admitted to the Livery in 1978 and was the father of Liverymen James and David Noel.

Oliver Radclyffe Brereton Emley

(1978–2022)

Oliver Emley died, aged 43, in January 2022. He was admitted to the Livery in 2005 and was the son of Past Master Miles Emley.

Janet Margaret Douglas Phillips

(1933–2022)

Janet Phillips died, aged 88, in April 2022. She was admitted to the Freedom in 1957 and was the wife of Court Assistant Emeritus Timothy Phillips and daughter of Douglas Hill, Fourth Warden in 1954–1955.

Committees

Membership

Mrs Clare Lennon
Mr Mark Williams
Mr Gavin Bacon
Mr Antony Barrow
Mr Michael Bradly Russell
Mr Jonathan Muirhead
Mr Nicholas Tusting
Mr Philip Williams
Mr Caspar Williams

Charity

Mr Richard Chard
Mr Mark Williams
Professor Angela Brueggemann
Mr Antony Barrow
Mr Gavin Bacon
Mr William Cock
Mr Julian Spurling
Mr Jasper Holmes
Mrs Harriet Stewart
Mr Robert Mullen
Mr Parminder Nahl

Policy

Mrs Clare Lennon
Mr Mark Williams
Mr Gavin Bacon
Mr Charles Barrow
Mr Matthew Pellereau
Mr Philip Williams
Dr Timothy Fooks
Mr Alistair Tusting

Young Livery

Ms Serena Cooke
Mr Ivan Kiwuwa
Mr Harry Pilcher
Mr Thomas Santa-Olalla
Mrs Talulla Rendall
Miss Francesca Barrow
Mr Alexander Preston
Mrs Emily Hore-Patrick

Property

Mr Charles Barrow
Mr Mark Williams
Mr Andrew Rothery
Mr Martin Dove
Mr Nick Preston
Mr Thomas Swanson

Finance

Mr Martin Dove
Mr Mark Williams
Professor Angela Brueggemann
Mr Charles Barrow
Mr Miles Emley
Mr Hamish Williams
Mr Sean Williams
Mr Alliot Cole
Mr George Barrow

Education

Mr Christopher Barrow
Mr Mark Williams
Mr Andrew Rothery
Mr Matthew Pellereau
Mr Ian Russell
Dr Timothy Fooks
Mrs Elizabeth Womersley
Mrs Sophie Miremadi
Ms Sophie Binyon
Mr David Sheppard

Leather Trade

Mr Jonathan Muirhead
Mr Mark Williams
Professor Angela Brueggemann
Mr Andrew Rothery
Mr Martin Pebody
Mr Ian Russell
Mr James Lang
Mr David Barrow
Mr Alistair Tusting
Mr William Tusting
Mr Edward Kershaw
Mr Andrew Bailey
Mr Jonathan Loxton

Staff News

This year we said farewell to a number of colleagues. **Terrance Jones**, who had served well as Beadle and Estate Manager since 2020, left us in June 2022. In December 2021 and March and April 2022 we said goodbye to Assistant Butler **Michael Best**, Executive Assistant **Paul Jupp** and Accounts Assistant **Toni Hearnden** after many years of service, and we are grateful for their long-held commitment to the Company. Head of Grants **Natalia Rymaszevska** started a period of maternity leave in August; we wish her and her family all the very best during this time.

In Natalia's place we welcome **Stacey Lamb** as Interim Head of Grants. April 2022 saw the arrival of Head of Communications **Curtis McGlinchey**, who joined us from the Goldsmiths' Company.

Our new Beadle and Estate Manager, **Matt Williams**, joined in May from the catering industry. Within the Finance Department **Gabrielle Sparkes** and **Mahadi Hasan** were appointed to the new roles of Financial Controller and Senior Assistant Accountant in September 2021 and May 2022 respectively. Last autumn we welcomed **Smita Yadev** as Personal Assistant to work closely with Julie and Matthew.

2022 saw our Head Butler, **Malcolm Mace**, reach a major milestone in his Company employment, having worked for the Leathersellers for an amazing 40 years. We are grateful for his great dedication to the Company over such a long period of time.



Malcolm's presentation from the Company in recognition of 40 years' service

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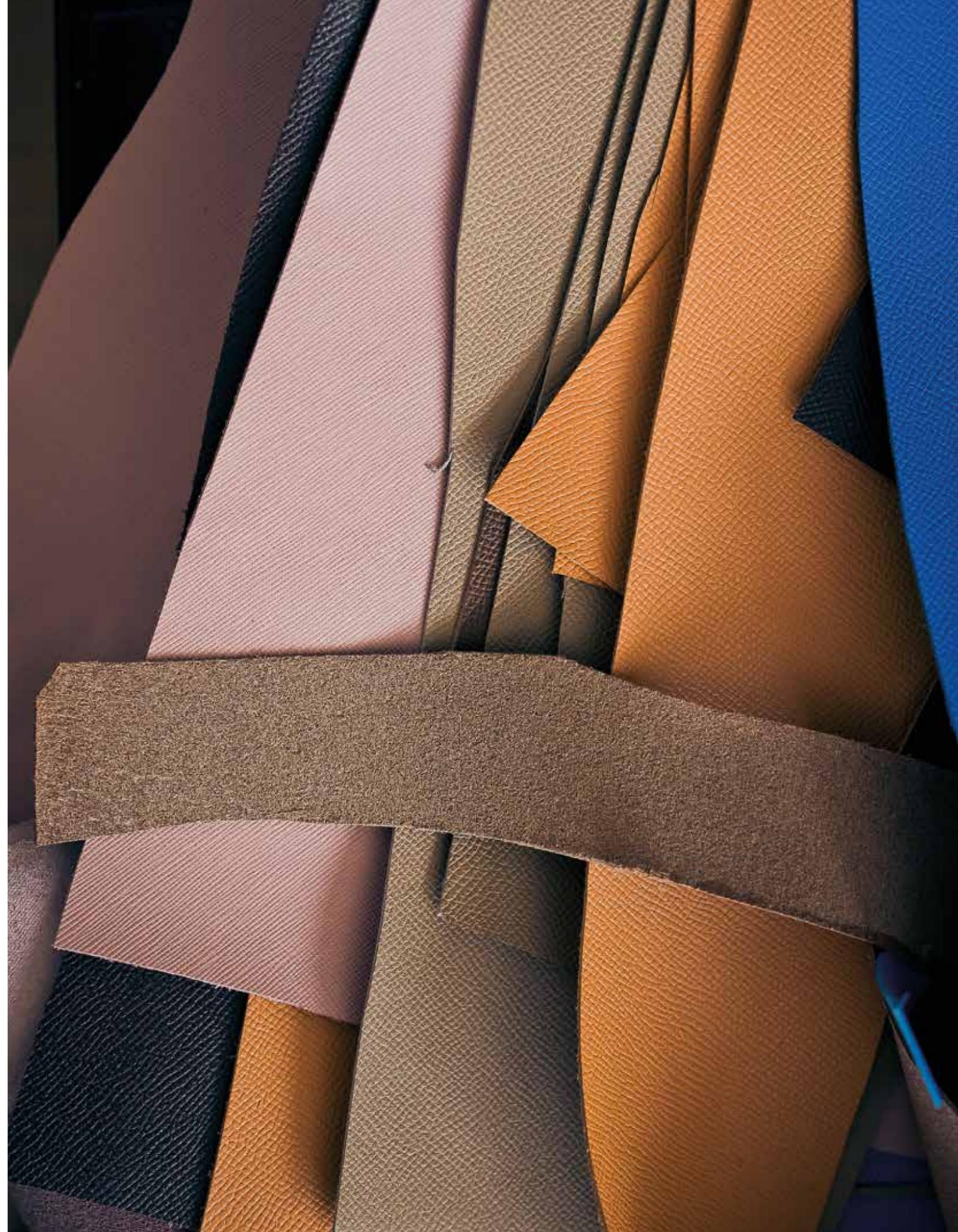
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The Leathersellers' Company

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