

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF CORDWAINERS' STRATEGY

(as at 28 May 2020)

Introduction

1. A livery company is a unique membership organisation. The oldest, which include the Cordwainers, can trace their recorded history back to the Middle Ages as trade guilds. As such, livery companies had an early involvement in the training of apprentices in an understanding of the duties and responsibilities required of the trade. In addition, they had the authority to supervise such trade in a fair and equitable manner in exchange for exclusive trading rights in the commodity or profession in question, as well as supporting those in or connected with the trade and the City.

2. Cordwainers are shoemakers. Originally, they were highly skilled craftsmen who used the finest goatskin leather from Cordoba in Spain. Today, we continue to strive, through the gifts of time and money, to help the footwear industry to flourish. We also seek to use the networks and trade/business and other associations, which we have built up over hundreds of years, in support of this and for other educational and charitable efforts.

3. The principal objective of the Company is, accordingly, to support the footwear industry in the United Kingdom. This document places the Company's activities in that context by linking the support to education and charity with: the Company's heritage – including major trade and business links, wider affiliations and the fellowship engendered by being a member of the Company, and its responsibilities in, and to, the City of London. By doing so, it ensures that, with the support of a vibrant Livery and Freedom, the Company remains purposeful and relevant in the 21st Century.

4. Codifying the above, the strategy sets out the Company's objectives, how they are to be achieved and the priorities for the coming year. The Court and the Master and Wardens, acting as trustees of the Cordwainers' Charitable Trusts, will review the strategy annually, and it will be accessible in full on the members' section of the Company's website and in summary on the public section.

The Company's Vision

5. The Company Vision, based on the four pillars of Participation, Charity, Profile and Growth, and on the values of Heritage, Relevance, Inclusivity and Diversity, Civic and Livery Duty, and Fellowship and Family is:

To be a well-known and influential voice in a thriving and confident footwear industry, and within the City of London.

In the longer term, the Company has aspirations to acquire a more international voice and for projects with which it is associated to be synonymous with being the best in their class.

The Company's Objectives

6. The Company's principal and other main objectives are:

a. **To support, through financial and other means, the footwear industry in the United Kingdom.** Specifically, and noting the overlaps, the support will focus on:

- i. Providing support to Colleges offering footwear design and manufacture courses which supply new talent to the industry, by offering scholarships, bursaries, hardship grants and other awards;
- ii. Hosting and promoting the major annual footwear awards for the industry, which focus on design and entrepreneurship;
- iii. Acting as a facilitator to bring together industry bodies and figures with academic and craft training bodies;
- iv. Funding an affordable number of internships or apprenticeships within the footwear industry.

b. **To support other charities and organisations with which the Company has historic links,** principally in the areas of:

- i. Medicine, particularly the Royal Free Hospital. (The Royal Free was established by William Marsden, Master Cordwainer 1849 – 50.)
- ii. Charities for the blind. (The Cordwainers' most generous benefactor, John Came, who died in 1796 left money in his will for disadvantaged people, including the blind).
- iii. The Armed Forces, principally the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, the Cordwainers' affiliated regiment, with which the Company has had a relationship since 1953.

c. **To build upon the Company's heritage** by:

- i. Upholding and preserving the values and traditions of the Company and historical and other assets, including the Company's brand.
- ii. Maintaining an active and supportive membership with a strong family feel, to include a balanced recruitment policy of family and industry members as well as those connected to the Company/City of London.
- iii. Developing external relationships with historical and related institutions, educational and charitable bodies.
- iv. Encouraging participation in, or support for, the Company's education and charitable endeavours, and fostering a culture of philanthropy in the Company.

d. **To contribute to the City of London** by participating in all aspects regarding the activities and governance of the City of London.

Delivering the Objectives

7. In order to deliver on all of its objectives, the Company will prepare a three year plan, with financial and other targets and seek to:

- a. Promote a philanthropic culture within the Company, its membership and its wider network. The Company and Charitable Trusts' activities should be regarded as indivisible, to deliver the Company's principal objectives.
- b. Increase the value of the Company's and the Charitable Trusts' funds through the careful stewardship of the Company's assets to provide maximum long-term return on investments and rents, and encouraging donations, legacies and fundraising by members, both to safeguard the future of the Company and to enable increased charitable grant making, year on year.

8. The Company will aim to achieve its objectives as follows:

a. **Supporting the footwear industry in the United Kingdom**

The Company believes that the most effective and lasting way of supporting the industry, and to contribute to society, is to support talent in its widest sense. The Company will also support charities that help deserving members of the footwear community.

This objective will be achieved by:

- i. Organising and developing the Cordwainers National Footwear Awards.
- ii. Providing financial support (and reviewing impact) to:
 - (1) Educational institutions, individual and projects including (but not limited to) the provision of scholarships, bursaries, prizes and hardship funds.
 - (2) Initiatives that break-down barriers to, and promote employment within, the industry,
 - (3) Training programmes.
 - (4) Charities which support the weaker and more vulnerable members of society, linked to the industry.
- iii. Providing non-financial support in the following ways:
 - (1) Encouraging and facilitating dialogue amongst industry and related academic institutions.
 - (2) Encouraging participation from the Company's wider network.
 - (3) Providing support to advisory and trustee boards
 - (4) Mentoring
 - (5) Patronage

iv. Sharing expertise available within the Company through the personal involvement of Company members.

b. Supporting other charities and organisations with which the Company has historic links

This objective will be achieved by:

i. Providing resources, particularly staffing and expertise, to administer the other charities for which the Cordwainers have responsibility: the Cordwainers Educational and Training Charitable Trust Company, the Royal Free London Nurses and Midwives Trust and the Harben Armoury Fund.

ii. Providing financial support (and reviewing impact) to charities, institutions and projects with which the Company has historic links both through grant making, and through fundraising activities and initiatives in support of the designated charity of the year.

iii. Providing non-financial support in the following ways:

(1) Encouraging participation from the Company's wider network.

(2) Providing support to advisory and trustee boards

(3) Patronage

iv. Operating and funding the almshouses owned by the Charitable Trusts.

v. Honouring the spirit and terms of historic legacies and bequests.

vi. Using music to support and reinforce the core charitable giving strategy of the Company.

vii. Sharing expertise available within the Company through the personal involvement of Company members.

c. Building upon the Company's heritage

The Company will seek to uphold its values and traditions and to ensure its continuing relevance by:

i. Establishing and maintaining a diverse and vibrant community by encouraging and admitting people from a wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, who are committed to achieving the Company's aims and objectives.

ii. Maintaining a strong fellowship by conducting a programme of social, cultural sporting and fundraising activities that engages all its membership.

iii. Strengthening the communication within the Company so that all members feel engaged and informed, and establishing a culture of openness.

iv. Managing the Company's financial affairs responsibly.

v. Developing the Company's links with the footwear trade and associated bodies, and encouraging educational excellence within the industry.

- vi. Maintaining affiliations with historical institutions and with HM Forces.
- vii. Deepening relationships within the City of London, including the City Corporation, other Livery Companies and Cordwainer Ward.

d. Contributing to the City of London

It is a key responsibility of a City Livery Company to participate in the activities and governance of the City of London.

The Company will achieve this objective by:

- i. Increasing members' awareness of the City of London Corporation and encouraging participation by its members in all aspects of the City's activities, including participating in ceremonial events and activities that promote the City of London and support the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs.
- ii. Encouraging participation by members of the Company in the governance of the City of London.
- iii. Encouraging and supporting members of the Company who may aspire to be a Sheriff and/or the Lord Mayor of the City of London, or to take on other civic roles and appointments in the City.

Review

- 9. The Company strategy will be reviewed annually and the revised version, including new priorities for the year, will be approved by the Court.

ANNEX A

Priorities for 2020/21

1. Establish the new structures for governance of the Company
2. Specify the charities that the Company will support in future
3. Complete the renewals of the substantial leases that are due, and a schedule of refurbishment and renewal for the Company's and Charitable Trusts' properties for the next 10 years.
4. Analyse and develop diverse revenue streams for the Company
5. Improve the quality and strategic nature of decision making within the Company, including the development of a three-year plan with financial and other targets
6. Establish a pathway for the future housing of the Company
7. Encourage communication and interaction between the Charitable Trusts, the CET and the other charitable trusts for which the Company has responsibility, to encourage best use of overall charitable funds through aligned objectives
8. Promote a series of social, cultural and sporting events to raise money for the Cordwainer Charity of the Year
9. Continue the over-arching theme of bringing the Company closer to the footwear industry by reaching out to further high-profile figures within the industry, strengthening links with the BFA and continuing to raise the profile of the National Footwear Awards.
10. Continue preparations for the 750th Anniversary in 2022.