



# SOMERSET HOUSE

IMPACT REPORT - 2022/23



**THE HOME OF CULTURAL INNOVATORS**

Somerset House enjoyed an unexpectedly buoyant year, as the site speedily refilled with cultural innovators, the public and commercial activity. We were able to accelerate our charitable spend on the building and the cultural programme and throughout the year the site was bursting with energy.

We are proud to be custodians of this historic building at the heart of London, with a long history of public service and counter perspective. We use this today, to provide a home for the UK's largest creative community working globally across art, technology, business and social enterprise. In doing so Somerset House draws fresh ideas and new talent in, enabling surprising alliances, convergences and chance encounters, which motivate and inspire.

The exchange between artists, creatives and wider society is the most vital and inspiring element of Somerset House. This is felt most strongly when our programme is driven by our residents. Most notably in 2023/24 we bravely backed two of our artists, Gareth Pugh and Carson McColl, to present **This Bright Land**, a month long celebration of community and culture, in the Edmond J.Safra Fountain Court, attracting 200,000 visitors.

Cultural highlights include the critically acclaimed **The Horror Show!** Exhibition in our Embankment Galleries, curated co-curated by Studios artist Ian Forsyth and Jane Pollard with Claire Catterall, and Grada Kilomba's **O Barco/The Boat**, a powerful courtyard installation that marked the 10th anniversary of another Somerset House resident enterprise **1:54, the contemporary African art fair**.

As you might expect from a community packed with creative talent, the bounce back was fast, with many new residents joining across our workspace offerings, our co-working space **The Exchange** and many new creative businesses. They were joined by much new talent, most notably through our **Inclusive Talent Programme** and the **Black Business Incubator** which welcomed its third cohort. The creative industries remains one of the fastest growing sectors and its resilience and fleet footedness in a rapidly changing world is supported by and exemplified by Somerset House.

Somerset House invites everyone to '**step inside, think outside**'. It is a place to escape the comfort zone in the safest way and to experience the power of the creativity at the heart of our lives.

What happens here happens nowhere else. This is a result of the unique combination of people, place and programme and is thanks to the unceasing dedication and hard work of the Somerset House team. I am grateful to them, to my fellow trustees, to the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport" and to all of Somerset House's supporters and partners

### Gail Rebusk

Chair of Somerset House Trust



This Bright Land 2022, Vogue Ball

**Somerset House is the home of cultural innovators, connecting creativity and the arts with wider society. We host a collision of worlds and harness the power of our people, programme and place to:**

- **DRIVE ARTISTIC AND SOCIAL INNOVATION**
- **DEVELOP THE WIDEST POSSIBLE SPAN OF TALENT**
- **LEVERAGE THE POWER OF ARTS TO MAKE CHANGE ACROSS THE WHOLE OF SOCIETY**

# A year in the life of Somerset House

Impact Report 2022/2023

## 2.4M

VISITORS

## 562K

ONLINE AUDIENCE

## 420K

VISITORS TO CULTURAL PROGRAMME

## 3,284

YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN PERSON IN INCLUSIVE TALENT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

## 583

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES PROFESSIONALS MEMBERS OF OUR SHARED WORKSPACE SOMERSET HOUSE EXCHANGE

## 342

DAYS OF FREE EXHIBITIONS AND DISPLAYS

## 300

MAKERVERSITY MEMBERS ACROSS 96 BUSINESS, WITH >50% FEMALE MEMBERS FOR THE FIRST TIME

## 142

INDIVIDUAL SOMERSET HOUSE STUDIOS ARTISTS

## 125

CREATIVE ENTERPRISES BASED IN OFFICES AT SOMERSET HOUSE

## 82

RESIDENTS ARTISTS AND CREATIVES FEATURED IN CULTURAL PROGRAMME

## 65

EARLY STAGE BLACK-LED CREATIVE ENTERPRISES PART OF THE BLACK BUSINESS INCUBATOR



The Arks of Glimokudan by Leony New, Morgan Stanley Lectures at Somerset House with The Courtyard, 2022

# Home of Cultural Innovators

In a world where arts organisations can no longer exist as islands and artists can no longer be boxed into single disciplines, we have evolved our resident community of artists, makers and creative enterprises to back unexplored intersections, unexpected perspectives and change encounters. Therefore, the revitalization of our resident community in 22/23 has been critical to our mission as the home of cultural innovators.

## Creative Enterprises & Exchange Shared Workspace:

- Creative enterprise office space voids reduced from **17% at the start of the year to only 8% by April 2023.**
- **125 creative enterprise organisations** occupying almost 79,000 sq ft of office space, including 25 new creative enterprises joining and 15 residents moving within the building
- **46% increase in shared workspace Exchange members** and a total of 583 individual members, with 209 organisations, 79 freelancers and including 50 bursary recipients
- **1,911 residents** engaged in our community programme across a mix of business advice clinics, networking events and special interest groups.
- Resident success stories include Hofesh Shechter's film *Political Mother* winning Cannes Film Festival Award for Best Dance Film, Prettybird's directing duo Daniels winning an Oscar for *Everyone Everywhere All at Once* and Ananas Anam launching a new low impact yarn to help brands reduce their environmental impact.



Artist talks in Snooker Rooms

## Somerset House Studios:

- Supported **142 individual artists**, welcoming 22 new artists to the community.
- Resourced by the **Young Talent Fund**, 3 artists have been supported through a new Music & Sound residency to develop a new work for our experimental music festival Assembly in 2024, with a further 6 artists supported through Bursaries.
- Thanks to **Jerwood Arts**, we have been able to launch a new 18 month residency programme for early-career visual artists, with new work to be presented in Gallery 31 in 2024.
- In person international residencies have become possible again and we have introduced new digital residencies with international partners. (See casestudies on the following pages)

The impact of the many brilliant interdisciplinary Somerset House Studios artists is felt across the breadth of Somerset House's cultural programme, including **Gareth Pugh** and **Carson McColl** transforming the courtyard with **This Bright Land** and Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard co-curating **The Horror Show!** in our Embankment Galleries. The Studios represent Somerset House's creative life force.

## Home of Cultural Innovators



Nouf Aljowaysir - *Ana Min Wein (Where am I From)?*

### PATH-AI RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

Somerset House Studios partnered with UAL Creative Computing Institute, The Alan Turing Institute, and the RIKEN research institute in Japan to create the **PATH-AI residency programme**. The aim was to commission three artists to create new works critically engaging with intercultural ideas of privacy, agency, and trust in relation to artificial intelligence (AI) and other data-driven technologies.

Chris Zhongtian Yuan, Juan Covelli and Nouf Aljowaysir were supported to develop new works which premiered on Somerset House's Channel in December 2022. Nouf Aljowaysir's *Ana Min Wein (Where am I From)?* has been shortlisted for the prestigious **2023 Lumen Prize**.



Juan Covelli - *Las Cárceas (The Fallen)*

### CHRISTINE SUN KIM RESIDENCY Goethe-Institut x Somerset House Studios Residency

From January to April 2023 we welcomed Berlin-based American artist **Christine Sun Kim** and her family for a three-month residency to develop a new body of work to be presented in Gallery 31 as part of **Hyper Functional, Ultra Healthy**, a returning series focused on health and wellbeing.

Kim's practice considers how sound operates in society, deconstructing the politics of sound using musical notation, written language, infographics, American Sign Language and the body.

With the support of Goethe-Institut London we were able to resource the required ASL interpretation and childcare support to make the residency feasible.

Kim's residency culminated in new work, **Edges of Sign Language**, which opened in Somerset House's Gallery 31 in March 2023.

**“Deafness has never had a place in history. In my work, I want to force that place.”** - Christine Sun Kim



Edges of Sign Language, Gallery 31

# Distinctive Cross Disciplinary Programme Highlights

Impact Report 2022/2023



## ETERNALLY YOURS

Free exhibition exploring ideas on care, repair and healing

**"Felt like a fitting cultural moment to explore individual and collective healing"**

- Guardian



## SUMMER SERIES WITH AMERICAN EXPRESS

Dazzling return of our courtyard music series of unmissable live acts, including Tems, John Legend and Arlo Parks

**"Set in a neoclassical courtyard, these evening shows are among the most elegant in London"**

- The Times (Saturday Review)



## THIS BRIGHT LAND

Conceived by Gareth Pugh and Carson McColl, the courtyard was transformed into a month-long celebration of community and culture.

**"Summer's most joyful festival"**

- Evening Standard



## SIN WAI KIN: THE STORY CYCLE

Site specific film commission from Turner Prize nominated artist to launch Somerset Houses new digital platform Channel

**"This barnstorming debut nicely encapsulates the platform's essence"**

- Creative Boom



## SERAFINE1369: WE CAN NO LONGER DENY OURSELVES

New durational commission from Studios artist Jamila Johnson-Small

**"We can no longer deny ourselves signals a remarkably generous and multi-layered departure for this body-focused artist."**

- Art Monthly



## GRADA KILOMBA'S O BARCO / BOAT

The UK premiere of Grada Kilomba's profoundly powerful work, made even more resonant against the backdrop of Somerset House

**"Poignantly positioned... the work is a reminder of how we continue to live with these ghosts of the past"**

- Financial Times



## THE HORROR SHOW!

An exhibition revealing how ideas rooted in horror have informed the last 50 years of creative rebellion in Britain

**"Demonstrates how artists working outside the norms cast the most delicious underground spells. Go. See."**

- The Wire



## SKATE WITH MOET & CHANDON

Hailed as one of the capital's favourite winter experiences

**"Ice-skating at Somerset House definitely has to be on your Christmas event list"**

- Stylist



## JITISH KALLAT'S WHORLED

**"Manchester, Mumbai, the moon: Jitish Kallat's huge spiral installation in London connects climate change and the cosmos."**

- The Art Newspaper

# Inclusive Talent Development – Intensifying Creativity, Multiplying Opportunity

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We intensify creativity and multiply opportunity, creating the conditions to continually challenge and reinvigorate the status quo. We find, back, develop and invest in a much wider span of talent and minds across community, sector, race, gender, age and stage.

## Upgrade Yourself

Our Upgrade Yourself programmes focus on young people aged 16-30 years old and are predominantly aimed at giving young people from under-represented backgrounds the skills, networks and inspiration to develop sustainable creative careers under the Upgrade Yourself banner.

We reached **3,284 young people** through our in real life programme strands. These included launching the new twice-yearly Upgrade Yourself Festival, connecting aspiring and emerging creatives under 30 with trailblazing creatives and industry experts via talks workshops and mentoring sessions.

**“It was a chance to reflect on your own career journey and learn things along the way. I feel confident I’m on track after meeting the mentors.”**

We also introduced **Upgrade Yourself Takeovers** as an extension of our exhibition programme. Starting with a special evening in *The Horror Show!* exhibition, our Inclusive Talent Engagement team programme talks and performances within and around the exhibition to unpack the themes and provide creative career insights for aspiring creative professionals.

Feedback from young people on our Kickstart supported London Living Wage paid Industry Placement programme which finished in April 2022 included,

**“This has literally been the happiest I’ve been in a good two years and it’s because I finally feel my life is back on an actual track.”**

Since then we have recruited a further 5 young people onto our new twelve month London Living Wage paid Industry Placement programme. This has included working with resident host organisations including Hofesh Schecter Company, Siren, Royal Society of Literature and On Da Beat.

80% of Upgrade Yourself programme participants identify as underrepresented.

Young people’s creativity was also embedded into This Bright Land with the Voices of Tomorrow project which shared experiences of family and London through the eyes and lived experience of seven young people who identify as belonging to the following communities.



Upgrade Yourself Festival 2023

## Black Business Incubator

In June 2023 the first cohort of **Black Business Incubator** participants completed their twelve months on this programme, which is delivered in partnership with Mentor Black Business and sponsored by Morgan Stanley. The Black Business Incubator supports early stage Black-led creative businesses to thrive through access to free workspace, becoming embedded in the Somerset House resident community, masterclasses and mentoring.

Since then we have welcomed a further 50 businesses onto two further cohorts. Thanks to continued support from Morgan Stanley, the programme goes from strength to strength and is constantly evolving in response to participant feedback.

**“The Black Business Incubator was instrumental to getting me to think beyond being a ‘book packager’.”**

Jasmine Richard, founder of inclusive fiction studio Storymix, which was awarded our Growth Prize at the end of their time on the Black Business Incubator

**“Having a place to work, think and networking has done lots for me in a business sense, but also more importantly mentally.”**

Akwasi Brenya-Mensa, food entrepreneur and founder of award-winning Tatale

## Heritage, Renewal & Public Enjoyment of the Site

Impact Report 2022/2023

We are constantly looking at how we continue to renew our historic site, ensuring it is fit for purpose when it comes to welcoming our creative residents and visitors.

Perhaps most significant to the day-to-day visitor experience has been the completion of **Strand/Aldwych** pedestrianisation and landscaping. As a result visitors' arrival to Somerset House has been transformed and we look forward to working closely with Westminster City Council and our neighbours to extend our programme into this new public realm.

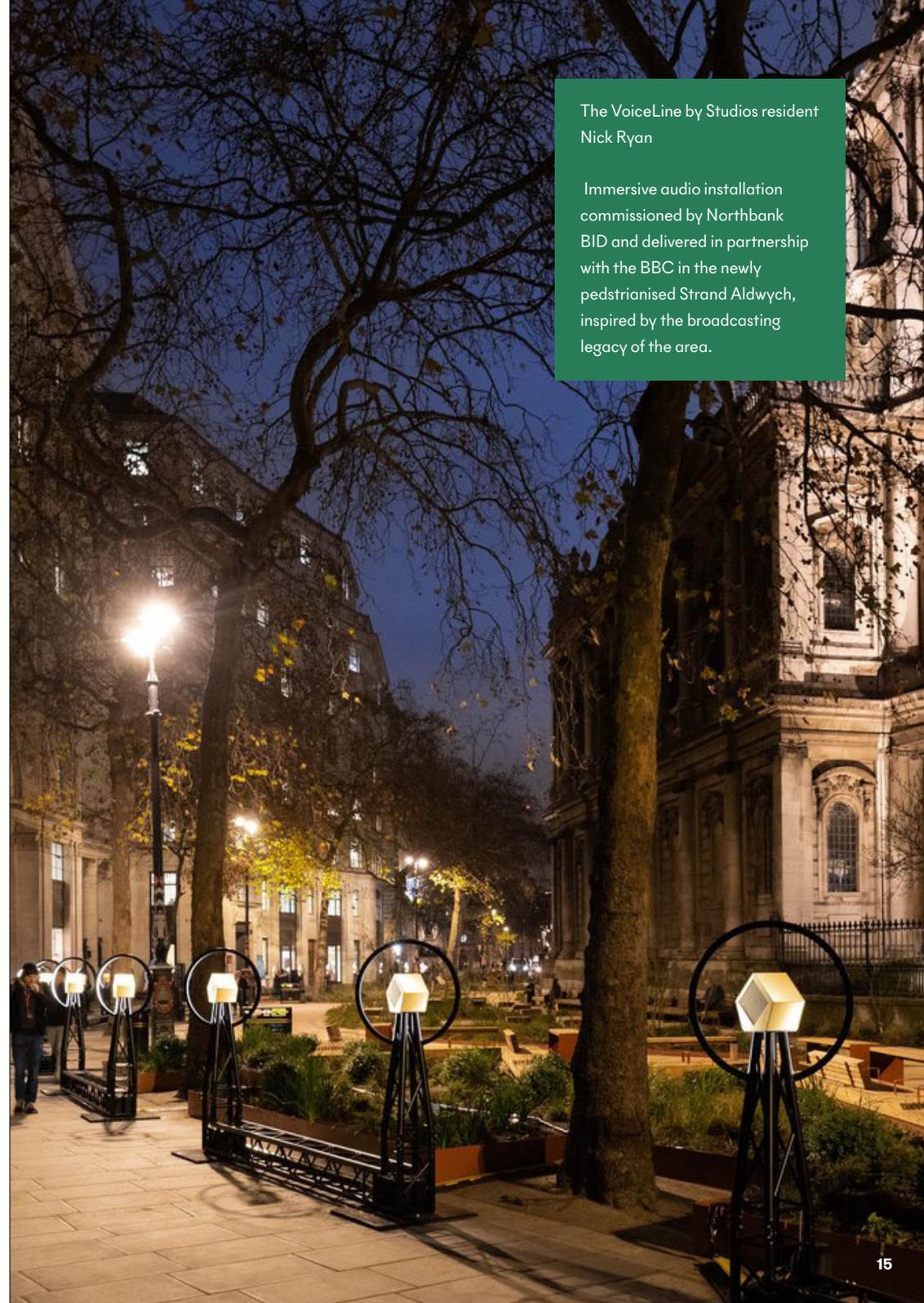
Visitors have also been able to engage with Somerset House's history more fully as a result of our relaunched **Historical Highlights** tours. These have been attended by over 1,800 visitors since July 2022. For the first time we have also introduced self-guided audio tours, thanks to support from Bloomberg. These **Sonic Histories audio tours** are signposted across Somerset House and can be listened to via the Bloomberg Connects app. We commissioned writers Laura Lomas, Rex Obano, Ava Wong Davies and Sabrina Mahfouz to produce imaginative new work in response to specific elements of Somerset House's history and architecture.

Somerset House is committed to being a welcoming destination for all visitors, as reflected in our **Safer Space** guidelines. This year we also introduced a new **Access Working Party** to support best practice across our operations and to make a series of new recommendations for improvements.

As part of our ongoing efforts to reduce our **environmental impact**, we installed radiator smart controls combined with room thermostats and occupancy sensors targeted at reducing our gas consumption. During 2023-24, we will be working with energy specialists to map out our longer-term decarbonisation plans including a review of longer-term options for the site's energy supply.

Our conservation and repairs and upgrades programme continued with conservation works to the dome, repairs to West Wing roof windows and completion of the major sitewide CCTV upgrade. We have also begun façade cleaning and restoration of the New Wing from Lancaster Place.

Strengthening our sustainable model in order to deliver on our charitable objects also requires focusing on how we do things internally. Thanks to support from the Fidelity UK Foundation, we have been able to onboard a new Business Systems Analyst to drive the implementation and upgrade of systems and processes, many of which were put in place when we were a much smaller organisation.



The VoiceLine by Studios resident Nick Ryan

Immersive audio installation commissioned by Northbank BID and delivered in partnership with the BBC in the newly pedestrianised Strand Aldwych, inspired by the broadcasting legacy of the area.

# Financial Snapshot 2022/2023

The organisation has recovered well from the COVID pandemic with total income of £21.1m exceeding pre-COVID levels (£20.1m in 2019/20).

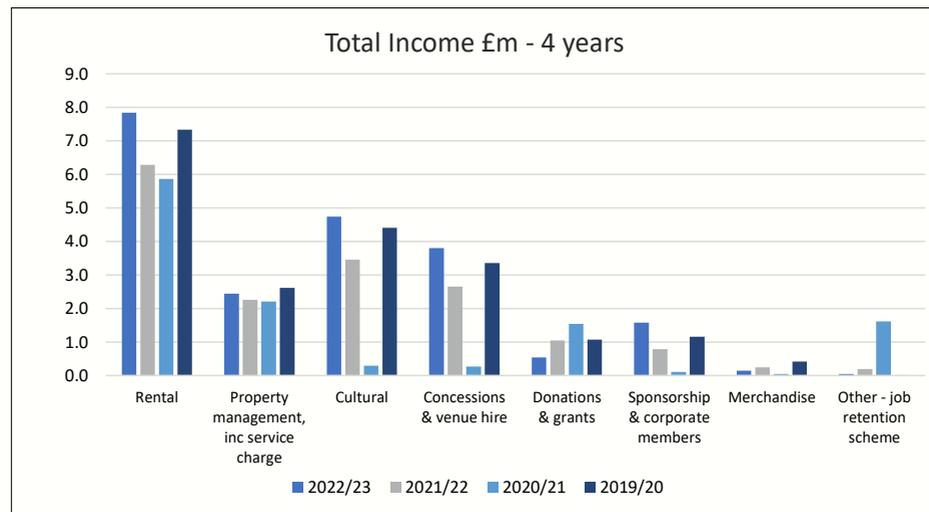
We set what we believed to be a realistic budget for the year, with a £1.2m deficit. This reflected significant investment in people and charitable activity ahead of income fully recovering.

However, income rebounded faster than planned, and in some cases exceed previous peaks, delivering a surplus before depreciation of £1.6m.

Key areas of outperformance included rental income, commercial events and Skate.

As a result reserves are currently higher than target they are budgeted to fall back within the target range during 2023/24 with a budgeted loss reflecting continuing conservation works, investment in our programme, building improvements and in strengthening our team together with capital spending plans.

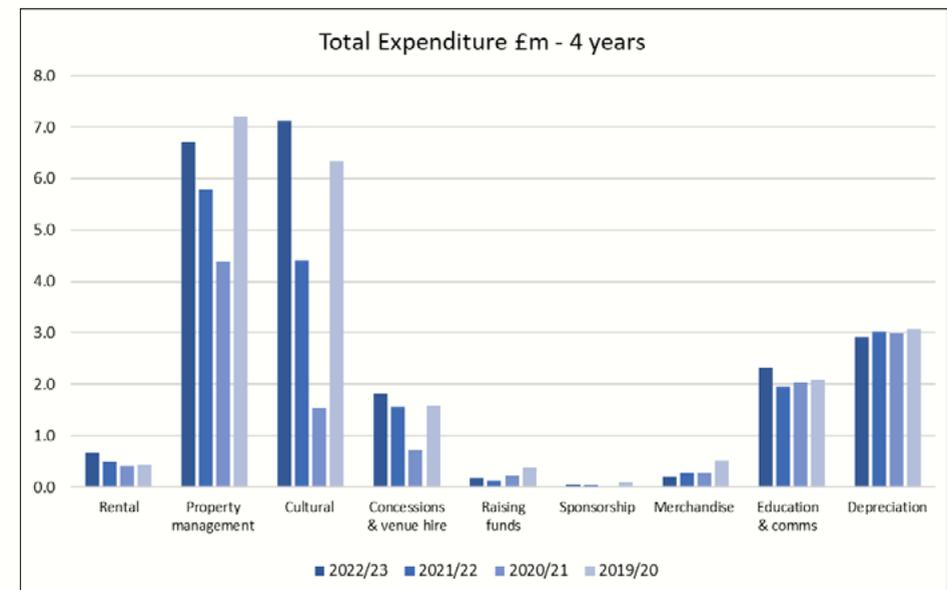
## TOTAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE (UNRESTRICTED & RESTRICTED)



As activities have increased post-COVID, so has our cost base. Staffing costs increased during the year as we rebuilt and alleviated pressures felt in many teams totalling £6.2m in the year (2021/22 - £5m). We spent £6.7m on property management & conservation including £0.4m on new heating controls to improve efficiency and commencing conservation works on New Wing including façade cleaning. We continued to take a cautious approach to expenditure commitments as much of our income performance is not clear until the second half of the year. This meant that £0.2m of expenditure was delayed into 2023-24. Expenditure on the cultural programme surpassed our pre-COVID benchmark reflecting the higher cost of presenting This Bright Land.

Trustees designated £1.05m of funds towards future site works. This will enable us to continue a programme of heritage, sustainability and visitor experience improvements.

The Trust continues to pay a peppercorn rent to DCMS in respect of the leasehold.



Figures taken from Audited Accounts for 2022/23 which were approved on 27th September 2023

# Thank you

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## Trusts, Foundations And Institutional Partners

Buttinghill Foundation	Jerwood Arts	The Ruia Foundation
Cockayne Grants for the Arts, a donor advised fund held at The London Community Foundation	John Thaw Foundation	SANTI
D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust	Kusuma Trust	The Warburg Pincus Foundation
Eranda Rothschild Foundation	Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi	Westminster City Council Culture and Community Fund
Fidelity UK Foundation	Mbili Charitable Trust	Young Westminster Foundation
Goodman Gallery	Nadezda Foundation	Summer Holiday Activity Fund
Gregory Annenberg Weingarten, GRoW@Annenberg	Northbank BID	
	The Rothschild Foundation	

## Corporate Members, Corporate Partners, Sponsors & Brand Partners

American Express	Forest Essentials	San Miguel
Bank of America	Hotel Chocolat	Squarespace
Bloomberg	Knight Frank LLP	Switzerland Tourism
Bombay Sapphire	Moët & Chandon	TOAST
CBRE	Morgan Stanley	UNIQLO
Estée Lauder	One Aldwych	

## Somerset House Supporters' Court Patrons & Individual Supporters

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Dominika Blackappl	Melanie Hall	Zeynep and Can Koseoglu
Felicia and James Brocklebank	Mercedes Vilardell	
Jonathan and Ronnie Newhouse	Paul Goswell	

As well as those who wish to remain anonymous.

## Trustees - as of 1 April 2023

Gail Rebuck, Chair	Dawid Konotey-Ahulu	Melanie Smith
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Camilla Lowther	Jeremy Joseph	Yini Zhang

***“Being part of a diverse crowd - diverse in race, age and gender. It felt different to being at other arts institutions. I felt engaged with the future.”***

Visitor to This Bright Land

**step inside think outside**

[somersehouse.org.uk](http://somersehouse.org.uk)

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