

HOUSE MILL TRUST LTD

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES **for the year ended 30 June 2024**

During the reporting period the Chairman, John Haggerty, has once again unfortunately suffered periods of ill health, and has not been able to play a full part in the management of the House Mill Trust (HMT). During this time the trustees have stepped up to enable HMT to function. The volunteers have also, in many cases, increased roles and responsibilities and I would like at the beginning of this Report also to thank them, as they have ensured that the buildings have opened and delivered a wide range of activities.

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 June 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

HMT remains committed to its plans towards the major restoration project, within its overall future strategy but also as an education and intelligence sharing resource, with a range of other heritage projects. The five main objectives remain:

- A source of green energy
- A heritage legacy
- A centre for community, arts and culture
- A unique learning experience
- A hub for volunteering and development

Fundraising has begun again, but at this stage in conjunction with planning for an events-based programme, rather than for the main restoration project. The fundraising will be largely in project-based modules, rather than – at this stage – for full delivery of the entire machinery restoration. The full project will only be possible upon completion of a full-scale fundraising initiative, and this will involve damming off the tidal river to ensure that works can safely be undertaken below the building.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Public benefit

The public benefits of the project have been reviewed and whilst the primary benefit remains the preservation of the Grade 1 listed House Mill and its restoration to a working mill, the peripheral benefits have been redefined.

Since our last report the Trust has continued developing its objectives and planning future activities in line with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefits. House Mill meeting room bookings are slower than previously, as nationwide working practices have changed since COVID-19 and with working from home, and remote access meetings (et Zoom, Teams etc) we are constantly re-assessing best use of the buildings, both towards a variety of uses, and also to protect and grow the income stream.

A full programme of Activities, Exhibitions and Meetings is slowly developing beyond the financial year end with Newham Heritage Month, Open House and Open Heritage back on the schedule. House Mill also takes part in the annual National Mills Weekend (NMW) initiative and for the past two years has researched and prepared a dedicated Exhibition, in line with the NMW topic. These are each busy events for House Mill and key for raising both buildings' profile and an income stream for the café.

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ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Progress

Once again, the Trust has continued to deliver some of the smaller works that were previously part of the original scheme. This will result in some variations on any whole-restoration project resubmission,. This is mainly routine maintenance, and replacement of floorboards on the ground floor of the Mill, using appropriate reclaimed wood, from specialist suppliers, and installed by specialist volunteers/Trustee.

Works to the House Mill Archive continues with both volunteer and trustee research ongoing. A new exhibition on Millwrighting was prepared for National Mills Weekend in May 2024, and this proved very popular with visitors, and so is now permanently displayed in the cafe area; giving visitors an insight into House Mill even if they are unable to visit the mill itself whilst on site. Another Exhibition is in preparation for National Mills weekend May 2025, with the subject of “House Mill history”. It is expected that this will also be on permanent display in the cafe area.

Several of the volunteers are preparing display cases to show some of the unique wooden pattern collection. The pattern collection is extensive but not currently accessible within a standard guided tour. The new display cabinets will, however both show artefacts and written information on items which are currently spoken about, but not seen by the public. These display cases will be placed at strategic sites throughout the mill, and become part of the guided tour itself, thus providing more information , and visual images, for visitors. This is an important step forward in sharing even more information about the history of the House Mill and extended Three Mills site.

Following the successful refurbishment works to the south facing elevations of House Mill and Millers House, a detailed survey was prepared, for the northern side of the House Mill, including the roof. Full costs for these works are awaited, but it is expected that they will be undertaken some time during the next twelve months. As with the southern elevation, the works will be undertaken by specialist heritage contractors. Once again, due to the current skill set of the Trustees, these works will be supervised by the Trustees themselves.

The research by the UCL team is progressing well, and we expect some detailed reports this year on both the deteriorating condition of the ground floor timbers, and the increasing levels of the tides, which we understand is causing the damage, as previously reported.

The Trust is most grateful for this collaboration, and looks forward to both the receipt of the report, sharing with appropriate partners and organisations, and being able to prepare for any remedial action which is deemed to be necessary. This may take the form of additional and dedicated fundraising,

Education

Education at the site is delivered by partner organisations, such as Chain Reaction, University College London, The Line art trail, and various local schools. Relations with the Harris Science Academy ,located on Three Mills Island, in Clock Mill, continue to grow, and HMT hosts events for pupils, teachers, parents and prospective parents, throughout the year. Discussions are underway with a view to an exhibition by the year 11 art students in the House Mill Gallery space, which will display works submitted in the GCSE examinations, and be open both to the school itself and to the general public.

The classroom also hosted eight weeks of tuition and guidance for pupils from Harris, by the Diana Foundation. This was a life skills course rather than national curriculum, and it was found to be extremely popular with those who took part. This was the first year, and it is hoped to continue into subsequent years.

The Trust has offered various local charitable organizations complimentary use of the classroom for a variety of training and educational activities. These have included environmental projects, local residents and other community and education groups. In particular, we have been pleased to host weekly sessions for a Mindfulness group, led by The Line, and the clients used both the classroom and the sensory parts of the garden to also use the cafe space and the garden, depending upon their particular weekly needs, and other things that might be taking place within the buildings. We understand that there are plans to bring back a Dementia group to meet regularly in the Miller’s House as this has been identified as a comfortable and safe space by the service users themselves.

A new community initiative was to hold two pilot workshops on how to make paper thread – using the Japanese art of kami-ito, and other ways of manipulating paper. We were surprised and delighted to find the workshops both fully subscribed, and we hope that they will be repeated in the future. The use of the rooms for subjects which are not “mill” related is a fairly new initiative, and with the increasing number of new communities in the area, and the eventual development of the Gasholder site at Twelve Trees, we plan to do many more of these, as interest grows.

General

House Mill Trust continues to work towards reinstatement of a full programme of Tours, Events, Exhibitions and Special openings. As reported last year, however, this has had to be started from the bottom up following the lengthy lockdowns, and the inevitable changes to the onsite business as a result.

A more limited range of activities was delivered throughout the year, in addition to the weekly public guided tours, and these once again included private group tours, gin tastings, several exhibitions in the gallery, and the celebration of life for a local gentleman who was such a great supporter of the House Mill, that his family chose to hold his wake in the ground floor and garden, in conjunction with some tours for guests. This was a real honour for House Mill to host.

Miller's House also hosts a weekly coffee morning for a Wellbeing Walk, a Friday youth club, and is the independent venue for Sunday services for Christchurch at Three Mills.

The Miller's House is the site for two major artworks on The Line art trail, and these will be in situ for a further three years. Madge Gill "Untitled" print on the rear of first floor, overlooking the garden and the walkway up to Three Mills Green, and the "Juniper" weathervane on the third floor balcony, overlooking Three Mills Lane. These are important additions, and enjoyed by walkers and visitors to the buildings. Inside the Miller's House, cafe area there is currently an exhibit of works by Madge Gill, provided by LB Newham heritage. This is the largest of the LBN exhibitions within the borough, and links nicely with the other Madge Gill works currently showing along the route of The Line.

The major art exhibition during this year was by Helen Cammoc and entitled "The Lay Shaft Drive is Down" and "Swirling Eddies, Tender Breeze". This was open at House Mill for six weeks, Thursday to Sundays and invigilated by youth guides provided by The Line, and facilitated by House Mill volunteers.

This exhibition coincided with the launch of "On Wind Tides", Helen Cammock's large-scale text installation spanning a cable bridge to the south of the House Mill, on the River Lea, and connecting the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Newham.

These works were commissioned by The Line in 2023. Also featured was a short film by Reece Straw, who documented the creation and installation of On Wind Tides. "The Lay Shaft is Down" included a spoken word and sung performance first staged at the House Mill. This used the heritage House Mill as a starting point, and the overall works considers their relationship to industry waterways, migration and colonialism. Community groups were involved in the creation of "Swirling Eddies, Tender Breeze" and that work is also still shown in a display case next to Cammock's installation. The original artworks are safely in store at House Mill, and changed monthly.

House Mill has fully embraced the opportunity to work with Helen Cammock, The Line and several local communities in facilitating these important works.

We still have not been able to return to pre-pandemic numbers for hire and catering for the meeting rooms, which had been a major source of income. With the working from home, and meetings being held by zoom and teams for instance, it remains unlikely that the previous hire levels will once again be achieved. The Trust is exploring potential other uses for the rooms currently available.

Visitor numbers are the following:

Art Gallery	1,260
Classroom	471
Meeting Rooms/Events	1,806
Cafe	4,955
Guided Tours, including special openings	1,222
Community groups	3,080
Total Visitors numbers	12,794
(excluding digital visitors, and cafe takeaway clients)	

These numbers are slightly higher than for the previous year, but we are hopeful, with the new initiatives currently booked and planned, that these will continue to rise, going forward.

Business Plan

The Trust's Business Plan contains full details of the restoration project, the Trust's operation, and income and expenditure projections for five years post restoration. The Plan is robust and a living document. The business case proposes that with the employment of key staff, supported by the volunteer team, the House Mill itself will be open for at least 5 days a week, with some seasonal variations. This will make marketing of the site much easier, and we can work with other local and central-London based museums to raise visitor numbers, offer group deals and easier access for both residents and tourists alike.

The café will be open up to 7 days a week (depending upon measured footfall) and also with seasonal variations. It also includes a full range of Events, corporate hire, meeting room hire, gin tastings and weddings. Successful pilots have been held of all planned new activities.

The Plan indicates that the Trust will be financially sustainable, with income from education, entrance fees, events, corporate hire, weddings, enhanced café and shop and hydro-electricity. There is further income from tenants and potential for income from an evening/weekend bar, but these have not been included into the Plan, at this stage.

The Trust had planned to extend its activities, to challenge both the Activity Plan and the Business Plan, and to continue financial sustainability in advance of the restoration project. However, this has not been possible in the light of the negative outcomes of the pandemic, as stated elsewhere above. However, the Trust is actively working to establish new business models and increased safe use of both buildings, as previous income streams in some areas are unlikely to return to pre-pandemic levels. Outreach events with the new and incoming communities are planned for this summer, and the Trust is confident that this will ensure that the House Mill remains relevant to these new audiences. Both as a visitor centre, and also, it is hoped, to gain new volunteers, and potentially, also, Trustees.

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HMT is licensed by the LB Newham as a an approved Premises for Marriages in Pursuance of Section 26(1) of The Marriage Act 1949 and as a Venue for Civil Partnerships in Pursuance of Section 6(3a)(A) of The Civil Partnership Act 2004. No weddings were possible during this year, as in the majority of weddings a long lead in time is required.

The third-floor room continues to be rented to another charitable organisation, Chain Reaction Theatre Company. They are a small charity, which has been working for more than 25 years; delivering education and inspiring young people to make positive choices about issues that affect their day to day lives. Chain Reaction also uses other parts of the building for education and its own board meetings.

Christchurch at Three Mills rents a room here on a week to week basis for Sunday service. They are looking for a more permanent relationship, if possible, with permanent rental of the first floor. This is currently being discussed in detail, both relating to increased and regular income for the Trust, but also to ensure that should it go ahead other areas of HMT activities will not be adversely affected, and the buildings still remain safe for all visitors. An appropriate risk assessment is in preparation and full training will be given to Church personnel, should the initiative go ahead. HMT has stressed that the church would remain as a client, and fully independent of House Mill Trust itself, and HT charitable status would not be affected.

Prospects

Three Mills Island remains in a period of regeneration, with several local major regeneration projects both underway and proposed. The House Mill is on the cusp of all of them but not directly included in any, although the Trust is in discussion with several developers and the planning authorities.

Since 2012, the core of the London Legacy Development Corporation's role, as defined by the Mayor of London, had been "to promote and deliver physical, social, economic and environmental regeneration in the Olympic Park and surrounding area". The Southern Olympic Fringe comprises Pudding Mill Lane, Sugar House Lane, Three Mills, and Bromley by Bow.

However, from 1st December 2024 the LLDC ceased to be the Local Planning Authority and its powers were handed back to the four local boroughs. Hence House Mill once again comes under the LB Newham. LLDC will continue, as an evolving organisation, delivering and creating opportunities for the local area., and they remain accountable to the people of London through the Mayor of London, whose office is now relocated to the new City Hall building in the Royal Docks, Newham. We look forward to discussions about how House Mill may be included in these opportunities.

We are also in regular contact with the Conservation Officer of the LB Newham.

We await and look forward to a meeting with Uma Kumaran, the new MP for Stratford and Bow (a new constituency in 2024) and to show her the unique House Mill which sits directly in the middle of this new constituency.

As previously reported, the Trust is always encouraged and motivated by statements relating to the London Plan (five year review due 2026) and local regeneration developments. The Trust contributed to the LDDC consultation document regarding the Bromley by Bow SPD Masterplan and Public Realm Strategy in November 2016. More recently the Trust has contributed to the consultation on the new LLDC Three Mills Conservation Area. Within this we sought to retain our existing section 106 parking facility and obtaining further section 106 gains.

The Trust continues its relationship with Historic England and has been in talks around the planned refurbishment works to the buildings' exteriors. Historic England has visited since the south facing refurbishment and is delighted with the works, the use of heritage appropriate materials and the retention of the majority of the window frames etc. This accolade is of particular interest and importance to the Trust, following some recent architect advice (not followed) that all the windows be removed and replaced with an accoya treated wood. Whilst this would have provided a highly durable product, resistant to rot, fungi etc, and long lasting, the Trust was emphatic that as a chemically treated processed wood it would not have been acceptable for use in a Grade I listed building.

HMT has also met with Historic England and the Canal and River Trust (CRT) about the damage caused by increased flooding to House Mill floor and foundations, following the creation and installation of the water control system to the north of the site, part of the Three Mills Lock (Lock 2012). . This prevents the natural tidal flow for several more miles (up to Lea Bridge Road which created the

“mill pond” for House Mill and Clock Mill) as previously, and the water backs up and into the heritage House Mill. These changes to the waterways are obviously outside of HMT’s control and/or responsibility, but it is the timbers of the House Mill which are being adversely affected. It was noted that HMT contacted CRT regarding the increased tides and incidences of flooding immediately after the structures were installed, CRT doesn’t think that these interventions will have caused the problem. However, they did agree to research into and compare historic tide levels to current, and will report back.

The Trust also acknowledges the encouragement and support of numerous bodies, and it will continue to build on those relationships in the interests of the Mill and its environs.

House Mill Trust has been approached to host the meeting of the International Tide Mill Conference, due to take place in 2026, It was during a previous International Tide Mill Conference that House Mill was acknowledged to be the largest in the world. Clearly this would be prestigious for HMT and details are awaited so that formal discussions may commence.

Our risk assessment process continues to be reviewed and maintained. We are working towards further improving our website, and our other social media, to become our main information points. Several new volunteers are leading on this, each of them IT and marketing students, and we are very grateful to be able to move forward with them. This will enable House Mill to become more visible even when the building is physically closed, and to ensure that both the heritage of the building, and the ongoing and future activities, are widely publicized.

We remain convinced that the Trust has a unique and magnificent project in the House Mill. We do know that we need more volunteers, and several new focussed Trustees, and are actively seeking these.

We believe the Trust can go forward with confidence, moving towards successful fundraising in the future enabling the machinery restoration to take place and towards saving the largest remaining tidal mill in the world for generations to come.

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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
for the year ended 30 June 2024

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees have approved Articles of Association that represent the Trusts current objects, and which have been filed with Companies House and the Charity Commission.

The Code of Governance prepared as part of the development and restructuring of the management of the restoration project and the Trust continues to be significant, well managed and undergoes regular review.

Additionally, the recent plethora of Codes of Practice, Guidelines, GDPR and changes in legislation place further pressures on trustees and volunteers alike. The trust is conscious of the need to comply, to these policies, and will endeavour to do so. Governance covers a broad spectrum of requirements. The Governance Working Group is drawing up new guidance, in line with the NCVO guidance for micro charities, but with particular relevance to House Mill Trust, and these will ensure that The Trust has correct procedures in place covering all aspects of our activities.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

The Articles of Association stipulate that there must be a minimum of three trustees and there is no maximum number of trustees. Additional trustees may be appointed by the existing trustees at any time, either to fill a casual vacancy or as an addition to the existing trustees. Any trustees so appointed will hold office only until the next Annual General Meeting and will then be eligible for re-election.

Potential trustees are invited to informally attend trustee meetings prior to appointment and a comprehensive induction programme is available. Additionally, individual trustees may undertake external training in a particular area of their role on the Governing Body.

Induction and Training of new trustees

The charitable entity strives to ensure equal opportunities and diversity in the employment of staff and trustee appointments. Selection criteria and procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

Organisational Structure

The company was once again managed and run during the year by volunteers. Strategic, financial, and technical management is exercised by the appropriate directors. Operational management is mostly undertaken by three of the directors, who have involvement with volunteers, operations and events. The need for operational staff is identified and it is hoped that once the pandemic has passed that funding will become available towards this.

The Trust remains conscious of the need to maintain its trustee numbers and expertise, going forward.

Working Groups

Each group is chaired by a Trustee with each working group deciding its own agenda, meeting regularly, and reporting actions directly to the board. The members consist of Trustees, Advisors and key partners, reporting back to the main board.

For much of this year the working groups have either met largely by zoom or been put on hold.

All directors of the company are also trustees of the charity and there are no other trustees. At each Annual General Meeting, one-third of the directors (the longest serving) are obliged to retire from office. Each director so retiring is eligible for re-election. The Board has the power to appoint additional directors; any director co-opted during the year must stand for election at the next annual general meeting. Trustees with relevant experience or expertise are sought through canvassing and advertising and newly appointed trustees are provided with relevant training and induction.

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Going forward, as previously set out, we also hope to attract more of the immediately local communities, and younger people, thus increasing diversity and ensuring continued interest in House Mill, moving forward. During the summer we will host some "meet the neighbours" initiatives to introduce them to this site, and also to encourage new and existing residents to join us on the journey, and to share their thoughts both on its current use and potential for wider use, in the future.

Once again, much credit must be given to the greater involvement of our volunteers who have continued to embrace the new and wide-ranging opportunities, we have brought to House Mill during the last few years. Our volunteers ensure we remain open for the public on our regular published openings. We thank them all for their continued support without which the Trust could not operate. This year, in addition to the new volunteers who are working on the marketing, as above, we welcomed several new volunteers who are currently training to be guides, and once fully trained, they will contribute towards fulfilling the Mill's potential for increased visitor opportunities.

Induction and training of new trustees

The charitable entity strives to ensure equal opportunities and diversity in the employment of staff and trustee appointments. Selection criteria and procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

Risk management

The trustees have reviewed the risks to which the charity is exposed and ensures appropriate controls are in place. The Trust has re-valued its properties for insurance purposes.

The risk register is being rewritten to reflect the working group definitions. Each of the working groups will identify the risks to assets within their responsibilities and ensure the treatment of those risks is managed effectively.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

01928896 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number

292336

Registered office

The Millers House
Three Mill Lane
Bromley-by-Bow
London
E3 3DU

Trustees

Mr J Haggerty (Chairman)
Mr W Hill
Ms B Charters
Mr A Cregan
Mr D Harbord
Mr A Spalding
Mr J A Walters

Company Secretary

Mr J Haggerty

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for the year ended 30 June 2024

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Independent Examiner

Raffingers LLP
Chartered Certified Accountants
19-20 Bourne Court
Southend Road
Woodford Green
Essex
IG8 8HD

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY

The principal activity of the company is the House Mill Restoration Project, and the aim of The House Mill Trust, formally the River Lea Tidal Mill Trust continues to be the:

- Restoration of the machinery to working condition;
- Development of House Mill into an education and community resource;
- Production of hydroelectric power by using the 18th century wheels alongside 21st century turbines; unique in delivering alternative energy using technology spanning four centuries.
- Increased safe use of both buildings by the local and growing communities, and by specialist milling/industrial heritage groups and schools

All of which involves the raising and management of funds to restore and maintain the 1776 Grade I listed House Mill, a tidal mill at Three Mills, London E3 and the largest remaining one in the World.

The company is limited by guarantee of £1 per member (company number 01928896), governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association and is a registered charity (number 292336).

Approved by order of the board of trustees on and signed on its behalf by:

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Mr J Haggerty (Chairman) - Trustee

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

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