



OLD ROYAL
NAVAL COLLEGE
GREENWICH



The Greenwich Foundation for the Old Royal Naval College

ANNUAL REVIEW 2022–2023

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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR

Sir Stuart Etherington

This remarkable site holds a special place in the hearts of many, and I am privileged to be a part of its enduring legacy.

I am delighted to have joined at a pivotal time for the Greenwich Foundation for the Old Royal Naval College as we embark on a new chapter of major projects and plans, ones that will help us to build a sustainable future for the next 25 years. We will continue to engage with the community, foster partnerships, and seek new opportunities for growth and collaboration.

We have made significant progress in the preservation of our historic buildings, making them more accessible to the public while our family and learning programmes have expanded, engaging with visitors to share the special significance of this site. The Chapel of St Peter & St Paul saw the completion of two major projects this year: the conservation of Benjamin West's epic painting, and the installation of an environmentally-friendly lighting scheme which has provided new ways to discover and enjoy the Chapel's ornate and impressive interiors.

There are challenges that lie ahead. Our buildings and grounds need significant maintenance, conservation and enhancement work every year. Our dedicated team work round the year to ensure that we are financially self-sustaining as far as possible, while remaining accessible and open to all. However, the Greenwich Foundation is a charity which relies on the generosity of the public to help maintain and protect some of the nation's finest art and architecture.

I would like to thank our donors, whose continuing support is so vital. We are especially grateful to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and to the many charitable trusts and individuals who give generously to the Foundation each year.

I am excited to work with the trustees, leadership, staff and volunteers and our many partners to further our mission of preserving our heritage and sharing the rich history of this extraordinary site.



INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Matthew Mees

I am very proud of the strides we are making as a heritage organisation and visitor attraction, namely in developing a thriving independent cultural programme. One that we hope will ensure long-term resilience and allow us to protect and conserve this architectural masterpiece for generations to come.

Our events are making a real impact on people and communities and being an ‘eventful destination’ is giving people a reason to visit and revisit. Our public programme is allowing us to meet an important part of our mission – to educate and share the history and significance of this magnificent place. This, in turn, improves the public’s recognition of the site, which has improved significantly in recent years. Events like the *Museum of the Moon*, Queen’s Platinum Jubilee four-day weekend, the popular festivals of Diwali and Lunar New Year light shows, and Christmas

celebrations enliven our buildings and grounds with spectators and revellers alike.

We serve as a valuable education and research resource. Our award-winning education programme is free to state-funded schools and provides quality learning experiences linked to the school curriculum, as well as fun and informal learning sessions for adult learners and families with children. This includes the hospital outreach sessions in our borough which were shortlisted for the 2023 Museum+Heritage Awards in the Learning Programme of the Year category.

Special projects have opened and improved even more spaces for the public to enjoy and learn from, while demonstrating conservation-in-action across our site. The Nelson Room has been carefully restored to its former glory with new interpretation developed, while the restoration of the Benjamin West altarpiece has brought the Chapel interior in line with enhancements previously made to the Painted Hall.

We have taken steps to understand our own impact on the environment, finding solutions that would allow us to be environmentally sustainable and responsible whilst adapting to and respecting the historical significance of the buildings. We have an action plan that aims to deliver in some key areas over the coming years – green-energy solutions; gaining sustainability certification that verifies and measures carbon data to reduce emissions and work towards net zero; and engaging our staff and audiences to drive change.

I am grateful to the individuals and charitable trusts who support us, and to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. I am particularly thankful for, and acknowledge here, the resilience, dedication and hard work of my colleagues at the Greenwich Foundation who make this an exceptional place to visit and to work in.

Matthew Meel



OUR SUPPORTERS

The Greenwich Foundation for the Old Royal Naval College wishes to thank the following for their contributions in 2022–2023:

MAJOR BENEFACTORS

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

SUPPORTERS

The 1805 Club

American Friends for the
Old Royal Naval College

Art Fund

Tony Hales CBE

The Hartnett Conservation Trust

The Idlewild Trust

Ian and Caroline Laing

The Michael Marks Charitable Trust

Moynitrust

Old Royal Naval College Chapel Fund

The Rose Foundation

Royal Borough of Greenwich

The Charles Skey Charitable Trust

PATRONS

George Anson

Sir Frank Berman KCMG QC
& Lady Christine Berman

Sir Nicolas & Lady Christine Bevan

Dr Tony & Rosemary Butler

Dr Rupert Evenett FCA

Tony Hales CBE

Jonathan & Marjorie Ouvry

The Rt Hon. Sir Timothy Sainsbury

Eric Shawyer CBE

Chris & Tracey Springett

*And all those who prefer
to remain anonymous*





OUR STORY

The Old Royal Naval College is the centrepiece of Maritime Greenwich, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with a long and celebrated 600-year history.

1439



The site was originally home to Greenwich Palace, the favoured Royal residence of Henry VIII. The Palace fell into disrepair during the Civil War, after which Queen Mary II ordered the creation of the Royal Hospital for Seamen on the same site, which housed injured and retired sailors.

IMAGE: *GREENWICH PALACE*, C. 1600–1629. NATIONAL TRUST

1696



These are the stunning classical buildings visitors can see today, designed by one of England's greatest architects, Sir Christopher Wren, and built between 1696 and 1751. The magnificent Painted Hall, one of the finest Baroque interiors in Britain, was painted by Sir James Thornhill 1707–1726 and has been referred to as 'Britain's Sistine Chapel'.

IMAGE: CANALETTO, *GREENWICH HOSPITAL*, 1750s

1873



From 1873–1997 the buildings housed the Royal Naval College, one of the world's foremost naval training establishments for naval officers for over a hundred years including the first female members of the Royal Navy in the 1940s, known as the WRENS.

IMAGE: *THE MARCH PAST BY WRNS, 1941. PRIEST, L C (LT) © IWM*

1997



After the Naval College moved to Shrivenham, an independent charity was established in 1997 called the Greenwich Foundation. The Foundation conserves the magnificent baroque buildings and grounds of the Old Royal Naval College for present and future generations and provides opportunities for wide and diverse audiences to enjoy and share their significance.

TODAY



Between 2016 and 2019, the Greenwich Foundation spearheaded an award-winning £8.5 million conservation project, which saw the Painted Hall restored to its full glory in, and the Tudor foundations of the site excavated. Within the first year the visitor offer was recognised as one of the top tourist attractions in the country.

OUR VISION

The Greenwich Foundation for Old Royal Naval College has two charitable purposes, to conserve and protect the historic site and educate the public about the heritage of the site.

Today we are a visitor destination, a historic landmark open to the public and one of London's most popular venues and filming locations, with over 733,000 visitors through our buildings and many more onto our grounds during the last year.

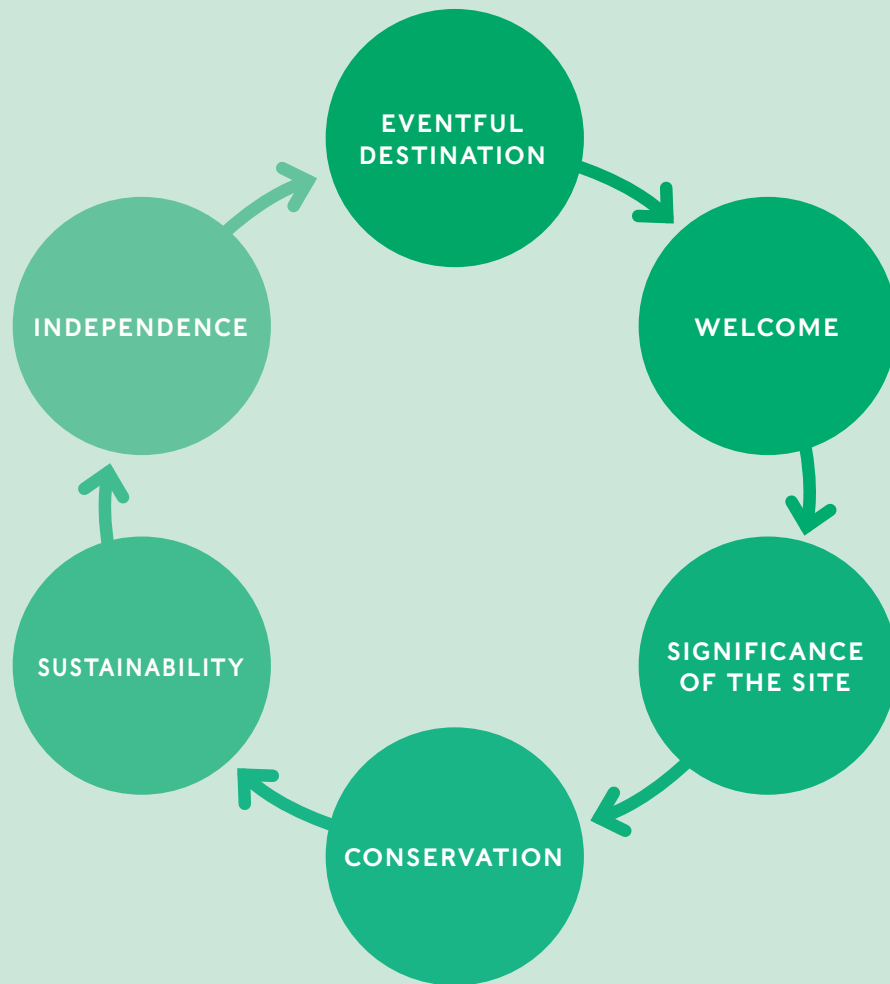
The green 17-acre riverside estate is a source of public enjoyment and local pride, being at the centre of the community in South-East London and providing a free and bustling public realm that serves many including 10,000 students from our principal site partners, University of Greenwich and Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance.

Our vision is to be an extraordinary cultural and eventful destination, acclaimed for its sustainable conservation, learning, and creativity. An unforgettable place for everyone to discover, learn from and delight in for all time.

Our mission is to enrich people's lives by protecting this architectural masterpiece and sharing its history, heritage, and significance, contributing to the enjoyment and well-being of everyone.



OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



Foster a cultural, creative, and **EVENTFUL DESTINATION** in London and for the local community that celebrates the arts, music and heritage of the site and promotes imagination and creativity.

Strive to be engaging, **WELCOMING** and accessible to as wide a range of people as possible, aiming to showcase diverse perspectives, cultures and histories and inspire a sense of ownership, pride and enjoyment in the local community, Londoners and visitors.

Share the **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE** through learning and educational activities and resources that promote the history and heritage and help people understand its context.

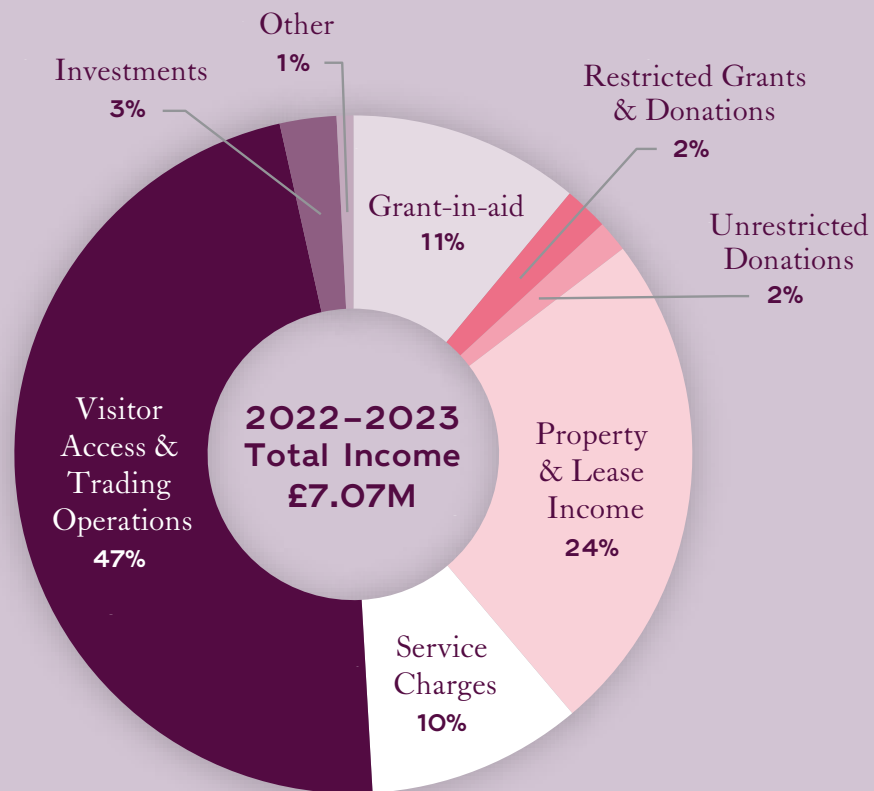
CONSERVE and protect the fabric of our breath-taking buildings, grounds, archaeology and its collections to ensure the architectural and cultural heritage is preserved for future generations, as well as enjoyed by the present ones.

Embrace a **SUSTAINABLE** future that reflects society's expectations, adopting responsible stewardship of the site for future generations and a visitor centric perspective that can support our work towards sustainability.

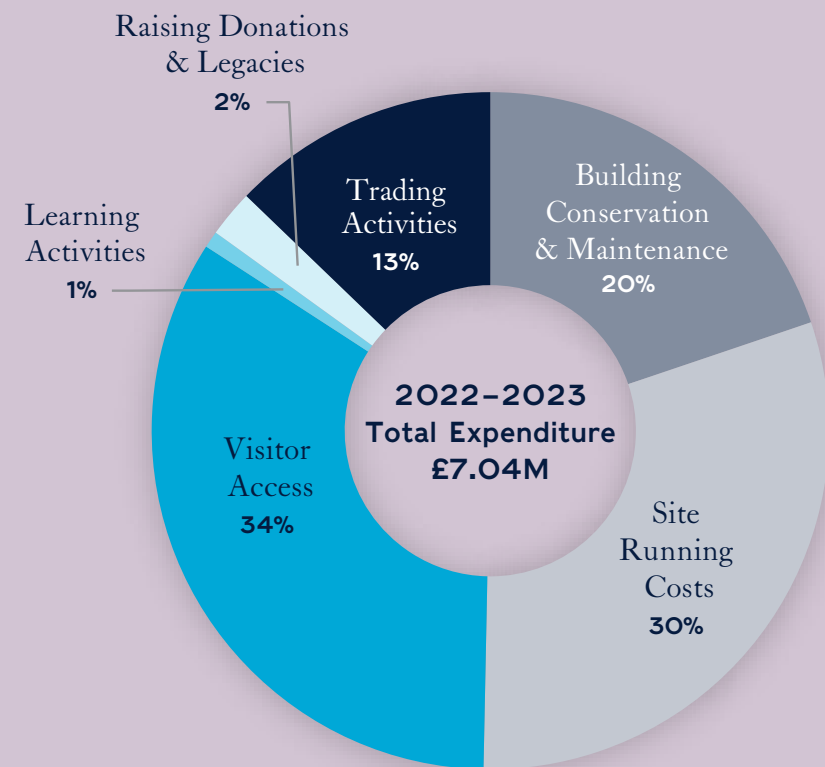
Become fully financially **INDEPENDENT** by broadening income streams, growing a thriving cultural business and ensuring long-term viability and resilience.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE IN 2022-2023

How we are funded



How we spend it



A YEAR IN REVIEW

The year 2022–2023 was full of success for the Old Royal Naval College. Two major restoration projects, the Nelson Room and the Benjamin West altarpiece within the Chapel, were completed after careful specialist attention and generous philanthropic support.

We exceeded our targets to welcome over 733,000 visitors, including 4,350 school pupils, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) learners and family participants. Our creative programming, especially the *Museum of the Moon* exhibition in the Painted Hall, brought in new audiences and we took new approaches to our outreach work such as our hospital sessions to extend our reach even further.

733,000+

VISITORS THROUGH OUR
BUILDINGS AND MANY MORE
ONTO OUR GROUNDS

50,000

PEOPLE CAME TO SEE THE
MUSEUM OF THE MOON
IN THE PAINTED HALL

25,000

PEOPLE JOINED US FOR ONE
OF OUR GUIDED TOURS

5,100

VISITORS ON FIRST
SUNDAYS ACCESSING THE
PAINTED HALL FOR JUST £5

11,000

SCHOOL, FAMILY AND ADULT LEARNERS
ATTENDED LEARNING SESSIONS

5,500

SCHOOL CHILDREN
FOR CURRICULUM-BASED
LEARNING WORKSHOPS

1,000

DEAF, VISUALLY
IMPAIRED PARTICIPANTS
AND ESOL LEARNERS

THE NELSON ROOM
WAS RESTORED BY:

8 CRAFTSPEOPLE
3 STONEMASONS
3 DECORATORS
2 GLAZIERS

THE BENJAMIN WEST
CHAPEL ALTARPIECE
WAS RESTORED BY:

4 CONSERVATORS
3 PAINTERS
1 PLASTERER
WORKING FOR
8 WEEKS

43

YOUNG PEOPLE
ATTENDED
8 HOSPITAL
OUTREACH
SESSIONS FOR 2
HOSPITAL SCHOOLS

76

VOLUNTEERS
WORKED
5,500
HOURS

100

PEOPLE RECEIVED
THEIR BRITISH
CITIZENSHIP
IN A SPECIAL
CEREMONY IN
THE CHAPEL



BLOOD & BATTLE: DISSECTING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM BEATTY



1797: THE MARINER'S REVENGE;



TRINITY LABAN CHAPEL CHOIR

HIGHLIGHTS

THE NELSON ROOM

The restoration and re-opening of the Nelson Room now allows visitors to explore the fascinating story of Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson's lying-in-state at the Old Royal Naval College.

Following his death at the Battle of Trafalgar, the body of Lord Nelson was brought to the Old Royal Naval College where it was taken to a small records room off the Painted Hall – now known as The Nelson Room – ahead of his funeral in central London. Martin Ashley Architects oversaw the conservation of the Hawksmoor-designed space, where visitors can now explore Nelson's connection with Greenwich and learn about how Greenwich became the epicentre of a national expression of loss and mourning. The re-opening of the space was accompanied by a well-attended lecture series which explored the multi-faceted history of one of our nation's most significant historical figures.

THE RESTORATION OF THE NELSON ROOM WAS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF MANY INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS, IN PARTICULAR THE GOSLING FOUNDATION.

CONSERVATION

Ongoing conservation and maintenance is a key part of the Foundation's work.

Each year we redecorate and re-gild; clean and conserve, repair and restore every aspect of the buildings and grounds; from our colonnades to hundreds of windows and doors, miles of stonework, railings, gates, lanterns and lightwells, and much more.

EDUCATION

Inspiring people of all ages with the history and context of the Old Royal Naval College is at the heart of what we do. This year we were recognised with the highly prestigious Sandford Award for Education. The award recognises the highest quality of site-based heritage learning, with a particular focus on schools programming. We were praised in their report:

“Those ‘wow moments’ that students will remember for a lifetime. Its rich history is brought vividly to life by the Learning Programmes, which are in themselves world class.”



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a crucial part of our work. Highlight events such as a special BSL (British Sign Language) tour for deaf and hard of hearing visitors; Heritage Construction Career Day for school and college students across London; the annual pomander-making workshops with participants new to the UK and learning English as a second language.

During August we ran a 6-week art project for young refugees. The students worked with a local artist to record their impressions of the Painted Hall, using sculptures and found objects.

“They learned a lot and enjoyed the opportunity to practice their English, asking questions and giving opinions. It is so important that asylum seekers, refugees and other recently arrived migrants can learn about the community they live in and feel part of that community. Thank you so much.”

SEA CADETS

The Greenwich, Deptford and Rotherhithe Sea Cadet Unit is based in *T.S. Dreadnought* within the grounds of the historic Old Royal Naval College. The Sea Cadet Unit is flourishing with a company of about 40 young people, regularly undertaking drills and practices in the old naval grounds.

HOSPITAL SCHOOL PROGRAMME

In this academic year we ran 8 hospital outreach sessions for 2 hospital schools attended by 43 children and young people, along with accompanying adults. The hospital schools programme was shortlisted for the Museums and Heritage Awards' Learning Programme of the Year.

FAMILY EVENTS

Our family audience grew with the introduction of a family programmer. Special astronomy activities ran throughout the Easter holidays and Royal-themed arts and crafts and storytelling took place over the Platinum Jubilee Weekend. A new 'Messy Play' strand of Early Years programming began in September. This has proved extremely popular so far with over 70 children visiting with their grownups for the first session.



COMMERCIAL

Alexander McQueen was one of several brands that had a major showcase on our grounds. The commercial team worked with Gainsbury & Whiting, McQueen and Historic England to enable a two-week build, for a spectacular fashion show.

An architectural superstructure, designed by acclaimed Chilean architect Smiljan Radić sprang from the lawns of Lower Grand Square at the Old Royal Naval College in October to present the British luxury house's Spring/Summer 2023 collection. Other corporate clients like Rolex, Rolls Royce and the Terrence Higgins Trust, all hosted events with us this year.



WEDDINGS

Our weddings and corporate hire go from strength to strength under the management of Company of Cooks. We have increased our hospitality revenue and have built a strong reputation as one of London's leading hire venues. The launch of Asian Weddings at the Old Royal Naval College saw an overwhelmingly positive response. There were also public ticketed fine-dining experiences with live entertainment in the Painted Hall under the *Museum of the Moon* installation, special festive experiences and themed Afternoon Teas in Admiral's House.

FILM & TV LOCATION

For heritage and historic buildings, filming can provide significant income through location hire fees. In addition, being associated with a film or television show can be a powerful draw for international and domestic visitors who wish to visit a famous movie location and subsequently contribute to a place's vital visitor economy. Netflix's *Bridgerton*, *The Crown*, *The Diplomat* and Apple TV's *Slow Horses*, *The Great* and George Clooney's *The Boys in the Boat* all filmed on site.



INSPIRING AWE & SPECTACLE

The *Museum of the Moon* was a beautifully conceived art installation that allowed us to use our public space and programmes to inspire and educate.

The Painted Hall at the Old Royal Naval College provided an epic setting for the *Museum of the Moon*. The eight-week installation provided every one of its 50,000 visitors with a moment to discover two amazing works of art at the same time – the spectacular Painted Hall and a thought-provoking contemporary piece by British artist Luke Jerram.

It was the most successful project for the Old Royal Naval College since the re-opening of the Painted Hall in March 2019 – attracting families and younger, diverse audiences, some visiting Greenwich for the first time.

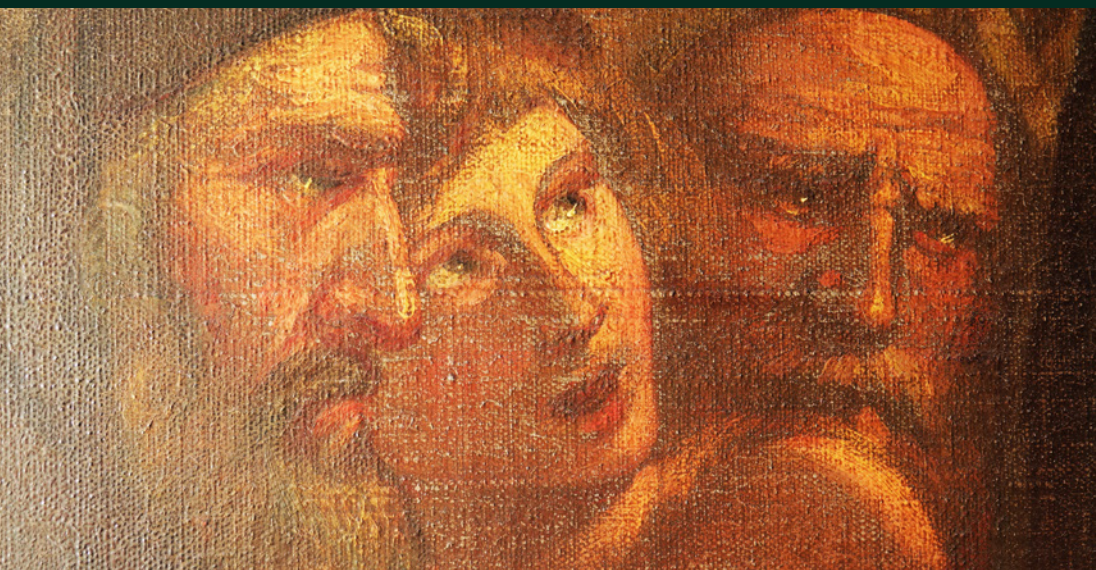
50,000 VISITORS

A CRUCIAL PART OF
THE DELIVERY WAS OUR
STAFF, THE VISITOR
EXPERIENCE TEAM AND
OUR 76 VOLUNTEERS

1391
HOURS
WORKED

432
SHIFTS ACROSS
8 WEEKS





BENJAMIN WEST ALTARPIECE RESTORATION

Visitors had the rare opportunity to see conservation in action as work in the Chapel of St Peter and St Paul was undertaken on Benjamin West's epic painting *Preservation of St Paul after a Shipwreck at Malta*.

The work on the altarpiece in the Chapel was led by painting conservators, Paine and Stewart (who executed the award-winning conservation of Thornhill's Painted Hall) involving a full clean of the painting's surface and its elaborate frame whilst adhering to the principle of minimal intervention.

The works were supported by the American Friends of the Old Royal Naval College, Hartnett Conservation Trust, Michael Marks Charitable Trust, Idlewild Trust, and generous individuals.

"For the first time ever, we can actually see a shipwreck and facial features and figures. Lots of people have asked where the signature is – I can now show them it at the bottom left-hand corner. The Chapel and Painted Hall are now a truly stunning duo."

A CHAPEL CONGREGATION MEMBER



SUPPORTING THE OLD ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE

As a registered charity, the Old Royal Naval College relies on philanthropic support from generous individuals and charitable trusts to protect this historic site and share its significance with the public.

“History matters, music matters and what an amazing place to be educated on such a beautiful campus ...

That you will have access to special Patron events is only a bonus. Support this wonderful place for its own worth and heritage.”

TONY BUTLER





“The Old Royal Naval College is a unique site with its history and magnificent buildings and deserves support for future generations to enjoy.

It has developed a wide programme of conservation, education and local engagement and its buildings are a spectacular setting for art installations ...

For all these reasons, I would urge others to consider making a legacy gift to the Old Royal Naval College.”

DAVID SALMOND

“We have a real connection to the Painted Hall in particular, as it was where we got married. Given our connection, we have always felt it important to support the Old Royal Naval College. Having seen first-hand the great work that has been done over recent years we have continued to support as we know our donations are being well used ...

Preserving the beauty and heritage is key and providing support to an organisation who have the best interests of the site at heart means you know the key aims will be met.”

CHRIS SPRINGETT

SUPPORT US

To find out more about making a donation to the Old Royal Naval College, please visit ornc.org/support-us or contact development@ornc.org







OLD ROYAL
NAVAL COLLEGE

GREENWICH

**The Greenwich Foundation
for the Old Royal Naval College**

GREENWICH LONDON SE10 9LW
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1062519

