

# LEATHERSELLERS' STRATEGY

January 2024



THE  
LEATHERSELLERS



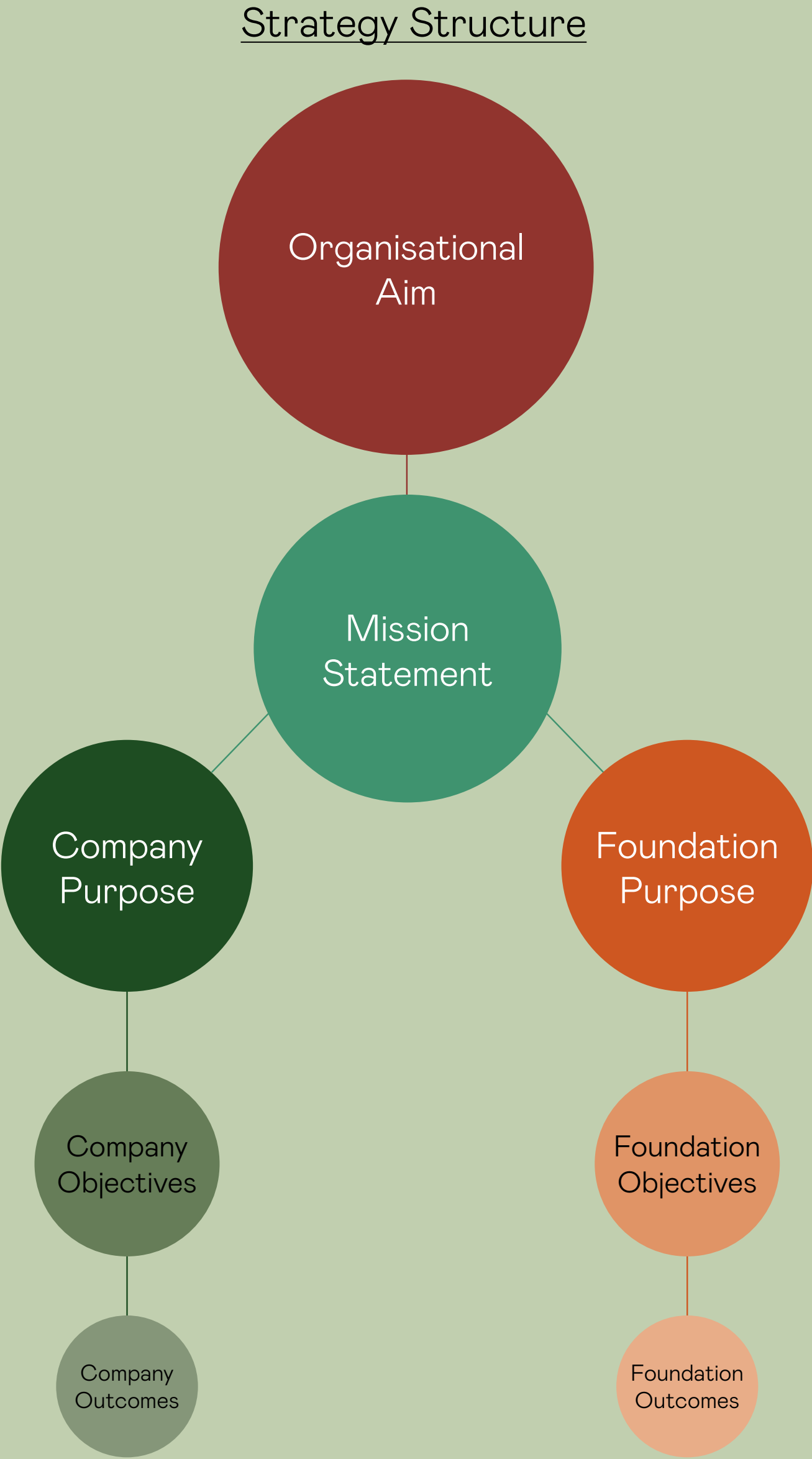
Welcome to the Leathersellers. We enable individuals and communities by working with charities, foster opportunity through education, and support the UK leather trade.

This strategy articulates two years of work across the organisation, synthesising new thinking and approaches with the commitments that have always defined us. Indeed, our organisational identity, which informs this strategy, is based on consistent historic precedent and in the ways we seek to meet our objectives in the present day. This rationale provides the basis for both our strategy and culture and has been refined into what we call our Guiding Principles. You can see these in more detail on the following page.

Along with helping us achieve our goals and making clear decisions, the strategy will enable us to begin measuring our objectives and the work needed to be able to realise its ambition. Some of this is already in place or underway and some is yet to be developed. The strategy is therefore dynamic and will evolve over time to reflect the results of its implementation.

As we put in place these measurements, we will be able to use the data to further improve our work and increase our impact. Along with myself, I know that the Company’s members and the dedicated staff team look forward to delivering the objectives herein, helping to fulfil our historic purpose as a platform for opportunity.

**Matthew Lawrence**  
Chief Executive and Clerk to the Company



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our Guiding Principles are truths that serve as a foundation for how we operate. They are based on centuries of consistent application and our activity and ambitions in the present day. Our Guiding Principles are embedded across our organisational identity and in the way we choose to carry out our strategic objectives.

## Compassion

Compassion lies at the core of our identity and purpose. We have an enduring charitable legacy, from 1444 to the present day. We are committed to the support and service of others.

## Endeavour

We endeavour to be the best we can be, striving for excellence in our approaches and practices, being ready to learn and to set examples of leadership.

## Independence

Our independence, based on a 600-year heritage, informs our responsibilities as stewards in the present, gives us an ability to innovate, and to respond to needs and opportunities.



# AIM & MISSION

Organisational Aim

FULFILLING OUR HISTORIC  
PURPOSE AS A PLATFORM  
FOR OPPORTUNITY

Mission Statement

As stewards of an enduring legacy, we  
are driven by charitable ambition and our  
responsibility to future generations



Parminder Nahl was awarded various academic prizes and an undergraduate university grant from the Leathersellers while studying at Colfe’s School. Parminder is now a member of the Leathersellers’ Livery.



# COMPANY PURPOSE



## Company Purpose

To steward our assets (financial, historic, and relational) and support the work of the Leathersellers’ Foundation – ensuring each generation of members passes on a better organisation.

## Objectives

- ① To ensure long-term stewardship of our financial, historic and relational assets
- ② To be an open, engaged and responsive organisation, building on our positive legacy and reputation
- ③ To support the delivery and impact of our charitable, educational, leather trade, City and wider communities
- ④ To support the Foundation to increase the impact of its work

# FOUNDATION PURPOSE



## Foundation Purpose

To enable individuals and communities by working with charities; to foster opportunity through education; and to support the UK leather trade.

## Objectives

- ① To be a best practice funder, demonstrating trust, transparency and flexibility, to create the most added value for our grantees
- ② To provide sound financial stewardship
- ③ To drive impact and long-term change in our funded areas
- ④ To leverage the added value of the Leathersellers’ community



# THE COMPANY OBJECTIVES



Objective 1:

TO ENSURE LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP OF OUR FINANCIAL, HISTORIC AND RELATIONAL ASSETS

Objective Narrative

The long-term stewardship of our assets (in the widest sense) is the most important driver behind the longevity and financial health of the Leathersellers. The more opportunities we have to develop financial value and capitalise on the skills and involvement of our members and partners, the more we can drive our charitable ambition.

Outcomes

- Manage risk effectively and exercise financial control, to steward and maintain the longevity of assets
- Foster strong governance, by embedding strong policies and procedures that are actively promoted and pursued
- Identify and realise opportunity to create financial value
- Develop an engaged and diverse membership and staff with the skills, commitment and assets to underpin the Company and Foundation’s strength, balance and focus over the long-term



St Helen’s estate has been the home of the Leathersellers since 1543, when the Company acquired the former site of the Priory of St Helen. Today, we act as curators of St Helen’s Place and as guardians of its historic significance within the City of London.



Objective 2:

TO BE AN OPEN, ENGAGED AND RESPONSIVE ORGANISATION, BUILDING ON OUR POSITIVE LEGACY AND REPUTATION

Objective Narrative

Building on our positive reputation by strengthening our networks and clearly communicating our impact. We will continue to reinforce this by implementing best practice and through bringing the work of the organisation closer to members, staff and partners.

Outcomes

- Increase understanding and appreciation of our work
- Build and leverage our wider network and partners in the City of London and beyond
- Develop our Environmental, Social and Governance approaches and practices



Ellie Jones and Rachel Revell are graduates of De Montfort University’s Fashion and Textile Department and winners of the Leathersellers’ Design Awards. The Leathersellers have been supporting De Montfort University since 2011 to develop excellence in leatherworking and raise the aspirations and craftsmanship of students.



Objective 3:

TO SUPPORT THE DELIVERY AND IMPACT OF OUR CHARITABLE, EDUCATIONAL, LEATHER TRADE, CITY AND WIDER COMMUNITIES

Objective Narrative

The Company has long-standing, and more recent, formal and informal responsibilities, obligations and connections. It aims to play a key part in contributing to the success of these closely related organisations and communities.

Outcomes

- Provide skilled and engaged support in our formal external governance roles
- Support the civic, ceremonial, philanthropic and social activities of the City of London; and our military affiliations
- Facilitate the understanding and use of leather through engagement with the UK leather sector, by convening discussion and through support for education, research and heritage



Charlie Laurie was awarded the Leathersellers’ Award at Cockpit Arts for three years from 2016 to 2018. He is now Director of luxury leather goods company, Charles Laurie London.



Objective 4:

# TO SUPPORT THE FOUNDATION TO INCREASE THE IMPACT IF ITS WORK

Objective Narrative

The Foundation’s charitable ambition is the embodiment of a Livery that contributes to society. The more support the Company can offer the Foundation financially or through other means, the more impact is created.

Outcomes

- Company financial surplus released to increase financial giving
- Continue to add value by leveraging the Leathersellers’ non-financial assets in support of the Foundation’s aims to help deliver targeted and impactful grant-giving (including members, the Committees, the Hall and staff)



# The Foundation



Objective 1:

TO BE A BEST PRACTICE FUNDER,  
DEMONSTRATING TRUST, TRANSPARENCY  
AND FLEXIBILITY, TO CREATE THE MOST  
ADDED VALUE FOR OUR GRANTEES

Objective Narrative

This objective focuses on being a modern Foundation, that is confident in what it hopes to achieve. It aims to deliver the best for its grantees and adds value to its communities.

Outcomes

- Prioritise the needs of grantees in the design and delivery of all grants processes
- Trustees, Committees and staff make timely and objective decisions, actively using existing evidence base
- Communicate with openness and purpose



Grantees and partners attending the Foundation’s annual Link & Learn event. From bottom left clockwise: Eliza Frayn, Doorstep Library Network; Jessica Brown, Trusthouse Charitable Trust; Andrew Beeput, The Bond Board; Louise Cheung, The Amber Foundation; Isabelle Clement, Wheels for Wellbeing.



Objective 2:

# TO PROVIDE SOUND FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Objective Narrative

Active and skilled stewardship, mindful of governance and societal change, is crucial to ensure the Foundation can continue and grow its impact through grant giving.

Outcomes

- Commitment to ongoing value optimisation to ensure we can continue to grant as much as possible
- Consider and embed environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors regarding the Foundation’s operations and assets
- Ensure trustees are engaged and informed regarding risk, their roles and responsibilities



Children at a workshop run by Foundation grantee, Visyon, who have been supporting the emotional health of children, young people and their families in the Cheshire and Staffordshire Moorlands areas since 1994.



Objective 3:

# TO DRIVE IMPACT AND LONG-TERM CHANGE IN OUR FUNDED AREAS

Objective Narrative

The more positive impact we have the more we add value to our grantees. This objective ensures the Foundation is set up for success and is structured in a way that it can learn in order to maximise its positive impact on communities and grantees.

Outcomes

- Measure and communicate the outcomes and impact of our work to advance knowledge, and inform our strategic and financial approach through sharing learning and responding to evidence and opportunities
- Convene and collaborate with others to foster purposeful connections and to achieve greater impact
- Be a trusted partner and resource to enable the philanthropy of others



Jack Millington (right), a member of the Leathersellers’ Freedom and owner of micro-tannery Billy Tannery, with apprentice Mark, a former brewer whose role has been supported with a grant from the Leathersellers’ Foundation.



Objective 4:

TO LEVERAGE THE ADDED VALUE OF THE LEATHERSELLERS’ COMMUNITY

Objective Narrative

The Foundation is the fulfilment of the Leathersellers’ charitable ambition, providing and contributing to the support of individuals and communities in various ways.

Outcomes

- Provide charitable purpose for surplus Company funds
- Engage membership and alumni network for shared benefit and facilitating connections



Candice Lau is a leather and clay artist and member of the Leathersellers’ Freedom. Candice received the Cockpit Arts Leathersellers’ Award in 2015 and 2016, and the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust Leathersellers’ Award in 2017.





The Leathersellers  
7 St Helen's Place  
Bishopsgate  
London EC3A 6AB

[leathersellers.co.uk](http://leathersellers.co.uk)

Front cover: Mary Wing To is a leather artisan and current Master of Atelier at Chanel UK. Mary received a Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust Leathersellers' Award in 2012.

Photography by Paul Read,  
Jayne Lloyd and Shoayb Khattab