

STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2017



MISSION, PURPOSE AND VISION

OUR MISSION: Supporting scholarship, creativity and cultural enrichment

OUR PURPOSE: The London Library is a registered charity dedicated to the advancement of education, learning and knowledge by the provision and maintenance in London of a lending library embracing the arts and humanities. Founded by Thomas Carlyle in 1841, it has already played a central role in the intellectual life of the nation for over 170 years.

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE is to continue to provide generations of researchers, recreational readers, and writers of all kinds with the riches of a national library in the arts and humanities for use in their own homes or workplaces. As a leading literary institution, we aim to celebrate and promote the written word, stimulating ideas and creativity to the cultural enrichment of all.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Developing and preserving the collections
2. Extending access
3. Supporting research and reading
4. Fostering literary and intellectual community
5. Sharing our heritage

KEY CHARACTERISTICS AND VALUES

The London Library is ...

A treasure-trove of knowledge

By acquiring the most important published works in the arts and humanities in each generation and discarding almost nothing from its shelves, the Library has amassed an extraordinary collection of over one million volumes dating from the 16th century to the latest publications. A growing electronic library complements the printed collections.

We seek to provide the most direct and liberal access to knowledge by maintaining a high proportion of the printed collections on open-access shelves where the volumes may be freely browsed, with most available for loan. Likewise we seek to make the resources of our electronic collections available off-site (through our website) as well as within the Library premises.



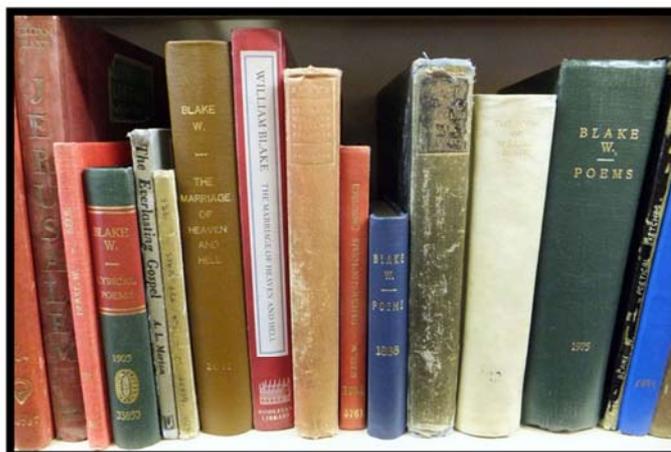
A place of learning and enjoyment

We believe in the intrinsic value of the life of the mind and its cultural expression so the Library offers facilities conducive to thinking, reading, scholarship and creativity. Membership is open to all and many of our members have no right of access to other loan collections of comparable depth and reach.

We seek to provide a prompt, reliable and courteous service, meeting and exceeding the expectations of users. Our highly-qualified and specialist staff operate in a spirit of keen collaboration with members, engaging with their individual research and reading interests whether those interests are professional or personal.

Independent

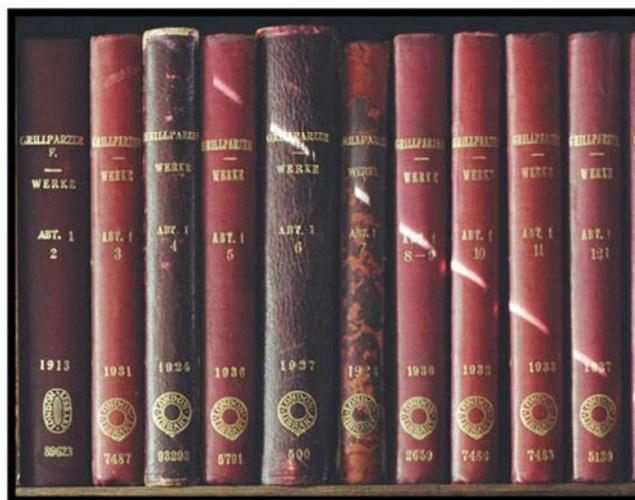
Throughout its history, the Library has remained self-financing (supported by membership subscriptions, donations and bequests) and self-governing, with a committee of Trustees elected by and from the members. This independent status brings many challenges but enables us to decide our own priorities, standing apart, when necessary, from fluctuating policy trends in local or central government.



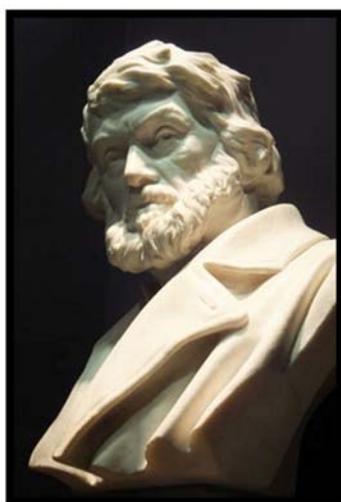
We determine our future direction and priorities in keeping with our founding principles and the needs of all those who depend upon us. At the same time, we seek to create effective partnerships with a wide range of organisations in order to learn from others, share our own expertise and work together in pursuit of common goals.

Cosmopolitan

The Library reflects the special character of London, being cosmopolitan in its collections and outlook. From the start, works were added to the collections in most European languages and many non-European ones; this practice continues with particular strengths in French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish languages.



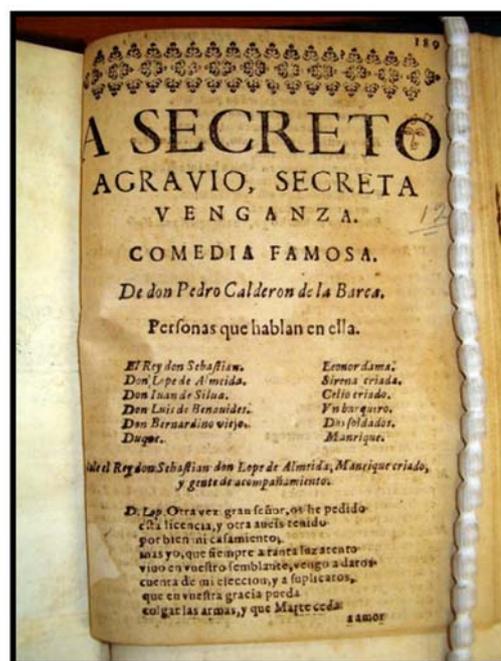
While providing a rich resource for London's residents, the Library also seeks to serve those much further afield. The Library's founder, Thomas Carlyle, held that "without reading, there is no intellectual living: a life without letters is death"; by working to increase access to the Library's collections and services (including an active postal loans and enquiry service and an ever-growing Electronic Library), we seek to ensure that no-one need go short of food for thought.



Steeped in history

The Library's founding members included many of the most prominent writers and thinkers of the day (from Dickens to Darwin, George Eliot to Thackeray, John Stuart Mill to Harriet Martineau) and the roll-call of renowned members continues to this day. The history of the Library – its members, collections and premises – therefore offers a window onto the literary and intellectual history of the nation.

We take pride in our history and seek to preserve and promote awareness of our unique institutional archive among scholars and researchers around the world as well as interested general readers.



CONTEXT

When the London Library was founded in 1841, there were no public libraries (the first Public Library Act was not passed until 1850) and few university libraries in England outside Oxford and Cambridge.

The London Library was founded to make good that deficiency in the capital and has continued to grow ever since, responding to changing needs and priorities while holding fast to its founding principles.

Role of libraries in the 21st century

Now, as then, our context is that of the evolving nature of library provision especially for those with limited access to the great national and university libraries of our day.

Many purposive general readers are no longer finding the materials they require in their local public libraries where other imperatives have led to a diminution of range, depth and longevity in the collections offered.

Online search tools make it ever easier to identify relevant information sources, raising expectations that a library should be able to offer access to them all regardless of their location or ownership. A library is no longer merely a physical location but a gateway to sources of knowledge beyond its walls.

Opinions differ as to the extent to which digital materials will entirely supersede printed ones and, indeed, as to the pace at which such a change might come about. For the present, the number of printed books published each year continues to grow even as e-book publishing gains pace. For the foreseeable future it seems likely that libraries will need to provide both.

Arts & humanities

In the arts & humanities, older publications are never entirely superseded – a work published in the 17th century or the 1920s may be just as relevant to ongoing scholarship as the latest work or become in itself an object of study. New methods of research and scholarly communication likewise sit alongside older ones. Digital technology has been embraced wherever it offers greater facility of access. Major databases which bring together a large quantity of individual texts (making it possible to search effortlessly across the work of one or more authors, periods or subjects) have proved particularly attractive. It has been noted, however, that research citations still tend to go back to the original print source, betraying continuing anxiety about the durability of the online source in a field where cross references may remain relevant for hundreds of years.

“The greatest city in the world is destitute of that useful institution, a public library; and the writer who has undertaken to treat on any large historical subject is reduced to the necessity of purchasing for his private use a numerous and valuable collection of the books which must form the basis of his work.”

Edward Gibbon (1779) quoted by William D Christie in *An Explanation of the Scheme of the London Library, 1841*.

Higher education

Changes in higher education policy and funding are having an increasing impact in the arts and humanities. Both teaching and research resources are under pressure as funding priority is given to science and technology or other areas of learning perceived to be more directly related to future employment and economic needs. Uncertain employment prospects also encourage increasing numbers of people with an interest in the humanities to develop their education and learning in non-traditional ways, whether through part-time study and distance learning, or by pursuing independent research. Without academic affiliation, many have no right of access to university libraries or their digital resources yet for those who wish to pursue a subject alongside a day job, a lending library is a necessary lifeline.

Creativity and cultural enrichment

With growing opportunities for digital dissemination as well as conventional publication, it seems that more and more people aspire to write books as well as to read them.

For this they need books in the sense that Thomas Carlyle spoke of them – as raw material to spark off new chains of thought, new avenues for creativity - and a place in which to write.

It is not enough for a library to be a store house for books; it must also be a congenial study offering quiet concentration and a sense of shared purpose among those who use it.

Financial challenges

The London Library receives no funding from central or local government and must rely instead on income from membership, investments and fundraising to cover all its costs – no small task at the best of times in a culture in which libraries are expected to be free at the point of use.

In today's challenging financial environment the task is even greater: keeping membership affordable in a time of high unemployment and reduced earnings; maintaining investment income without taking undue risk; and raising funds to support operations, capital development and endowment at a time when more and more cultural causes are seeking philanthropic funding in the light of dwindling statutory support.

At the same time, the need for enhanced services and facilities continues to grow as we must develop digital collections alongside the printed ones and extend our reach through electronic media.

“The good of a book is not the facts that can be got out of it, but the kind of resonance that it awakens in our own minds. A book may strike out of us a thousand things, may make us know a thousand things which it does not know itself.”

Thomas Carlyle
Founder Member

“Almost overnight, I discovered a world that is comfortable and quiet, where writing is taken seriously and where I have easy access to as much research material as I will ever need for my current project.”

Emmanuela Dekonor
Member

Space constraints



The London Library has occupied its present site since 1845, extending in every available direction over the decades in order to accommodate the growing collections and keep pace with the changing needs of readers. For the Library to be sustainable in the 21st century, we need to meet a number of key challenges, not least those of accommodating and preserving the collections while extending our ability to attract new members and ongoing revenue.

After detailed analysis of current and future needs, a development master plan was created in 2004 and construction work began in 2006. Phase 1 saw the conversion of a newly-purchased adjacent office building into a combination of book stacks, staff offices and a conservation studio, becoming T.S. Eliot House, the Library's newest extension. Phase 2 followed between 2008 and 2010, connecting T.S.

Eliot House to the St James's Square building on 5 levels and creating additional bookstacks, a new Art Room, Times Room and two new reading rooms as well as restoring the Issue Hall and improving circulation around the building, making provision for wheelchair access to many areas for the first time.

By the time of its completion - two further phases of work are required at an estimated cost of £11.5m – the project will have renewed every part of the St James's Square site, making optimum use of all the space available.



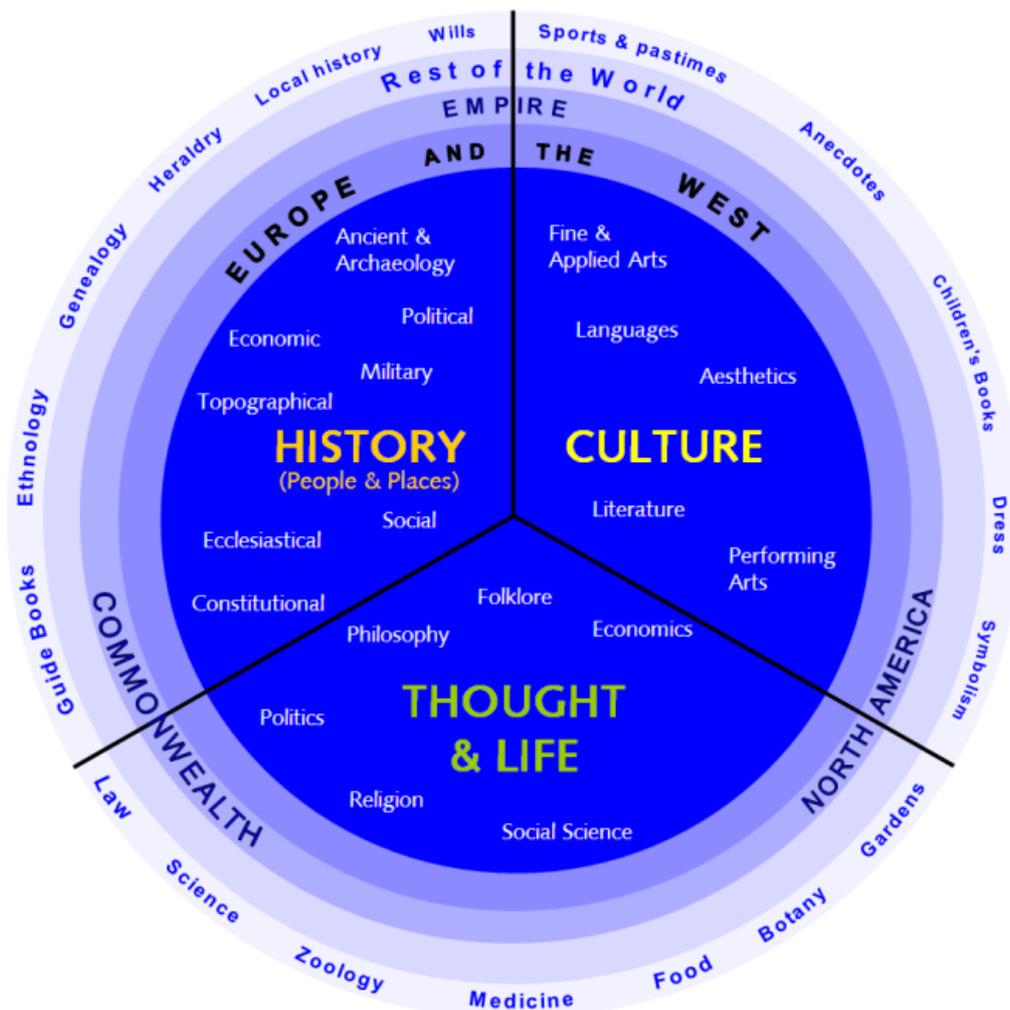
Strategic Priority 1

DEVELOPING AND PRESERVING THE COLLECTIONS

The Library's collection of over 1 million volumes reflects the interests and scholarship of its members from the moment of founding in 1841 to the present day. Its strengths come from a combination of range and depth which facilitates cross-disciplinary study and makes serendipitous discovery a constant delight.

Three broad areas form the heart of the collection where subject coverage is particularly strong:

- HISTORY** From ancient to modern: political, ecclesiastical, topographical, constitutional, social, economic, military ...
- CULTURAL EXPRESSION** Literature, language, fine & applied arts, performing arts...
- THOUGHT & LIFE** Philosophy, religion, folklore, social science, political science, political economy...



The emphasis of these core collections is on Europe and the West, reflecting the world view of our Victorian founders, but each shades out into broader geographical scope where there is perhaps less depth but still significant strengths. After Europe, the strongest coverage is of America and Commonwealth countries but the collections cover the rest of the world as well.

Beyond these concentric circles of the core collections, there is a fringe of peripheral 'niche' subjects. There is an element of the 'universe of knowledge' here, with something on almost any topic that comes to mind from the rigging of pirate cutters in the Napoleonic era to the design of almshouses, from the history of Tupperware to the care and uses of camels.

All subjects are strongly supported by works of biography and bibliography, the back-runs of over 2,500 periodicals, and a growing range of electronic journals and databases.

Some 40,000 of the Library's oldest, rarest, most valuable and vulnerable items are carefully secured within closed stacks, forming our Special Collections, but remain readily available for consultation. The result of the Library's determination to acquire the most important publications from each generation, they represent a microcosm of the whole collections and include extraordinary rarities.

"I could certainly never have written my book without the London Library."

Vernon Bogdanor, *The Coalition and the Constitution*, 2011

Our aim is ...to preserve this unique accumulation in readily-usable form for present and future generations, maintaining and developing its range and existing strengths while taking account of new directions emerging from historical and publishing trends.

Our greatest challenge is to develop appropriate digital collections alongside the printed ones, where digital formats offer new and complementary content or enhanced access to existing materials.

The measures of our success will be the continued availability of our collections for active use and the use to which the collections are put: the satisfaction of members, contribution to published works, and, ultimately, the expert judgement of scholars and readers of the future as to whether the most important books of the period have been captured and preserved for future generations.



Objectives

Action

To continue the development of the printed collections to meet the needs of present and future members

Each year we will acquire newly-published works of lasting value across the full range of the collections

- Ensuring all key works are acquired including material beyond the mainstream and currently popular
- Acquiring works requested or recommended by members if they fall within the remit of the collections
- Avoiding works of ephemeral interest and ensuring that all acquisitions add long-term value to the collection in their subject as well as being of immediate interest
- Extending the reach of the acquisitions budget by negotiating enhanced discounts with publishers and suppliers and encouraging author and publisher donation

Through purchase and/or donation, we will acquire older materials recognised to be of lasting value

- Reviewing subject areas to identify any which have been inadvertently neglected or overlooked
- Assessing offers to donate specialist collections in whole or part and accepting works which add substantially to the strength of the Library's holdings in a particular subject
- Giving priority to accepting materials at risk of loss to scholars and general readers through the dispersal of other libraries' collections

To develop appropriate digital collections to complement and enhance the printed ones

We will seek additional funding to enable a year-on-year increase in the range of digital resources provided

We will give priority to acquisition areas where digital format

- Adds value to content by improving information retrieval, eg
 - Through full-text indexing
 - Through providing capacity to search across a range of materials
- Offers longer-term possibilities for space saving
- Has a reliable preservation and support infrastructure
- Provides access to materials not generally available or affordable to individual subscribers

We will defer exposure to digital (or other non-book formats) where

- Content is simply reproduced in another medium
- Access requires a particular brand of reading device
- Content is readily available and affordable to individual purchasers
- Purchase/subscription model is unfavourable in comparison with printed books

To explore potential for selective digitisation of the Special Collections for their long-term preservation and to make them more accessible

We will identify priorities for early digitisation

We will identify appropriate potential partners for a digitisation programme

We will investigate funding opportunities and conduct a trial programme

To clarify and promote awareness of the Library's Collection Development principles

We will complete and disseminate a summary Collection Development Policy

We will continue programmes of assessment and analysis, developing more detailed collection policy guides for individual subjects, formats and languages to ensure areas of historic strength are maintained, built upon, and made known

We will maintain required procedures and documentation relating to the management and development of the collections to demonstrate compliance with the principles of PAS197: 2009, Code of Practice for Cultural Collections Management

To maximise the space available to accommodate the collections within the Library, safeguarding the old, rare and valuable books in secure storage while holding fast to the principle of open-access browsing and borrowing for the majority

We will seek to secure funding to complete the remaining phases of the construction master plan, which includes creating 25 years' growth space across all 2,000 subjects

- Constructing an additional 3 floors of book stacks to form the Courtyard Stack above the original 1890s book stack
- Creating an additional closed-access shelving area to increase secure storage for the Library's Special Collections.

We will refine our policy and procedures for identifying and removing from the main book stacks any duplicate copies which may have become superfluous, freeing up shelf space while ensuring that no individual title is lost

To upgrade environmental conditions for the storage of books and reduce risk of loss or damage to the collections from all types of emergencies

During the remaining phases of the construction master plan, we will implement the chosen design strategy to optimise temperature and relative humidity for the storage of open-access books within the limitations imposed by a Grade II Listed historic building:

- Upgrading insulation
- Treating glazing and lighting to control heat gain and UV damage
- Installing mechanical ventilation
- Improving heating controls
- Replacing elderly pipework and wiring

In the main secure storage areas for the Special Collections, we will upgrade environmental conditions to meet levels outlined in PD 5454:2012 and PAS 198:2012 (Specification for Managing Environmental Conditions for Cultural Collections)

We will monitor and improve our programmes of planned preventive maintenance of the fabric of the building and all mechanical, electrical and safety systems and services

We will continue to update and develop the Library's Emergency Preparedness Plan to cover all types of potential emergency

To maximise the usable lifespan of the Library's collections by giving careful attention to their preservation requirements

We will continue to implement systematic programmes of appropriate repair and rebinding of the book stock

We will refresh initiatives to encourage a culture of care in the handling of books among staff and members

We will continue identifying the oldest, most valuable and most vulnerable books for special treatment and transfer to secure storage as part of our Special Collections

We will ensure all materials acquired or developed in digital format have a reliable preservation and support infrastructure

We will clarify and document our collection care and conservation policies and procedures to demonstrate compliance with the principles of PAS197: 2009 (Code of Practice for Cultural Collections Management)

We will work to achieve a rating of 95% or above on the Good and/or Best Practice standards described in Benchmarks in Collection Care for Museums, Archives and Libraries, 2nd ed

We will review and develop appropriate practices for the preservation and conservation of the full range of non-book materials within the collections, including photographs, prints, art works and microfilm

To obtain formal external recognition of the quality and significance of the Library's collections

We will prepare and submit an application to the Arts Council for Designation of the Library's Special Collections under the national Designation Scheme for Museums, Libraries and Archives which seeks to identify and validate pre-eminent collections of national and international importance

If successful, we will use Designated status as a springboard to raise new funds to preserve, enhance and secure the collections for future generations

Strategic Priority 2 EXTENDING ACCESS

From the Library's founding in 1841, membership has been open to all, the only proviso being that members are expected to contribute at some level to the cost of maintaining and developing the collections, services and facilities for present and future generations.

We believe that membership should not be unduly determined by ability to pay and therefore should be subsidised for all those genuinely unable to afford the full membership fee. Indeed we recognise that many of those who could benefit most from what the Library has to offer are the least able to pay for it and might never hear of us were it not for our desire to reach them.

Our ambition is ... to ensure that anyone who might have need of our collections and services is aware of them and able to benefit from them according to need. For some this will mean membership with all its privileges and responsibilities; for others, the opportunity to consult particular items on a short-term basis, and, for others again, access to materials and resources made freely available through our website and social media or on loan via the national Inter Library Loan scheme.

We have been working hard to raise public awareness of The London Library beyond the traditional literary sector, adopting targeted methods of reaching out to new

constituencies. Since 2007, the proportion of subsidised members has risen from about 1% to about 10% of the total membership, including a growing proportion of young people under the age of 25 who represent an important audience to nurture for the Library's long-term future.

Our greatest challenge is to generate sufficient sustainable funding to enable us to increase still further the range and volume of supported membership options available. To this end we are working to increase revenue fundraising from a variety of sources, including individuals, companies and trusts.

The measures of our success will be greater public awareness of what the London Library is and has to offer, a larger and more diverse membership base, and increased traffic to our website and other materials offered freely online.



Objectives

Action

To increase public awareness of the Library and its unique character

We will make certain that all of our marketing, PR and communications fully and coherently express the essence of The London Library as a cultural institution - our heritage, assets (buildings, services, collections), and ethos (service, accessibility) – ensuring further that The London Library 'brand' encompasses not only these riches but also our charitable status and commitment to inclusiveness

We will raise awareness of the Library by working to obtain positive media coverage (specialist and general), drawing attention to particular riches in the collection and areas of general interest which demonstrate its national and international importance

We will work with current members, including those prominent in any field of endeavour, to publicise and promote the Library. We will maintain a visible presence at literary and arts festivals and other related events to raise the profile of the Library among new audiences

We will continue to provide access to the Library building through public tours and participation in events such as London Open House

We will use social media creatively to communicate key messages and engage in dialogue with the wider public

To ensure that anyone who might have need of our collections and services is aware of them

We will continue to supply the Library's online catalogue data to appropriate catalogue consortia (e.g. COPAC, RLUK, WorldCat) so that anyone around the world searching online for particular resources will discover our holdings

Our staff will continue to participate actively in professional networks supporting local and national library provision in particular subjects and languages. Staff will also play an active part in the Library's wider profile raising (e.g. social media, print editorial, blogs), enabling us to draw on collective staff expertise to help our various audiences understand the relevance of the Library to their needs

We will host cultivation events showcasing particular aspects of the collection of interest and relevance to specific organisations and groups

We will develop partnerships with relevant literary and arts organisations with a membership/readership to whom the Library's collections and heritage might be of interest

We will continue to provide a programme of talks and tours to specialist groups both on-site and off-site through the Library's Outreach programme

We will continue to develop The London Library Student Prize and London Library Fellowships as vital tools for engaging

young people and intellectual refugees respectively, and formulate additional outreach initiatives where appropriate to target other groups whose engagement with the Library we wish to improve

To attract more new members, maximise retention levels and reduce the churn rate for a broader membership base and increased financial stability

We will use all available means to communicate the benefits of London Library membership effectively to existing and potential members

We will continue to develop the recruitment potential of word of mouth promotion by existing members, and incentivise their efforts

Building on our successful adoption of social media we will continue to develop the range of channels used, encouraging members and staff to engage in fruitful social media dialogue with potential members

We will continue to identify key audiences that offer potential for membership recruitment and target these groups through dedicated marketing, PR and promotional campaigns including:

- Cost-effective media advertising and print campaigns, both off and on-line
- Promotional offers to partner organisations and at literary and arts festivals
- Dedicated recruitment campaigns aimed at increasing membership in specific categories including Institutional Members, spouse members, under 25s, postal and gift memberships

By developing our member research activity we will work to achieve a fuller understanding of how members use the Library so that we can continue to be responsive to members' changing needs

We will focus particularly on actively engaging with members at key stages in the life-cycle of their membership, e.g. during the first year of joining, renewal periods and conversion points for Young Persons and those who initially received membership as a gift

As new forms of electronic communication open up, we will develop their use to offer a fast and effective communication flow for members, without losing sight of more traditional communication channels for those who prefer them

Where additional external benefits and discounts from relevant third parties can be secured without cost to the Library we will use them to augment the perceived value of London Library membership

To increase the range and volume of supported membership options available and provide for up to 20% of memberships to be subsidised according to need

We will continue to promote the subsidised Carlyle Membership scheme to members and non-members for whom the full membership fee might be a barrier to joining or remaining in membership

We will implement effective fundraising programmes to increase the funding available for supported membership

We will conduct an annual review of the subsidised membership options available, adjusting them as necessary to ensure that membership of the Library remains accessible to as wide an audience as possible

To provide a range of materials and resources for cultural enrichment freely through the website

We will continue to develop and make freely available on our website the content of *The London Library Magazine* and blog alongside the catalogue of our collections

We will add a wide range of further resources, including themed online exhibitions, podcasts, photo books and digitised versions of materials from our Special Collections as these are created

We will explore and adopt appropriate new technologies to make additional content freely available via mobile devices

We will publicise all of these resources to a wider general public through appropriate partnerships and social media activity



Strategic Priority 3

SUPPORTING RESEARCH AND READING

From the start, the Library has always sought to bring people and knowledge together in the most effective ways, providing members with direct access to the books on open shelves and permitting borrowing so that all, including those whose time or mobility is limited, may take whatever opportunities they can to pursue their reading, thinking and writing. Browsing and borrowing remain fundamental to what we offer today, subject only to the need to safeguard the long-term future of the collections.

The starting point for all reading and research is the ability to discover what is available and discern what is likely to be most interesting or useful whether it is in printed or digital form. High quality indexing and finding tools are needed and much progress has already been made in the retrospective cataloguing in digital form of the Library's own holdings of over 1 million items. Catalogue records for about 62% of those holdings are now included in the online catalogue, including all works acquired since 1950 and about 30% of earlier publications. These records already offer a wider range of search capabilities and enhanced levels of information about each item to members and non-members throughout the world. The retrospective cataloguing project continues and, in addition, we seek to identify and implement technological innovations which facilitate discovery of and access to digital materials within and beyond the Library's own electronic holdings and online subscriptions.

At this time of information overload, when the increasing quantity of information available is not always matched by its quality, the assistance of trusted practitioners becomes ever more relevant. We recognise the critical role staff play in ensuring widespread and effective use of the Library. In member surveys, the rating of the assistance provided by our staff as "Excellent" increased from 58% in 2003 to 77% in 2011 and we continue to dedicate the time of highly qualified and specialist staff to this role.

Our aim is... to hold to our strategic principle of providing flexible, intelligent support to all members in their use of the Library for research or recreation, giving timely, relevant information and assistance, and developing new services and facilities to keep pace with changing demands.

In following this principle, **our greatest challenge** lies in securing sufficient funding to take advantage of the benefits technology offers. We need to invest in the necessary infrastructure and in the ongoing development of staff skills required to enable sustained growth in our technological capability alongside the continuation of our traditional services and facilities.

The measure of our success will be the extent to which we continue to meet the changing needs of our broad spectrum of users, facilitating the creation of works of literature and scholarship and contributing to their enjoyment.



Objectives	Action
<p>To develop the effectiveness of the Library's online catalogue as a guide and portal to resources within and beyond the Library's holdings</p>	<p>We will continue to add high quality bibliographical data relating to all new acquisitions to the online catalogue in a timely and effective manner</p> <p>We will continue to enrich catalogue data with links to tables of contents, dust-jacket information and abstracts and explore the addition of software to enable us to attach documents and images to bibliographic records</p> <p>We will seek additional funding to accelerate completion of the retrospective cataloguing project</p> <p>We will evaluate and install a 'search and discovery' tool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to allow simultaneous searching of the catalogue records for books and full-text e-library content • to provide the possibility of additional search options such as a catalogue prompt 'people who searched for that also looked at this' revealing related items searched for in research libraries across the world <p>We will evaluate and install a 'link resolver' directing members from external bibliographies and search tools such as Google Scholar to the full-text of Library resources</p> <p>We will incorporate floor plans and finding tools in the catalogue</p>
<p>To enhance the utility of browsing throughout the Library's collections</p>	<p>As time and space permit, we will review and improve the subject arrangement of books on the Library's open-access shelving, preserving the distinctive character of the historic classification scheme while addressing categories which have become unfamiliar or unhelpful to modern browsers</p> <p>We will investigate the possibility of providing virtual shelf browsing of the Special Collections kept in closed access storage</p>
<p>To maintain and develop our understanding of the changing reading and research needs of the whole spectrum of the Library's users</p>	<p>We will explore and implement the most effective ways of compiling information from members on their current research and reading activity and its implications for future service delivery and development</p> <p>We will monitor and review our involvement in the Inter-Library Loan scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examining the inter-library loan requests received internally from our members and externally from other libraries to understand better the role of the London Library's collections in national research activity • increasing our visibility as an active member of the Forum for Interlending and Information Delivery (FIL)

We will actively engage with national and international studies on research practice and new developments within the Humanities, increasing the profile and external professional activity of key staff in the wider research and literary community

While celebrating and safeguarding what makes the London Library distinctive, we will seek out and introduce the best practices and new initiatives from other library and information service providers

To investigate and embrace new technologies in service delivery, selective dissemination of information and library management

We will develop new and existing services for delivery via mobile devices

We will investigate the possibilities for further electronic packaging and supply of information services within the constraints of applicable licensing and copyright regulations

We will explore and adopt the best IT infrastructure and support we can afford

We will invest in the specialist staff training and development necessary to increase IT knowledge and competence throughout every department of the Library, enabling us more readily

- to harness all the technological tools at our disposal in maximising the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of routine processes
- to identify promptly the value of potential new services or enhancements to existing ones
- to establish priorities for the implementation of new technology and methods of service delivery

We will evaluate and upgrade to the next generation of Library Management System (the specialist software which supports the online catalogue and all of the technical processes underpinning acquisitions, cataloguing, book circulation etc) to provide for an integrated approach to managing the full range of our archival, print, online and digital resources

To continue to develop and provide high quality, research and technical support to all members in need of it

We will ensure that our standard of prompt book and information supply is maintained as the cornerstone in supporting research and reading.

We will continue to evaluate and improve the ways in which we provide timely and effective research and technical support to members throughout their membership

- updating our programmes for introducing new members to the Library's collections, services and facilities to ensure all receive initial help and support appropriate to their intended use of the Library

- experimenting with new approaches to the delivery of general assistance such as virtual tours, apps, group sessions
- offering tailored introductions to the effective use of the Library's electronic resources, as well as print and online research tools
- developing the scope, content and format of the guides available to our collections and services
- exploring and delivering an appropriate level of technical support for members experiencing difficulties with standard software or equipment

We will continue to offer assistance to members with reference and research enquiries, inspiring confidence by ensuring a high standard of accuracy and currency in the information provided

In order to make service improvements, we will seek the collaboration of members in reducing the amount of staff time absorbed by wasteful use of some services such as hold requests for books which then remain uncollected

We will continue to provide and develop a full range of services to those unable through distance or disability to attend the Library in person often or at all, promoting these services to all who might benefit from them

To increase the number of reader spaces available within the Library, maintaining the Library's traditional atmosphere of purposive reading and study in a range of different study environments

We will add to and upgrade reader spaces as part of each of the remaining phases of the Library's construction master plan. During Phase 3A

- the First Floor Reading Room will be fully refurbished and separated from the North Bay, with improved lighting, ventilation and furniture providing increased capacity for quiet, technology-free reading spaces
- the North Bay will be equipped with an enlarged gallery and fitted out for concentrated study as a modern writers' room, fully wifi-enabled with upgraded lighting and power-socket provision, and facilities for supervised consultation of materials from the Special Collections

As soon as the necessary funds have been secured, further reader spaces will be added in Phase 3B as part of the new Courtyard stacks, and in Phase 4 an additional Reading Room will be created on the 6th floor

In the meantime, we will make effective use of identified spaces within the existing building for the siting of additional reader desks wherever practicable

Strategic Priority 4 FOSTERING LITERARY AND INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY

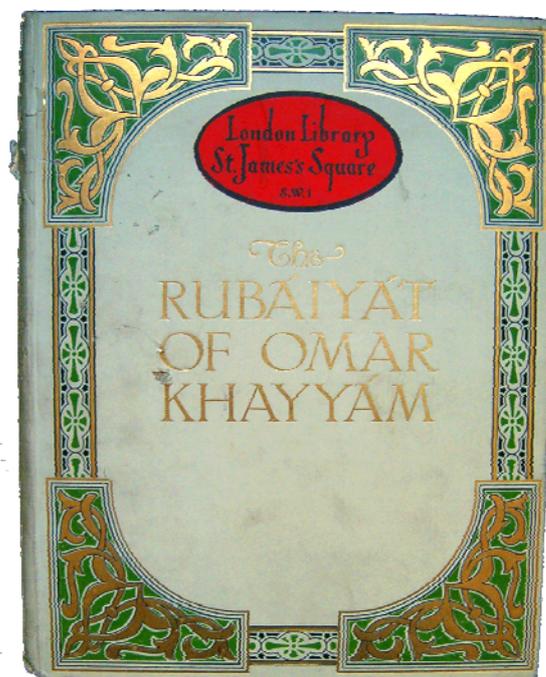
The London Library seeks to provide access to knowledge and creative inspiration without any particular social or political agenda. For some members, it is simply a place from which to borrow books; for others, a place to write; for others again, a place to celebrate the written word, with membership a token of faith in the continuing value of the life of the mind. In satisfying all of these varying needs and many more, the Library remains a vital place of learning and influence at the heart of the nation's cultural life.

In recent years we have seen an increasing interest in opportunities for members to engage with each other and with the broader literary and intellectual community as well as with the collections and staff.

Our ambition is to satisfy this interest in ways which deliver clear benefits with regard to promoting awareness of the Library, generating funds, enhancing the recruitment and retention of members and delivering a demonstrable public benefit.

Our greatest challenge is to achieve this despite limitations on space and funding but we believe this challenge offers us opportunities to play a visible and valuable role in "virtual" communities online, to develop partnerships with other organisations already providing cultural events and outreach and to use our available space intelligently to maximise its capacity for generating funds and raising awareness of the Library while still providing opportunities for all.

The measures of our success will be an increased involvement in the literary and cultural life of the nation, increased engagement of non-members with the Library, its collections and history, and greater public awareness of the role the Library plays in stimulating creativity, scholarship and cultural enjoyment.



Objectives

Action

To play a visible and meaningful role in online communities encompassing Library members, supporters, and culturally engaged audiences nationally and internationally

We will continue to make effective use of the Library's website and social media to engage members and non-members on themes of interest, utilising new channels as they develop

We will leverage the ready-made audiences and high profile of events of relevance (e.g. World Book Day, National Poetry Day) and popular social media memes (e.g. FridayReads) by bringing distinct London Library content to these existing initiatives

We will use our online platforms to profile a wide range of Library activity, from major events to day-to-day operations, creating a compelling narrative of the Library which will enhance our audiences' understanding of and sense of involvement with its institutional life

To provide improved refreshment facilities where members can take a break from their work and engage with each other if they wish, ensuring that all such space can also be used out-of-hours for revenue generation

We will work to secure full funding for the final part of the construction master plan which includes the creation of a dedicated Members' Room and Roof Terrace

To create external opportunities for public lectures, talks, discussion groups, exhibitions and other events to be associated with the Library and its members

We will continue to extend our range of successful partnerships forged with cultural events and organisations around the country, drawing on their existing infrastructure to reduce risk, nurture our existing audiences and introduce new audiences to the Library

We will seek opportunities for senior Library staff and members to represent the Library during such external events and in the media, enabling them to communicate publicly the Library's vital and varied role in cultural life

To continue to develop a programme of interesting events and opportunities for the Library's patrons' group, the Founders' Circle, in support of Library funds, extending the reach of such events where appropriate

We will improve and refine the programme of 'exclusive' events and opportunities offered to the Library's key supporters, drawing from the Library's rich community of thinkers and writers in a way that builds collective engagement between patrons, members and staff

We will work to leverage these events further, making them accessible in a different form to other audiences e.g. by making reports and

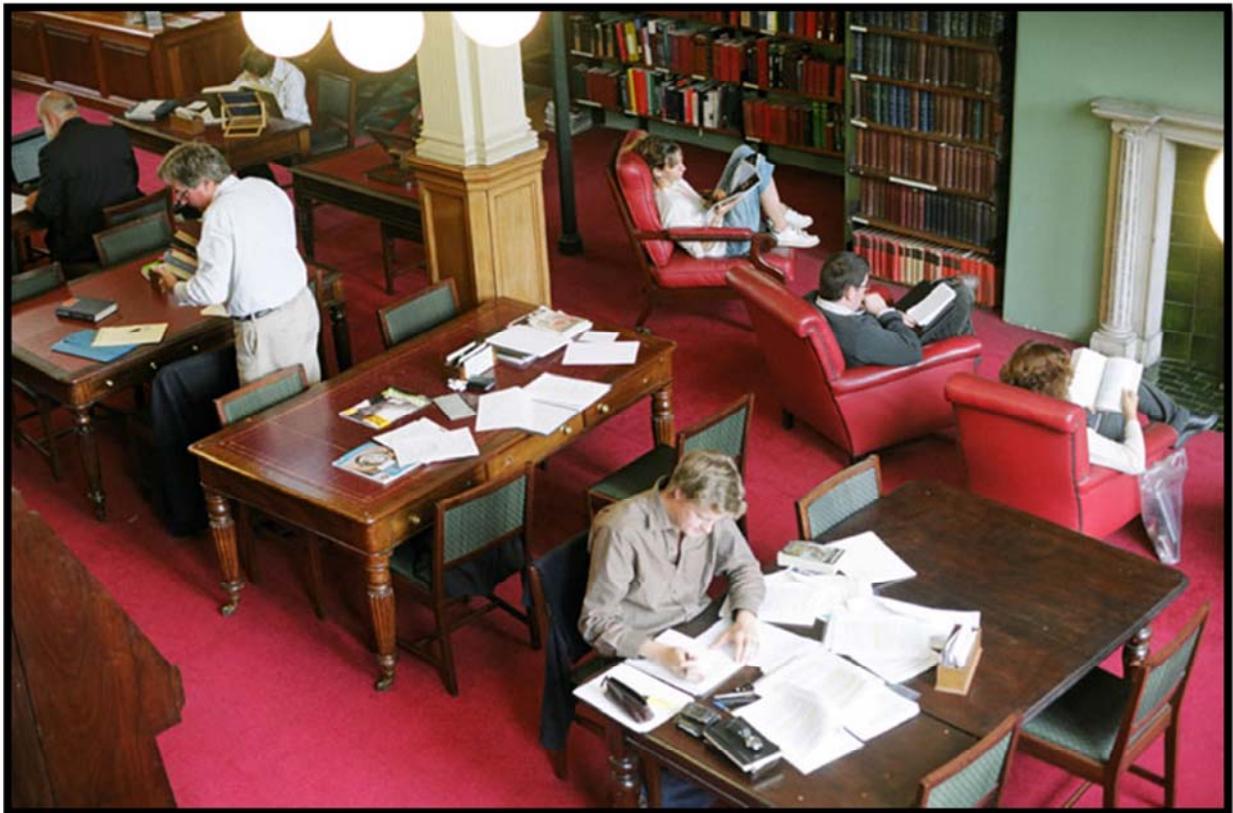
recordings available through the Library's magazine, website and social media

To build the profile of the Library's key awards and outreach initiatives – The London Library Student Prize, The London Library Life in Literature Award and London Library Fellowships – as practical expressions of the Library's commitment to excellence and awareness of its role in the cultural life of the nation

We will raise awareness of the Library's suite of awards and outreach initiatives in such a way that there is widespread recognition of their significance, meaning and relevance

We will encourage appropriate participation in and discussion of these initiatives within both traditional and new media, fostering the broadest possible sense of public engagement

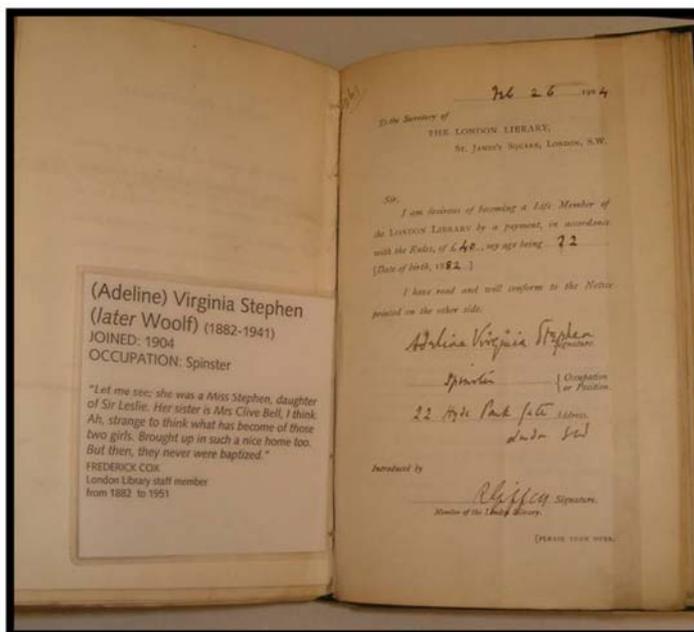
We will utilise the annual winners and recipients of the Student Prize, Life in Literature Award and London Library Fellowships as Library ambassadors, encouraging them to communicate the Library's openness and value to their respective peers and communities



Strategic Priority 5 SHARING OUR HERITAGE

The history of the Library – its members, collections and premises – offers a window onto the literary and intellectual history of the nation. Our institutional archives contain a fascinating range of materials, from the Minute Books tracing decisions taken by committees on the running and development of the Library, to membership application forms, the early catalogues of the Library and the Issue Books in which all loans were recorded during the first years after opening.

The significance of this material reaches far beyond the Library's own history, shedding light on a range of disciplines from Victorian Studies and the History of Ideas to Social History. From the catalogues and Issue Books it is possible to trace something of the transmission of texts over time, the reading habits of 19th-century authors and general readers, and the development of subjects of study, providing contemporary evidence that challenges some persistent misconceptions. Membership applications (often with accompanying letters) and Minute Books reveal connections between eminent thinkers and writers, the impact of times of war or national crisis, and changing social perceptions of what constitutes "occupation", to name but a few potential areas of study. Within the collections themselves, presentation labels and inscriptions record the provenance of many items, revealing something of the personal libraries and interests of distinguished scholars and benefactors and contributing to the interpretation of the significance of the Library's collections as a whole.



Our ambition is to explore, preserve and promote awareness of this unique institutional archive. Much needs to be done. At present the archives are not fully catalogued, making research time-consuming and often inconclusive. Storage conditions do not yet meet archival standards and many items are in need of conservation.

Our greatest challenge is to secure sufficient funding to dedicate to the archives, given the many other competing priorities.

Ultimately the **measure of our success** will be our ability to provide timely answers to questions about the content of the archive (e.g. was a particular person ever a member of the Library?), to make materials more readily available for detailed study by scholars from around the world, and to provide the fruits of detailed research online with materials illustrating the Library's history and its broader significance.

Objectives

Action

To prepare a comprehensive plan for the future care, development, use and promotion of the Library's institutional archive

We will consider how best to tackle the cataloguing of the Library's historic archives to internationally recognised standards (ISAD(G), ISAAR, EAD) and the most appropriate search and discovery tools to adopt

We will create a Records Management Policy so that current materials of potential archival interest are not lost to future researchers, and consider how best to capture digital content

We will conduct a full preservation needs assessment (including improvements needed to storage) and devise an appropriate programme of preservation and conservation to internationally recognised standards for archival material

We will identify priorities for research and review arrangements for access to archival material to ensure that the needs of researchers and those of the materials themselves are well balanced

We will devise a plan for promoting the archive to scholarly communities and to the public

To secure additional expertise and funding to enable implementation of the plan

We will identify and work with organisations and individuals able to offer special expertise in the content and care of our archives

We will prepare a cost plan for the work as a whole and its constituent parts, devising attractive funding packages, identifying potential funders and making approaches

We will investigate any scope for appropriate commercial exploitation of our archival materials in order to offset the costs of preserving them and making them accessible

To increase public awareness that the London Library is itself a rich subject for research in a range of disciplines within the Arts and Humanities

We will explore the possibilities of engaging collaboratively with the research community where specific research projects might advance our knowledge of the collections, history or heritage of the Library

We will use our website as a portal for sharing archival content with the widest possible audience

ACHIEVING OUR AIMS

In recent years the Library has responded successfully to a number of serious financial challenges. In order to achieve our ambitious strategic aims we now need to build on these successes and make use of the experience gained.

Membership subscriptions have always been the foundation of our business model but for some years fee increases had failed to keep pace with inflation, leaving us over-reliant on unpredictable income sources such as large legacies. To address this issue, in 2008 we implemented a substantial increase in fee rates and we have since used external inflation indicators as a benchmark for annual increases. We will continue to follow this policy, while keeping the range of membership options and relative rates under review. We will use large legacies and other windfall gains to support special projects or strategic objectives, or to build up our reserves.

In 2010 HM Revenue & Customs withdrew our entitlement to claim Gift Aid on our membership fee income, although it remains available on donations. To address the loss of this substantial income stream we implemented a 10% reduction in staff costs through a combination of redundancies and a global pay cut. We also took steps to reduce the financial risk associated with our final salary pension scheme by closing it to future accrual and implementing new arrangements on a defined contribution basis. We will continue to seek efficiencies in all areas without compromising service levels.

Our Development Office was originally established to seek philanthropic funding for major building improvements as set out in the 2004 construction master plan, and fundraising for the remaining phases of work remains a key task. The team is now also charged with increasing membership recruitment and retention and has a range of different fundraising objectives:

- To secure the £11.5 million necessary to complete the physical redevelopment of the Library
- To secure and sustain annual funding from individuals, trusts, corporate benefactors and sponsors to ensure we can maintain and develop our collections, services and facilities
- To seek funds for special projects of strategic significance such as completing retrospective cataloguing, digitisation, and the care and promotion of our archives
- To attract gifts with which to build a range of permanent endowment funds, the income from which can be used
 - To fund an extended range of supported membership options
 - To support the continued development of electronic and digital resources to complement the printed collections
 - To meet the cost of additional specialist and technical staff and provide for the continual upgrade of our IT infrastructure and expertise

We have already increased the resources available to the Development Office to reflect our raised expectations, and significant progress has been made in a number of areas. We will continue to invest further resources as necessary.

In 2009 the Library reviewed its policy for reserves and investments, using a tiered structure and investing according to the balance of risk and return appropriate to each tier. The new policy has delivered a reliable level of investment income without excessive volatility and we will continue to apply it as our reserves grow. Likewise we will invest endowment funds to give a sustainable income while preserving the real value of the capital.

We will review our financial results along with progress on our strategic aims in the Annual Report each year.