

The background is a solid dark blue. It features several overlapping circles of different sizes and colors. One large circle on the left is a light orange color. Another large circle on the right is a darker blue. A thin vertical white line is positioned on the left side of the page.

Annual Review **2023-24**

Annual Review 2023-24

Charity Number:
1123902

Company Number:
6521183

Principal Address:
**Alford House
Aveline Street
London SE11 5DQ**

Bankers:
**Lloyds Bank Plc
113-117 Oxford Street
London WC1B 5HR**

**COIF Charity Funds
St Alphage House
2 Fore Street
London EC2Y 5AQ**

Independent Examiner:
**Jones Hunt & Keelings
Chartered Certified Accountants and
Chartered Tax Advisers
71 Know Piece
Wilbury Way
Hitchin
Hertfordshire SG4 0TY**



“To promote the mental, moral, physical and
spiritual wellbeing of the young people of Lambeth”
Frank Briant (1864-1934) Founder of Alford House

GOVERNORS

N Baker
P S Bickerdike
B Bond
B Carter-White
B Chandaria (to 7 August 2024)
T F De Vere Green
C Lloyd
W J Maunder Taylor
N J Priestnall
Ms J Sanchez
M Shaw (to 12 March 2024)
T Shittu
Ms R Walsh
Ms J R Wells
PM Woodroffe

STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Sofie Amaro
Safiya Bashir
Kathryn Butcher
Pam Buttery
Lisa Cole
Patrick Davis
Clive Graham
Shaval Heaven
Péter Horváth
Peter Kinselley
Lawrence Lewis-Ackah
Tina Kerner
Steve McQueen
Sue Proctor-Watson
Tim Saunders
Nicky Thomas

A year of transformation, excitement and appreciation...

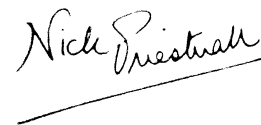
And so it begins... **finally!** Discussion has taken place about the Club's Aveline Street buildings for perhaps 20 years. Now the work is finally under way as the embodiment of Alford@70, the Trustees' plan to make Alford House fit for the 2020s and beyond.

We established the principle that we would break the work into two phases to enable us to do Phase 1 without having to secure the funds for the whole project and, crucially, to be able to run the youth club throughout the process. So, we were able to commit to Phase 1 and work began in November 2023, and is scheduled to finish in June 2024. With the exception of the new toilets in the South Building, the bulk of the Phase 1 work is in the North Building. While we can already see some beautiful results, much of the work and expenditure is on things which are not obvious or even visible – an entirely new roof,

insulation, windows, boilers, piping and wiring. We are fortunate in having tremendous expertise available to us thanks to the 100-year tradition of support for Alford by Old Millhillians, the alumni of Mill Hill School in north London. The Estates team which saw the successful sale of the car park and development of the plans and establishment of the professional team was led by William Maunder Taylor, and included fellow OM's Chris Lloyd, Nigel Baker and Jon Rosswick. For finalising the agreement with the contractors and the supervision of the project, we have been fortunate to have the skills and time of OM QS Andy Halstead. At the sharp end on a day-to-day basis, Club Manager Tim Saunders has managed liaison with contractors and balanced their needs with those of our rehearsals lettings clients and the Club activities. This has ensured the young people have continued to be able to come to the Club throughout. Phase 1 was made possible thanks to generous support from a range of donors. Their logos can be seen on the back of this document. We are immensely grateful to them all.

The building refurbishment was always only a means to an end: the Alford@70s commitment is to expand and enhance what the Club offers to the young people of the area. This requires not only suitable buildings, but also adequate human resources. We are thrilled and grateful that the Roger Raymond Charitable Trust has increased its commitment to supporting our team and we have used this to extend the number of youth worker hours we have available.

With thanks to my fellow Trustees, to all the staff and volunteers for their commitment to Alford House. It was great to be able to get so many of them together in the summer of 2023 at a strategy day and we continue to build on the principles established that day.



Nick Priestnall, Chair of Governors
(nick@alfordhouse.org.uk)



ABOVE: Main hall – before and after.



BELOW: Canteen transformed into the new dance studio.



General Review

The Club's achievements this year were spread across many aspects of Club life, including the beginning of refurbishment, the recruitment of new trustees and securing ongoing funding in light of increasing costs. Again, all proved challenging, but we can reflect on many successes in these areas. The Club's performance was also very strong, with the number of members increasing steadily over the year. We have achieved a significant amount of work in a very short period, which is a testament to the hard work of everyone involved.

From November 2023, refurbishment of the Club began in earnest. Great efforts were made to ensure services to young people could continue from our premises in Aveline Street with minimal disruption. We did achieve this, and are pleased to report that only two sessions were lost over the whole

period between November 2023 and the end of March 2024, due to the unexpected loss of electricity.

A great deal of reconfiguration had to take place to make this possible and we are grateful to both Morgan Lovell, for providing over twenty volunteers to move furniture and equipment all around the Club, and to Pallas LLP, for providing volunteers to wash down and clean what was to become a temporary new home for our fitness studio.

Although we ensured we could remain operational during the refurbishment, there was still a significant impact on our daily activities, particularly to the spaces we could operate in and support young people. More than half of the Club was off limits to young people for health and safety reasons. We are therefore fairly pleased with the following statistics...

**The only person you are
destined to become is the
person you decide to be.**

Ralph Waldo Emerson

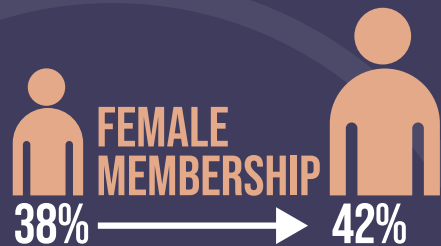


STATISTICS

We registered a respectable 320 young people over the course of the year, still well above our target of 200.

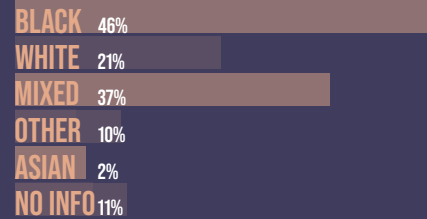
Core membership (those that have attended ten times or more over the year) remained similar to the year before but remains slightly below the 100+ we would like to see. We aim to see this increase once refurbishment is complete.

Female membership continued to increase, rising from 38% to 42% of total membership. Most pleasing is that this was reflected in female attendance, with attendance up 5%, from 39% to 44%.



Monitoring demographics of those engaged with:

ETHNICITY



Age groups were represented as:

AGE



Our own analysis, utilising the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), reveals that 58% of the young people we work with live in the 30% most deprived neighbourhoods.





**700 HOURS
HEALTH & FITNESS
FOR OVER 80 MEMBERS**

ACTIVITY

Health and fitness activity features strongly on the weekly programme. We have been providing at least 14 hours per week spread over four sessions for over eleven years and it has engaged hundreds of young people. Two sessions take place in the afternoon/early evening and these prove popular with young people after school.

Over the course of the year, we delivered over 700 hours of health and fitness training during the afternoon. In addition, we are finding that these sessions widen the reach of the Club beyond the local area. While young people, (perhaps on advice from their parents), may not be willing to travel a mile or more in the evening to attend the youth club, they are happy to attend after school and then travel home.

After only a short period of time, members are confident enough to access the facility and work on their personal programmes with minimal intervention from the fitness instructors. Through this activity young people:

- Improve cardiovascular health
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Improve bone health
- Improve mental health

They also engage in nutritional workshops with the fitness instructors.

Twice a week after school, Music Production and Health and Fitness run concurrently. Our Music Studio is based around a digital audio workstation (Logic Pro) which is an industry standard multi-track recording, production and mastering setup.

The studio is open to young people as solo artists or small groups of up to five.

During these sessions we work on backing tracks using digital instruments e.g., drum programming and string sections. We then layer over these with live instruments, including percussion, piano and vocals which are recorded in our vocal booth.

Some users have shown a keen interest in recording other artists under guidance with regards to mic technique, sound engineering techniques, track balancing, mixing and equalisation and the application of the many effects that are available.

We have had the pleasure of producing a diverse group of genres, from rap to soul to classical, with some young artists for whom English is not their first language.

The service users are encouraged to collaborate on each other's projects and give feedback.

Recently there have been some young attendees who have been interested in simply learning to play the piano or six string/bass guitar and percussion.

Throughout all the above, there are other repertoires which are developed and expanded on; conversation and debate at peer level, self-confidence, being receptive to criticism, vocabulary and self-expression.

A feature of having both fitness and music activities running concurrently, is the number of young people who use this opportunity to talk to youth workers about their lives. This may involve opening up about difficulties they are facing, school life, anxiety about exams or just the changes in their lives as they move to adulthood and how to face the challenge this presents. It could also extend to support with a CV or college application. This is a particular area of our work we want to expand upon by providing more suitable facilities for this kind of interaction in phase two of the redevelopment.



Our Monday evening workshops continued to offer health and fitness training, music production and, until the end of 2023, table tennis. We have found that the structure of the workshop night helps young people to pursue an activity with more purpose and less distraction than they would otherwise find on multi activity youth club evenings. This has its own benefits in that it enables young people to develop their skills quicker and to a higher level.

Roller skating remained on the programme for Tuesday evenings. Attendance varied during this year, but it is mostly a very popular evening.

Our girls' night experienced fluctuating attendance over the year. It is very much a self-determined evening whereby members and staff co-produce the coming terms activity. This can range from a treasure hunt for the younger members, (but the older ones do join in), to film nights and health and fitness sessions.

A number of activities are available on Friday evenings. It has always been our busiest session of the week and there is a strong social element to the evening. It is the end of the week and young people are usually keen to socialise with a less formal approach.

During the course of the year, there was increased effort into providing support for young people transitioning from primary to secondary school, primarily focused on our younger cohort of Club members. These sessions sprang from the staff team's observation that many children were facing challenges adjusting to secondary school life, particularly in the aftermath of the pandemic lockdowns. Drawing on resources from Young Minds, our transition support sessions delved into areas such as establishing a support network, recognising personal strengths, building resilience, and addressing the various worries and excitements associated with the move to secondary school. Emphasis was placed on equipping the students with effective strategies to cope with their concerns. Sixteen Year 6 pupils took part in these sessions. Post sessions, all said they have settled well into school. Importantly, they know that there is a member of staff dedicated to them should they need further support.

We have been limited in the amount of offsite activity we do at present due to the lack of a minibus, but skiing with Snow Camp became a highlight of the year. Twelve young people began their skiing journey in the summer of 2023 by enjoying two days indoor skiing and snowboarding at the Snow

Centre in Hemel Hempstead. Of the twelve, seven young people continued to improve their skills and knowledge by moving on to take part in five full day Sunday sessions of skiing and snowboarding during the autumn. Five then took part in Snow Camps Excel programme from January to April 2024, culminating with a week's skiing and snowboarding in Andorra. After shadowing an instructor for a week, they returned to complete tests that led to all five receiving their British Association of Ski Instructors Foundation certificates. The young people have enthused about the experience and of course the Andorra trip in particular. They have memories for life that we are sure they will cherish.

Alford House concentrates most of its activity during the academic year, but as seen above there is an increasing need to provide activity options to teenagers during the summer. To this end, the Club provided activities in both the Music and Health and Fitness studios for four afternoons a week for five weeks. Attendance to these sessions got off to a great start, but dissipated towards the end of the summer. A highlight of recent summers has been providing a work placement with stockbrokers TP ICAP. This is facilitated by a trustee and a member of staff for a young person who has faced significant challenges and expressed interest in a future in finance.



Alford House staff invited to celebrate with Lillian Baylis staff on their Outstanding Ofsted report.



Since January 2022, Alford House has delivered targeted support for young people at the Club and in schools via our Building Young Aspirations project. The support is designed to help young people who are facing particular challenges to grow their inner resources, equipping them to function well and navigate the world around them.

The work incorporates sessions designed to explore several themes, including mental health, consent, critical thinking and masculinity. The sessions are delivered in groups and also at individual level.

In 2023, 170 young people were supported as part of Building Young Aspirations, a marked increase on the previous year when 95 young people were supported. The number of young people supported at school fell slightly. Numbers recorded as accessing support at the Club rose sharply: this largely reflects more rigorous recording of encounters that are often, by their nature, more ad hoc.

In common with the schools-based cohort, young people supported at the Club were struggling with a wide-range of issues, often in combination, including anxiety, anger management, problematic family and/or peer relationships, domestic violence and uncertainty about their future direction. One young person, the subject of a case study, is described as being 'stuck in a loop of destruction in and out of school,' while another disclosed excessive drugs use.

We use several tools to gather evidence about the benefits of this area of work. This includes a Youth Engagement Survey

(co-produced by young people at Alford House), Stories of Change, Case Studies, and a Self-Evaluation tool for young people to complete. Interviews with young people and staff at the schools we work with were carried out by an external evaluator.

The feedback points to the project's significant success, creating an environment where young people:

- feel welcome and included
- feel safe while taking part in activities
- feel they can express themselves and their ability
- have opportunities to learn about themselves and their community
- feel a sense of purpose and achievement



Focusing on our external evaluator's interviews with school staff, it was noted that Alford House wasn't alone in offering targeted support for young people facing challenges. As one staff member put it: 'Many other organisations come in. One does more or less the same thing.'

This was seen as having benefits in reducing reliance on any one organisation or individual. Alford House support was, however, seen as having a number of stand-out features.

Staff valued Alford House's role in the community, noting that 'many students say they attend Alford House for one reason or another (homework club, roller

disco etc)' and that they encouraged this. This was seen as especially important with the loss of other local youth facilities and in ensuring continuity of support. 'Alford House is a community pillar, especially during the summer holidays. It means someone else is checking on students when LBTS isn't.'

The combination of 1:2:1 and/or group support was seen as beneficial. As one colleague stated, 'it's not a case of one size fits all.'

Finally, staff valued the consistency of Alford House's support, both in terms of the team's reliability and their consistent approach with students. This chimed with the school's emphasis on consistency, for example in the approach taken to uniform, how students entered the classroom etc. 'Behaviour improves when young people know the expectations. Some haven't got consistency at home.' It was also seen as key to building trust. 'If there's no consistency... young people become very distrustful of adults. Students are disappointed.' 'Young people need reliability from someone in their lives not connected to school, as they don't feel they can share or open up to someone in school.'

Interviewees also pointed to team members' complementary approaches, their flexibility, understanding of and commitment to the school.

Speaking of one of Alford House's staff, a teacher noted that 'He has worked with us for a long time. He knows how we operate.' As a local boy 'he knows the area' and was a 'fountain of information... I've heard him say to a young person 'what about this?' Another observed that he was 'therapeutic... he makes you feel good. I've never heard him raise his voice.' Another staff member of Alford House was described as having a different approach which was also effective. 'She knows all the staff... They work very well together.'

The team's understanding of the school counted for a lot. 'When we're having a challenging day, they know where to go to and what to do. They get the kids and know what school life is about... They have embedded themselves in school. They know our values. They know the timetable. They realise that relationships with young people, staff and parents matter. They also act as advocates for students.'

Two staff interviewees mentioned feeling supported themselves, in addition to the support they see for their students. 'He always checks in and asks how we are.'

Both volunteers were seen as 'coming from a place that really cares' and 'invested in us as a school' – evidenced by one going to the Year 11 Prom and another going to the OFSTED celebration party. Both were seen as colleagues and 'not like external staff.'

All the staff members interviewed commented that needs were going up, while support was less readily available and not affordable by schools. If support of the kind Alford House provides was not on offer 'kids will end up really struggling a lot in school.'

“Young people need reliability from someone in their lives not connected to school, as they don't feel they can share or open up to someone in school.”

PARTNERSHIPS

We continue to be part of the North Lambeth consortium of youth providers. Alford House was instrumental in expanding the consortium from five to seven organisations for the next round of commissioning from Lambeth Council from April 2023.

The consortium comprises of Active Communities Network (lead), Triangle Adventure Playground, Oasis Youth Hub, Young People Matter, Fight 4 Change, Oasis Adventure Play and Alford House. We believe an expanded consortium will be better placed to secure additional financial resources in the future.

In other partnerships, we remain part of Brook's condom distribution scheme and we also continue to provide accommodation to Lambeth's Justice Service to meet young people fearful of travelling across the borough to their offices.

Alford House moves forward into the coming year with excitement about the new consortium, the relationships built with schools and the plans for further refurbishment. It will need to ensure its resources are carefully managed and staff and volunteers well-supported to continue the work and build on the success achieved this year.



Old Millhillian President, Chris Kelly, visits the Fitness Studio.

Alford House

Statement of Financial Activities for year ending 31st March 2024
(Company No: 6521183)

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
INCOME				
Donations and legacies	13,881	-	321,674	355,555
Other trading activities	2,047	-	2,047	425
Investment income	184,493	-	184,493	121,316
TOTAL INCOME	200,421	321,674	522,095	376,521
EXPENDITURE ON				
Raising Funds	660	-	660	-
Charitable Activities	152,781	1,152,105	1,304,886	(263,116)
TOTAL	153,441	1,152,105	1,305,546	(263,116)
Net income/(expenditure)	46,980	(830,431)	(783,451)	(263,116)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS				
Total Funds brought forward	2,928,020	174,001	3,102,021	2,462,384
Total Funds carried forward at 31 March 2023	2,904,056	174,001	3,102,021	2,462,384

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006. All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All gains and losses recognised in the year are included.

Balance Sheet 31st March 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	910,547	-	-	910,547	925,063
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	19,833	-	7,500	27,333	14,838
Cash at bank and in hand	2,316,597	24,486	(663,931)	1,677,152	2,500,377
	2,336,430	24,486	(656,431)	1,704,483	2,515,215
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	(296,462)	-	-	(296,462)	(338,257)
NET CURRENT ASSETS (LIABILITIES)	2,039,515	24,486	(656,431)	2,318,570	2,176,958
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	2,950,515	24,486	(656,431)	2,318,570	3,102,021
NET ASSETS	2,950,515	24,486	(656,431)	2,318,570	3,102,021
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds				2,950,515	2,904,056
Designated funds					
Members' Fund				12,034	11,512
Redevelopment reserve				12,452	12,452
Restricted funds				-656,431	174,001
TOTAL FUNDS				2,318,570	3,102,021

These summarised financial statements contain a Balance Sheet and a Statement of Financial Activities, and are extracted from Alford House's full examined financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2024 on which the examiner Jones, Hunt & Keelings gave an unqualified report. The full financial statements were approved by the Board of Governors on 4th November 2024 and will be filed with the Charity Commission. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, the full accounts, the examiners' report on those accounts and the governors annual report should be consulted, copies of which can be obtained from Alford House, Aveline Street, London SE11 5DQ.

Nick Priestnall

N Priestnall
Chair of Governors

T. de Vere Green

T de Vere Green
Honorary Treasurer

Financial Review

This year the unrestricted fund had a surplus of £46,980 (2023: surplus of £566,032) which led to an increase in reserves generated from unrestricted activities to £2,039,968 (2023: £1,978,994) excluding the value of the Club's freehold premises. The unrestricted fund surplus was achieved, despite lower theatrical rehearsal income due to building works, being offset by interest receivable on deposit before contractor's invoices began to arrive. The budget for the year, excluding redevelopment costs, was for a balanced budget. The reason for the overall deficit in the year was due to the significant refurbishment works carried out to the property.



Plans for the Future

We could be entering some uncertainty during the year due to ongoing building works, leaving us needing to adopt a flexible approach to budgets and operations. The Governors have reviewed the Club's financial budget for the coming year. The budget forecast, excluding further redevelopment costs, a deficit of £5,550. Uncertainty about grants and theatrical letting income remain a concern, but as always, we will endeavour to balance the budget as the year progresses. Ensuring a good level of letting income is preserved in the face of refurbishment will be critical. This will be a challenging task.

The trustees are piloting a new governing structure this coming year. There will now be four sub-committees to the board, replacing the current three. They will be, Finance and Operations (who will take over responsibility from the Estates committee for the redevelopment), Youth Engagement, Regulatory and Compliance and External Relations. The Finance and Operations committee will lead the work on a revised strategy that has been approved by the trustees to refurbish the existing Club building and secure a sustainable future income. As a result of the concern about the budget over the coming year, the Finance and Operations committee have decided not to expend large amounts of reserves to progress the redevelopment of the club and will only authorise expenditure based on the amount of funds raised for this specific purpose. We are pleased to say that funds have already been raised to enable us to continue, beyond the near completed Phase 1, at a steady pace for this purpose. A full specification for Phase 2 works is complete and a timeline for further funding applications and a start date for Phase 2 is in place.

***Your voice matters.
Your opinion matters.
Your story matters.
Share it all.***

Amanda Gorman

With thanks to the generous supporters of Alford House

Lord Glendonbrook
The Michael Bishop
Foundation

WALCOT FOUNDATION



Mr Felix Charity Trust

The Roger Raymond
Charitable Trust

Roger & Irene Graham
Charitable Foundation

The Old Millhillians Lodge

The K N Shah Trust



Gold & Silver Wire Drawers



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AlfordHouse