



AUSTIN FRIAR 2022



The Furniture Makers' Company
the furnishing industry's charity



“

Our vision is for a thriving British furnishing industry with a talented workforce delivering high-quality products, which supports those in need from within its ranks and those who have served it in the past

”



The Furniture Makers' Company

the furnishing industry's charity

The Furniture Makers' Company is the City of London livery company and charity for the furnishing industry.

We foster the industry by supporting those in need, nurturing skills and expertise and inspiring excellence.

The past two years have been some of the most demanding days in living record. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted everyone, and virtually overnight the world had to learn new ways of working, socialising and coping with this unforeseen and unprecedented challenge.

For us, the pandemic presented an enormous opportunity to care for and sustain people working in the trade like never before.

Consequently, our focus lay heavily on our welfare activity during 2020 and 2021.

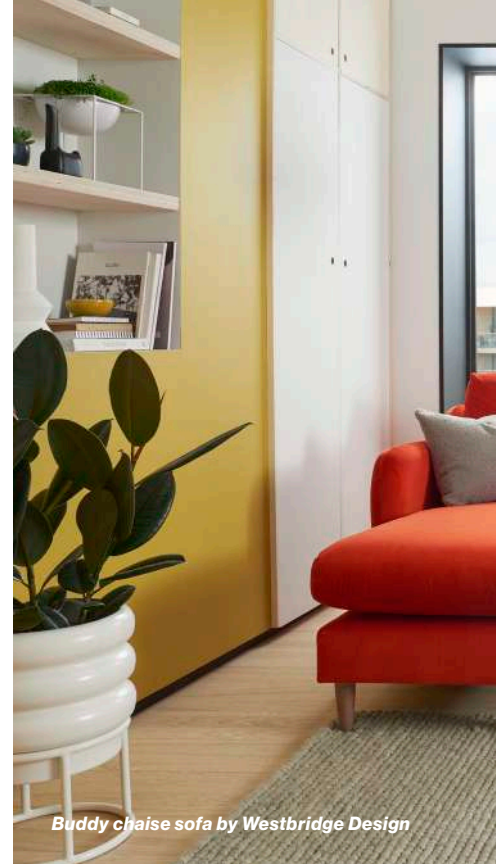
Of course, the turbulence of the pandemic brought huge hurdles for businesses, both large and small, to overcome. Regardless of these difficulties, membership remained steadfast with corporate membership growing.

This yearbook serves as a record of what we achieved during these remarkable years (2020–2022) in the areas of welfare, education and excellence, as well as the exceptional year of fundraising we've experienced. None of this would have been possible without the support of our members.

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THE FURNITURE MAKERS'
COMPANY IS THE CITY OF
LONDON LIVERY COMPANY
AND CHARITY FOR THE
FURNISHING INDUSTRY

**WE ARE HERE FOR YOU
AND YOUR INDUSTRY**



Buddy chaise sofa by Westbridge Design



Lusso by Panaz



Click Smart Wave Slate by Amtico



Nova Pro Scala drawer system by Grass



Hilly by Ocee Design



Synergy by Harrison Spinks



MASTER

David Woodward, Master of The Furniture Makers' Company

My time as Master has been a privilege and an honour. I am grateful to have been elected to lead The Furniture Makers' Company for an unprecedented two years and I hope that during that time I have succeeded in making a difference.

The pandemic has had a huge impact on all of us and I'm proud to be able to say that the Furniture Makers stood up to the challenges. Despite the difficulties, we collectively achieved a tremendous amount, enabling us to enter the next phase of our history stronger and more determined than ever.

During lockdown, our Personal Support Grants helped numerous individuals and families in their time of need. Our committees frequently met virtually, meetings that were better attended because of home working and technology, enabling us to move actions and plans forward faster.

The two-year strategic COVID recovery plan set goals of expanding welfare, developing our regional committees, with ambassadors dedicated to each of our activities, while having one eye on long-term plans. I am pleased to say that many of those plans have been achieved and work is ongoing.

Our Guild Marks have done remarkably well given the circumstances. The Design Guild Mark held virtual judging days very successfully, while the Manufacturing Guild Mark continues to grow. The Bespoke Guild Mark underwent a successful rebrand and has been developing plans for the future.

Sadly, our education programme had to be paused, but exciting plans are being formulated and will shortly be announced, bringing education back to the centre of our activities.

The Step 2 It campaign has been a huge success, increasing the number of fundraising events during the year and raising more money for our charity than ever before. Thank you to all those who stepped up, ran events, donated and took part in so many activities.

Some of my highlights include a visit to the 2 Rifles in Northern Ireland, where I was proud to be asked to present Afghanistan medals to the riflemen, helped by Prince Edward. I also presented the Furniture Makers Rifleman of the Year award.

Another great pleasure was my visit with Past Masters Margaret Miller and Tony Smart MBE to see Past Master Ray Leigh MBE and

present him with a specially commissioned box, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Furniture Makers. It was an absolute joy to meet Ray and his lovely wife, Jean.

The City of London and the livery have opened up at a pace since government restrictions were eased, providing me with a host of dinners, luncheons and events too numerous to mention at which I was proud to represent the Company.

On reflection, I think we can all be very proud of our achievements over the last two years. I thank you all, because without your commitment and effort, it would not have been possible. Thanks to you, I can now move into Past Master status with my head held high, looking forward to a healthy and growing company.

The Master Elect, Tony Attard OBE DL, will be focusing enormously on increasing membership and regional growth in all its forms. I urge you to support and help Tony to achieve his goals, as membership is the lifeblood of our organisation. I pledge my wholehearted support to him and wish him a successful and enjoyable year.



MASTER ELECT

Tony Attard OBE DL, Master Elect of The Furniture Makers' Company

I am often asked why I am a liveryman and a member of the Court of The Furniture Makers' Company. There is a relatively simple reason for that – I believe that we are an organisation that has an important role to play within our industry. However, that simple reason rather hides some more compelling motives for my membership.

One is being part of something worthwhile that uses coordinated thinking and the power of community to promote significant undertakings in our business sector. Another is an opportunity to work with great people, all of whom have the common purpose of delivering change.

We are a great industry to be involved in but often the route to employment is varied and not direct. We need to make this easier and become an aspirational industry that young people identify with for long-term career ambitions. We are a creative and industrial sector that employs a diverse array of talent in sales, marketing, design, accounting, logistics, HR and general

management. Because of the livery's position, we can join up the dots with all other organisations we are involved in and liaise with our national educational establishments to recruit the best graduates.

Our charitable activities are significant. Although I hear of the great work our money has done through the testimonials provided by recipients, the pandemic brought it into context in a way that I hope will never be repeated. We were there, ready and available, to help many of our colleagues in the industry navigate through these unprecedented times. While we have many routine activities, such as fundraising, regions, events and membership, the livery company has its roots truly in the history of British furniture making. It gives me a great sense of purpose following in the footsteps of these scions of our industry and seeing their portraits hanging from the walls of our hall.

When I was president of the Furnishing Trades Benevolent Association, before its merger with the Company, I read the

yearbooks that were produced in a bygone time, of the elaborate national balls that were held and the regional activities that used to engage so many people. We are a national industry and our membership needs to reflect that. The addition of regional membership will, in the long run, give opportunity to people to learn more about what we do and then apply for freeman or indeed liveryman status.

Membership is the lifeblood of any organisation, and we must recruit and retain members. In doing so we need to continue to deliver a consistent message that our livery is open to everyone occupied in the furnishing industry. It has been great to see the regions becoming more active. In a world where so much is vying for our time, we must also be relevant to all members, that is to Young Furniture Makers as well as our retirees. At the moment, we are a closed livery which helps us retain that closeness to our industry, but we are also ambitious to do bigger and better things which requires the resources only available when we grow our membership.

*Jaclyn, a designer-maker,
received a Personal Support
Grant during the lockdown*





WELFARE

Help for all
in the industry

As the charity for the furnishing industry, we have been supporting the welfare of people working in the trade since 1903. Every day, people have to cope with financial hardship due to the impact of bereavement, relationship or family breakdown, illness, reduced work hours, an unexpected loss of income or redundancy. But they don't have to deal with this alone. We help furnishing industry people who are dealing with financial hardship by providing grants and useful advice.

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic shook the landscape throughout 2020–2021,

presenting us with an exceptional challenge but also a huge opportunity to support more people than any other commensurate period in our near 120-year history.

With the assistance of individuals and businesses from around the UK in spreading our message of hope and support, we were able to provide lifelines to numerous families.

Thankfully, the emergency that the pandemic presented regarding potential job losses has passed, but our mission to help anyone who works or has ever worked in the trade remains resolute. We are here and ready to support.

Why Welfare Matters

Karen Clarridge is group head of HR at corporate member Whitemeadow Furniture



I've worked at Whitemeadow Furniture for nine years. Whitemeadow is the UK's largest independent upholstery manufacturer. We are based in Sutton-in-Ashfield and have 650 employees.

I first heard about the charity when I attended its annual clay pigeon fundraising event, Big Shots. It's a fun day that brings together companies from the industry to relax and socialise with the important function to raise money to support the charity.

Being one of Britain's leading manufacturers, we're passionate about the future of our industry and recognise the numerous challenges it faces. With this being at the very forefront of our thoughts, we're delighted to work with, be members of, and be supported by some of the industry's key bodies.

In 2016 Whitemeadow became a corporate member of The Furniture Makers' Company, sharing their vision, and supporting their aim to secure a bright future for our thriving industry. Since then, we have been active in championing their initiatives in the areas of education, excellence and welfare.

Most recently, we have been fundraising for the charity as part of their Step 2 It campaign. We wanted to do something fun

and a bit different to our usual bake sales and dress-down days, so we organised a charity abseil. We set up a system so colleagues could donate £1 and cast a vote for which manager they would like to see abseiling down the Millers Dale Bridge.

The fundraiser has been very effective in getting people involved, while raising awareness of the charity in a different way, and we were delighted to present the cheque to the Master, David Woodward, on a visit to our site.

We are now all really looking forward to the challenge in March 2022, although some of us don't like heights, but we know it's for a fantastic cause and worth every effort.

Working in HR, I'm particularly interested in the work the charity does with supporting the welfare of workers within the trade. As a company, we share case studies and information about the charity on our communication platform and display posters on notice boards. Furthermore, all managers/supervisors are fully aware of the charity to enable them to signpost an employee who may be in need.

What is great about the charity's service is it is completely confidential and no one from your workplace – not even HR – will be told about your application if you don't wish for it to be shared. I think that's a really important point to make as there may be someone out there who is reluctant to get in touch because they're anxious about their co-workers finding

out. Some people feel shame about asking for help when they really shouldn't. The service is about giving a leg up, not a handout, so we make sure information about the charity is readily available and accessible.

The advice I would give to any company in the industry who wants to find out more about the charity is to approach one of the regional welfare ambassadors and ask them to present to their management team. There is a lot that employers can do – signpost employees to the charity, display posters on notice boards, inform in employee inductions, leaflets on canteen tables, etc., – and The Furniture Makers' Company can provide all the material to help.

whitemeadow.com





Sandra was awarded a **Personal Support Grant**



Support through the pandemic

The past two years have without question been one of the most challenging and unstable periods of time in living memory. The COVID-19 pandemic brought with it overwhelming pain and misery

Scan here to watch
Toby's story



When the UK government announced restrictions in March 2020, we responded swiftly to the situation that was unravelling and established a new grant aimed specifically at supporting industry workers who were going to be financially impacted, a Personal Support Grant.

As the economic impact of the lockdown began to take its toll on companies, we saw a rise in applications from affected workers incomparable to what we'd ever experienced.

In 2020 alone we awarded over 1,000

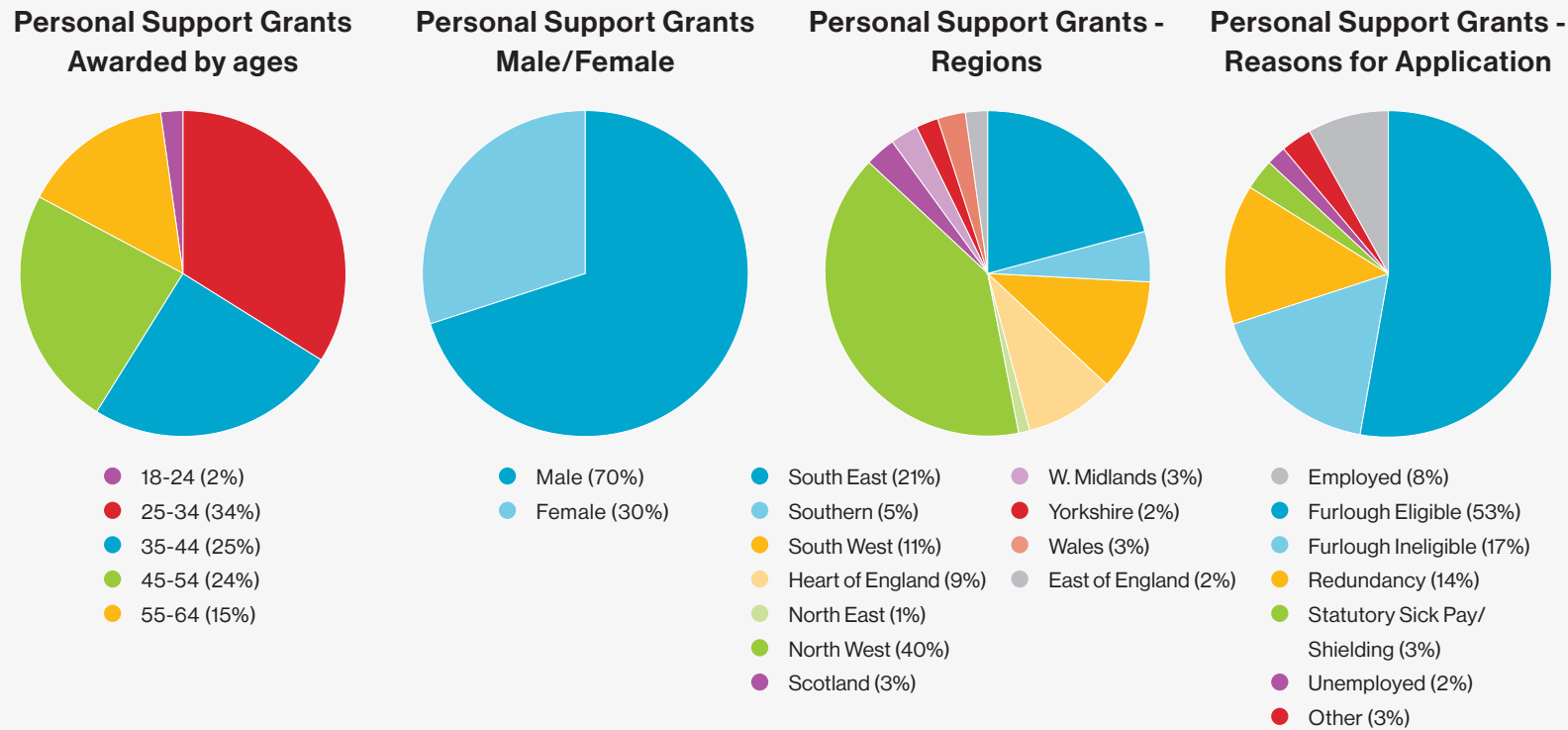
Personal Support Grants to struggling individuals and families to help them through this difficult time and awarded more money than any other proportionate period in our history.

We hope this situation will never be repeated but we remain ready to act and support if it does.

“Going from a reasonable salary to low income overnight was a scary prospect as bills, food, and life still existed and had to be paid for. I genuinely want to thank The Furniture Makers’ Company for their generosity and kindness shown throughout the whole process.” – Neil

“What with the pandemic and being made redundant, I would have struggled without the help of The Furniture Makers’ Company. Thank you.” – Sandra

“I want to thank The Furniture Makers’ Company for sending me a grant during the pandemic. It was the beginning of my career in furniture, and everything came to a sudden stop. The charity was kind enough to send us several grants during such struggling times – which I’m glad I came out of safely. Thanks again for your help and support.”– Jaclyn



Support when you need it most

Our charity is here to help people working in the furnishing industry who have fallen on hard times

Here are a few examples of the individuals and families we are proud to have supported.

Deborah's story

When Deborah's relationship with her partner broke down, she was left in the unwanted situation of covering the rent and bills of the home by herself. It wasn't long before she started struggling to pay the debts on her income alone.

Unfortunately, it wasn't possible to leave as she was contracted to a six-month shorthold tenancy. While looking for more affordable and manageable accommodation, Deborah's finances were strained to the point of having to reach out to friends for help to cover her outgoings.

Hearing about her situation, one of Deborah's friends – someone we supported while they were furloughed – told her about the financial support we offered.

Our welfare officer quickly assessed the situation and a grant was issued to Deborah. For a few months, we were able to offer regular grants to get Deborah through to her final rental month so she could start afresh somewhere else more affordable.

Charlotte's story

Being made redundant is a frightening and often devastating experience for anyone.

When Charlotte was made redundant from a manufacturer's retail outlet just after

Christmas in 2021, she was facing a rough start to the new year.

Fortunately, it didn't take her long to find employment, but her new job was not full time and Charlotte knew that she would have a shortfall in her income.

With the same household monthly outgoings, it did not take long before Charlotte was struggling and in financial crisis.

After receiving a recommendation from her former employer, Charlotte got in touch with us to see if she'd qualify for assistance by way of a one-off grant.

After assessing Charlotte's situation, we were able to provide her with a grant from the Perring Legacy Fund – reserved to support

people working in retail – to help cover her bills and outgoings.

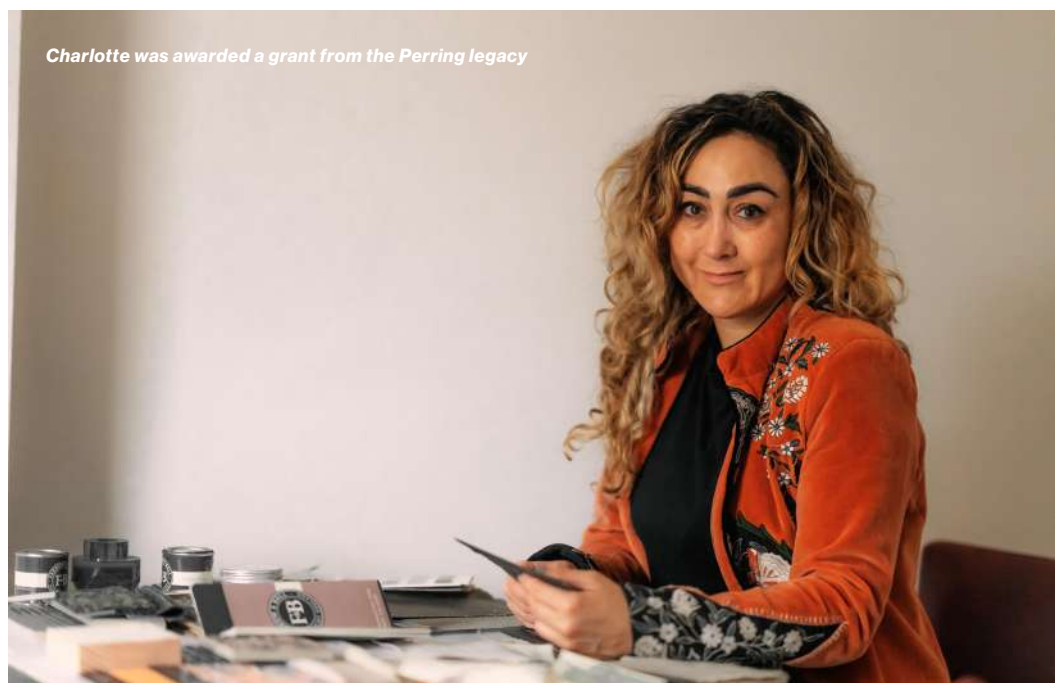
Paul's story

Paul, a warehouse operative for fabric manufacturer Camira, was facing the frightening prospect of homelessness when he contacted us for help.

His housing crisis started when his landlady dropped the bombshell that she planned on selling the property. Without a secured tenancy, Paul had to quickly face the fact that he had to move within the next two months from his two-bedroomed home.

Due to historic debts, Paul had no savings and no funds to support either the new rental

Charlotte was awarded a grant from the Perring legacy



deposit or the one month's worth of advance rent required.

Camira's HR department recommended he contact us and assisted with his application, enabling Paul to quickly get the forms and documents to our welfare officer. On receipt of his application, it took just three days to secure a grant to cover his deposit and advance rent.

Our swift action not only prevented a potential homelessness situation but enabled Paul to continue working without having to take any time off.

Paul said: "I had never heard of The Furniture Makers' Company but after speaking to a wonderful lady who helped me in my unpredictable situation, I have only warm words to say about this truly exceptional organisation. Thank you."

Michael's story

The pandemic has prompted many people to consider new career paths. It was during this time that Michael explored the idea of a career change and doing something that he had enjoyed for several years: making furniture.

After discussions with his wife, Michael applied for a two-year apprenticeship at a local cabinet making company. It was a huge step to take given he would be a mature apprentice on a reduced income with a mortgage still to pay and a wife and two young children to support.

Almost a year into Michael's apprenticeship, the family started to struggle



with bills, a situation exacerbated by a spike in the cost of energy prices.

Michael found out about us while searching on the Turn2us website, a national charity that helps people in financial hardship to gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and support services.

We were able to offer a grant to help the family with their everyday household outgoings.

Commenting on the support he received,

Michael said: "The Furniture Makers' Company has been a huge help for me and my family. Starting the apprenticeship was daunting, knowing the lower wage I'd be going on to. This grant has allowed us to ease the stress of these extra costs during my apprenticeship and gives more time to enjoy creating furniture and spending time with my family."

With over a year to go in his apprenticeship, we wish Michael well in his new chosen career.



Scan here to watch
Blaine's story



Margaret and William's story

In retirement we all hope for a peaceful and healthy time spent pursuing interests. Unfortunately for Margaret and her husband, William, they were unknowingly living with a problem that had the potential to bring down the very floors around them.

Margaret had worked for most of her working life as a soft furnishings maker and fitter. She was self-employed but was often

contracted working with designers and fitters in the north of England.

Enjoying retirement with William, all was going well for the couple until they discovered a serious woodworm infestation to the lower floors of their home.

Without savings and ineligible for Local Authority help, the couple contacted the Citizens Advice close to their home.

The advisor used Turn2us to identify The

Furniture Makers' Company as a charity that may help due to Margaret's employment in the trade.

We were able to offer a substantial grant to support the couple to remain in their own home and get the essential repairs carried out in full.

Work will begin on the property in spring 2022, with all the wood from the lower floor of their house needing to be removed and replaced.

Until then, the couple are having to live in less-than-ideal circumstances, but they remain chipper and full of gratitude for the support our charity is providing.

Margaret said: "We were at the end of our tether when to our amazement it was suggested we ring The Furniture Makers' Company. The welfare officer, Sue Dean, has been outstanding. Thank you doesn't seem enough, but our gratitude is beyond words. Many, many thanks."





Step 2 It

Last year we launched a campaign with the aim of having fun, raising money and supporting lives

In May 2021 we launched our largest ever fundraising campaign, asking the furnishing industry to 'Step 2 It' and help us raise £250,000 to support people from the trade who had been impacted by COVID-19.

It was our ambition to inspire companies and individuals to organise sports-based fundraisers between May 2021 – April 2022 in aid of our charity, encouraging friends, family and co-workers to join in the fun.

The campaign clearly resonated with the industry as the support we received was phenomenal. Every month there seemed to be a new supporter-led event going on, whether it be a staff abseil, 24-hour ping pong tournament, fun run, hike, long-distance cycle, danceathon – we had the lot.

Thank you so much to everyone who organised or took part in a fundraiser, or if you sponsored someone who was challenging themselves. A very special mention of thanks to our gold, silver and bronze campaign sponsors.

Thanks to you all, we surpassed our target.

“

We felt that that it was important to support the Step 2 It campaign as a gold sponsor because it's a fun way of getting people involved with the charity while raising money for this important cause. We wanted to be part of this campaign because not only are we corporate members, but we want to fully support the industry and help those working in it.

”

Steve Bulmer, managing director of Biesse Group UK



The Master (centre) being greeted by a welcoming party at the end of his 110 mile Grand Union Canal Walk



Axminster Tools coastal walk



David Tracey raised £11,000 by hiking the Coast to Coast Walk



Jonny and Nelly walked the Icknield Way



Phil Reynolds and Emma Delea organised a 'Keep on Running' fun run



Axminster to London cyclists at the finish

GOLD SPONSORS



SILVER SPONSORS



Furnishing Knowledge

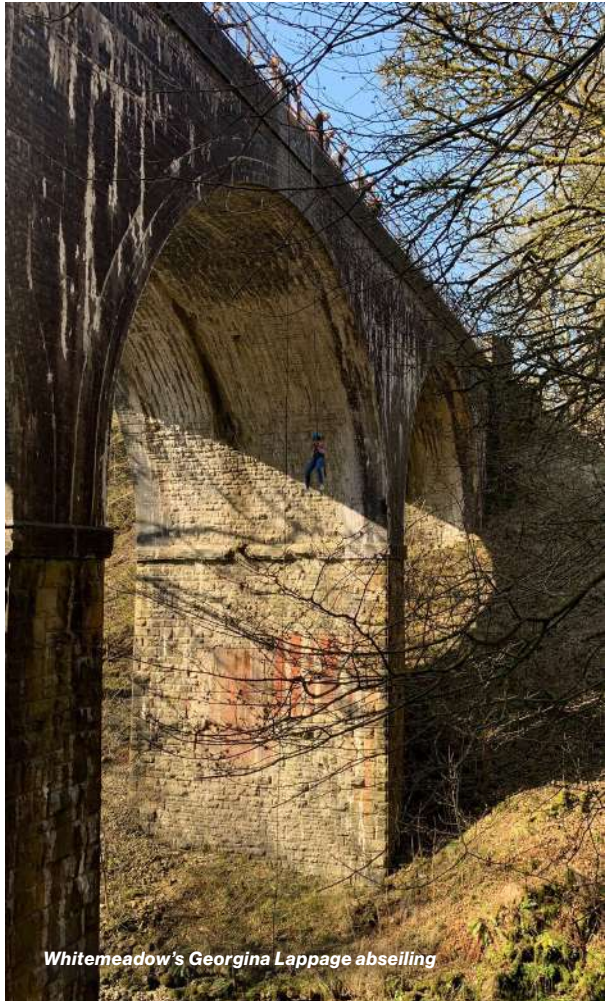


BRONZE SPONSORS





The Step 2 It Charity Ball at the Landmark London



Whitemeadow's Georgina Lappage abseiling



William Hands scaled the equivalent height of Mount Everest



Axminster to London cyclists at the start



Handy Ltd's 24-hour table tennis marathon



Sam, Rosie, Juliette and Tom from the Furniture and Home Improvement Ombudsman take on the Tough Mudder

“

Blum UK's primary reason for becoming a corporate member was due to the incredible work undertaken by The Furniture Makers' Company, our industry charity. We thought Step 2 It was a perfect vehicle for raising awareness in the industry and raising additional and much needed funds for those associated with the furnishing industry, who may need help in the future. We became a gold sponsor in the hope of giving this incredible initiative a kick-start.

”

Mark Richardson, managing director of Blum UK



Ruairi Giles ran the London Marathon



The Master and Madeline on one of their many walks



Whitemeadow presenting the Master with a cheque

*Simple Shade 05, a 2021 Design
Guild Mark Lighting Design
category winner*





EXCELLENCE

Championing and
rewarding quality

Excellence pervades the UK furnishing industry and we have made it our duty to recognise it since 1958, when the then Furniture Makers' Guild introduced the Guild Mark.

We continue this glorious tradition today through the awarding of three distinct Guild Marks – the Bespoke Guild Mark, Design Guild Mark and Manufacturing Guild Mark – which collectively reward and raise the profile of British design, innovation and manufacturing.

To ensure their significance, the Guild Marks are judged and audited by sector influencers and revered industry experts, making them enviable to obtain.

Holders of the different Guild Marks not only receive kudos, but also an invaluable marketing tool to promote their product or business which has been shown to have significant sales benefits.

All holders of our coveted Guild Marks can be found on the Guild Mark Directory on our website.

Why Excellence Matters

Melvyn Earle, editor of Manufacturing Guild Mark media partner Furniture Journal, explains why excellence is a necessity if you want to stay ahead



Progress. Advancement. Development. The pursuit of excellence. Have you noticed how the once steady pace of change has reached dizzying speed and once-accepted benchmarks are being cold-shouldered in favour of higher goals?

It was ca.1885 when Carl Benz built what's believed to be one of the first automobiles.

By 2020 there were over 32 million cars registered in the UK alone.

It was 1903 when Orville and Wilbur Wright's first machine left terra firma. Orville's first flight was 120 feet, shorter than the length of one wing of the largest aeroplane ever built, the 710-ton Antonov AN-225.

And it was in 1949 when the first NC milling machine with motorised axes was set to work producing helicopter blades. It was programmed by punch tape.

Look at us now.

In the furniture industry, we programme machines from the back office. They talk to

each other, tell us long before they will break down which parts they will need and create entire suites of furniture in eerily operator-free, robot-manned factories. The accuracy and the quality they produce is exceptional – and with each new generation, the boundaries of excellence are stretched that little bit further.

In the same timeframe, printers have taken simple paper products and turned them into ever more sophisticated furniture décors. They are so realistic to the eye and to the touch that when laminated to the latest generation panel products, they confuse the senses into believing they really are what they seek to copy. Many are even better.

Hinges and slides have progressed from simple devices that open and close doors and drawers to sophisticated movement systems that soft-close, glide open at the touch of a button and have become works of art as well as triumphs of technology.

Even the materials we use in today's production are more sophisticated, more capable, more flexible, and safer than ever before.

It's no surprise that today's consumer expects the latest designs, the finest quality, market-leading technology, uniqueness that sets them apart – and every single one of them is far more knowledgeable about what they are buying and what it's worth to them than ever before. Edged boards with a glueline you can see, slam-bang drawers in plastic-look carcasses, yesterday's design ideas... Show a





consumer excellence, explain the benefits and run-of-the-mill doesn't get a look in.

Furniture Journal is the magazine for furniture manufacturers in the UK and we've sung the virtues of excellence and pushed the boundaries of quality for almost three decades. We lead by example with editorials that show you how to improve your manufacturing at every level and we actively search out and bring you the latest technology and the most advantageous products; we present you with photography and print quality that allow the companies we write about to show their cutting-edge products in detail; and we provide you with a free app edition that allows technology leaders to demonstrate their latest developments in video form on your smartphone or tablet. Then we provide you with the details necessary to make contact – all for free.

Around two years ago, to help further the pursuit of excellence in the furniture-manufacturing sector, we teamed up with The Furniture Makers' Company and became its official Manufacturing Guild Mark Media Partner, promoting the aims and objectives of one of the industry's most prestigious acknowledgements of excellence, the Manufacturing Guild Mark.

It is our joint aim to promote and recognise excellence in manufacturing and encourage British furniture manufacturers large and small to meet standards that set them apart as the very best in their field. If you aspire to be among them, make sure you read Furniture Journal and apply for a Manufacturing Guild Mark. Together, we can help to put your company ahead.

furniturejournal.co.uk



B

BESPOKE GUILD MARK

BESPOKE GUILD MARK.
FLAWLESS, UNIQUE,
DISCERNING

The Bespoke Guild Mark recognises excellence in design, materials, craftsmanship and function for exquisite pieces of furniture made as single items or a limited run of up to 12. This year three exceptional pieces met the stringent criteria to be awarded the Mark.

bespokeguildmark.org.uk

 [@bespokeguildmark](https://www.instagram.com/bespokeguildmark)



BGM 476
Guilloché Bedside Tables by Fernanda Nuñez



BGM 477
Sculptural Sideboard by Clive Brooks and Barnaby Scott



BGM 478
**Display Table by Clive
Brooks and Simon Smith**



B BESPOKE GUILD MARK

FERNANDA NUÑEZ

The concept of fate – the notion that someone is destined to become the person they are – may seem like poppycock but on asking Fernanda Nuñez about her path to becoming a designer-maker, even the most hardened of sceptics might soften to the theory.

The seed of becoming a maker was sewn from an early age as Fernanda spent her childhood in her father's metal workshop, drawing, curiously observing and hammering any spare metal scraps she could find.

In 2006 she moved to the UK and studied for a Bachelor's degree in International Relations, seemingly taking her in a direction away from the arts. While working as a barista in the Lake District post university, Fernanda began investigating starting her own mobile café from a horse box that she wanted to convert. Little did she know that this would put her on a new course in life.

"I decided to enrol on a training course for a week to learn woodworking basics and came across Waters and Acland, a renowned furniture school. Waters and Acland opened my eyes to a whole new world of breathtaking handcrafted furniture that overlaps the limits with art. It was then, after a week of training, after the first set of dovetails and my first inlaying, that I knew this was the path for me.

"I am extremely lucky to have started my life as a cabinet maker under the guidance of a school that has such incredibly high standards and provides an enormous space for creativity. I have always had a strong

artistic inclination, and despite pursuing different career paths, I knew deep inside that I was meant to be a maker."

Taking to the craft like the proverbial duck to water, Fernanda first caught the Company's attention at the 2019 Celebration of Craftsmanship & Design exhibition. Her striking Guilloché tables, one of many pieces in the furniture pavilion, were awarded the Company's Design Award.

"Winning The Furniture Makers' Company Design Award in 2019 was a surreal and fantastic experience for which I am extremely grateful. This recognition represented the stepping stone that gave me the confidence to put my Guilloché tables forward for the Bespoke Guild Mark."

Since its launch, the Bespoke Guild Mark has been the apex of distinctions for UK designer-makers, recognising excellence in





design, materials, craftsmanship and function for exquisite pieces of furniture made as single items or a limited run of up to 12.

The Mark is one of the highest honours a bespoke maker can receive, and in 2020 – only one year removed from finishing her training – Fernanda was awarded one for the Guilloché tables.

The tables – the 476th design in history to be awarded a Bespoke Guild Mark –

represent Fernanda's first self-designed project – an endeavour that took her an astonishing six months to complete and over 100 hours of extremely detailed carving and sanding work.

However, a serendipitous call back to Fernanda's childhood helped prepare her for the precision she'd need later on in life.

"Growing up I studied and played the cello, and for many years I was devoted

to making music. I believe classical music cultivated traits of patience and perfectionism – indispensable attributes for a cabinet maker."

The design draws inspiration from a once much used but now almost forgotten French decorative technique called Guilloché, where a pattern is mechanically engraved via engine turning into metal.

Inspired by the Guilloché pattern from an art deco mirror, Fernanda wanted to explore the possibilities of transferring this technique into the realms of woodworking. The effect of the Guilloché pattern – an illusion of movement – is enhanced by the pale beauty of the maple, evoking the rising sun. It is framed by the dark silhouetted shape of the bamboo scaffolding, conceived to create contrast through its black stained legs and rails.

"The whole process was one enormous learning experience," explains Fernanda.

The tables were designed with functionality in mind, with the depth of each drawer serving different purposes. Each bedside table has a deep, general purpose dovetailed drawer, and a secret, shallow drawer for smaller and valuable objects like wallets, phones, jewellery, diaries or letters.

Daniel Hopwood, Bespoke Guild Mark chairman, said: "We were delighted to award Fernanda a Bespoke Guild Mark for her Guilloché bedside tables. Not only are they well-made but also offer interesting techniques in shaping the drawer fronts to

create the illusion of movement, as well as being a thoughtful, useful design. This was an early project for Fernanda and we look forward to seeing what she makes next."

Fernanda said: "I feel honoured and humbled to know that my work is recognised and appreciated by some of the most talented and respected people in our field."

Having now opened her own workshop and working under the name Wood Chuck Chick, Fernanda's star seems like it has only just begun to shine.

She concludes: "The journey continues and it has just begun."

woodchuckchick.com

[@woodchuckchick](https://www.instagram.com/woodchuckchick)





DESIGN GUILD MARK. SETTING THE BAR OF EXCELLENCE

The prestigious Design Guild Mark is awarded to drive excellence and raise the profile of British design and innovation.

The Mark recognises the highest standards in the design of furnishing in volume production, by designers working in Britain or British designers working abroad.

In 2021 27 designs were awarded a Design Guild Mark, 21 from the Furniture category, four in the 2D Design category (textiles, wall coverings, surfaces, carpets and floor coverings) and two in the inaugural Lighting Design category.

The TO1 Cross Chair and Identity and Strata collections were named the winners of the Jonathan Hindle Prize for outstanding design. Oceanic and Introvert Extrovert were also highly commended.

designguildmark.org.uk

 [@designguildmark](https://www.instagram.com/designguildmark)

Furniture

- DGM 234 The Kenilworth collection, designed by Pierre Greenway for Pierre Greenway
- DGM 235 Fold, designed by Samuel Wilkinson for The Conran Shop
- DGM 236 Cruz Del Sur x Disegno, designed by Matteo Fogale for Matteo Fogale Ltd
- DGM 237 Rakino collection, designed by Tim Rundle for Morgan Furniture
- DGM 238 Jethro, designed by Sarah Kay for SCP
- DGM 239 Smalto Table collection, designed by Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby for Knoll International
- DGM 240 Ore Tables, designed by Daniel Schofield for Ercol
- DGM 241 Corso Table and Bench, designed by Dylan Freeth for Ercol
- DGM 242 Verso Cabinets, designed by Dylan Freeth for Ercol
- DGM 243 Backer, designed by Daniel Schofield for Hayche
- DGM 244 Assembled collection/Stack and Chamfer, designed by Paul Crofts for Isomi
- DGM 245 Lino Chair, designed by Sam Hecht and Kim Colin for Herman Miller
- DGM 246 Civic Tables, designed by Sam Hecht and Kim Colin for Herman Miller
- DGM 247 Folk, designed by Luke Pearson and Tom Lloyd for Allermuir
- DGM 248 Kin, designed by Luke Pearson and Tom Lloyd for Allermuir
- DGM 249 TO1 Cross Chair, designed by Luke Pearson and Tom Lloyd for TAKT
- DGM 250 Chamfer 'springleaf' Table, designed by Ben Fowler for Yonga Mobilya/Marque Furniture
- DGM 251 Deco Screens, designed by Mark Gabbertas for Gloster Furniture
- DGM 252 Maya, designed by Mark Gabbertas for Gloster Furniture
- DGM 253 Pi Stool, designed by Simon Cass for Par-avion
- DGM 254 Aspect Table, designed by Tom Rawlings for William Hands

2D Design

- DGM 255 Identity and Strata collections, designed by David Irwin and Rachel Evison for Bute Fabrics
- DGM 256 Kit Miles Fabric Wallpaper collection, designed by Kit Miles for Kit Miles
- DGM 257 Hit the North, designed by Drew Millward and Charlotte Raffo for The Monkey Puzzle Tree
- DGM 258 Oceanic, designed by Jodie Padgett for Camira

Lighting Design

- DGM 259 Introvert Extrovert, designed by Nathanael Hunt for Haberdashery
- DGM 260 Simple Shade 05, designed by Naomi Rochowski for Naomi Paul Ltd





DGM 246



DGM 247



DGM 250



DGM 251



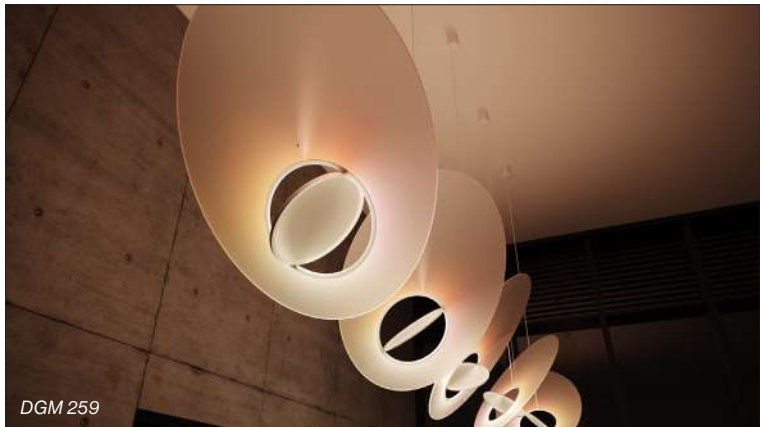
DGM 254



DGM 255



DGM 258



DGM 259



DAVID
IRWIN

x

bute



bute

DAVID IRWIN x BUTE

If ever there was a design that could be considered a love letter to its place of origin, it would be the Identity and Strata textiles collections, manufactured by Bute Fabrics.

Designed by David Irwin and Bute Fabrics' senior designer Rachel Evison, the collections were heavily inspired by the company's heritage, the stunning island of Bute and its people.

'Kin', the first of two fabrics within the Identity collection, celebrates the impact of the human touch within machine production: the maker's mark and the mastery of the unique processes inherent in textile manufacture.

Meanwhile, 'Clan', the second of the two Identity fabrics, pays homage to the unique origin of the company, which was founded in 1947 by the 5th Marquess of Bute. He started it with the sole purpose of providing employment opportunities for service people returning home from the Second World War and 73 years later it is still supporting a community by employing 46 people.

The Strata collection, which consists of weaves 'Mason' and 'Mineral', takes its cue from Bute's underlying geology, celebrating the colours of stone found on the island, from its bedrock to its pebbled beaches and rocky shores.

Rachel explains: "From the outset the aim was to create a collection as unique as the story of Bute Fabrics; one that was intrinsically linked to the mill, its heritage and the island of Bute itself. The collection's soft touch and

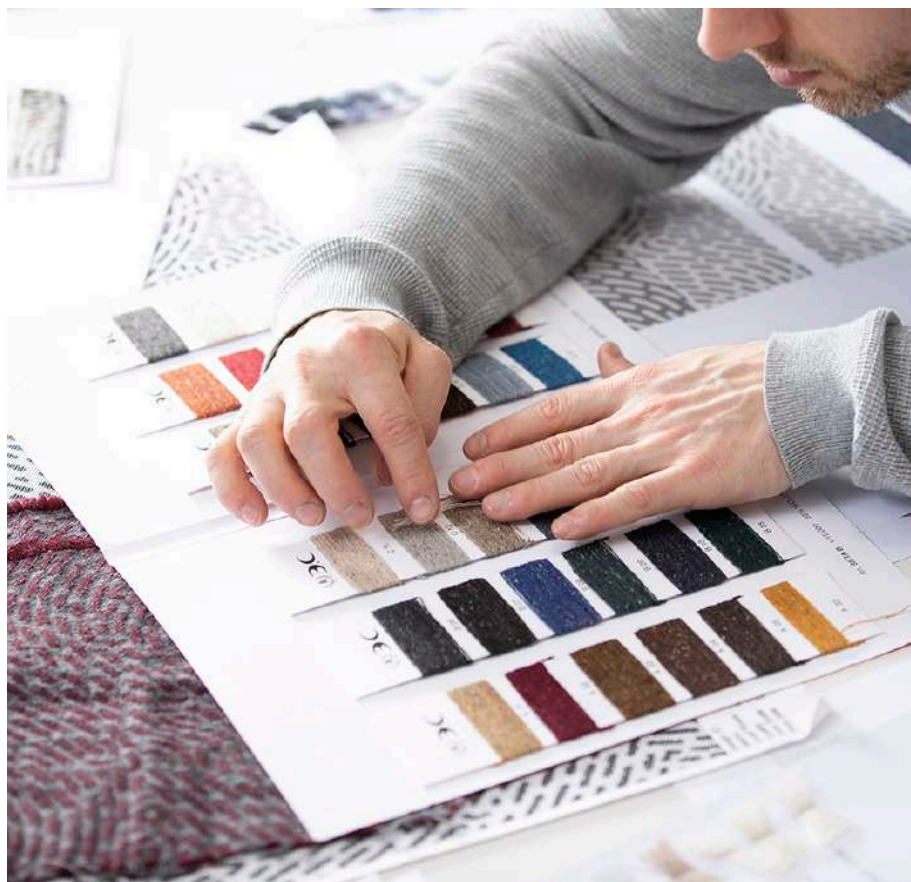
handle is unique within the contract fabric market as natural and recycled content in high specification cloths rarely achieve this."

While the collections are an ode to Bute's roots and journey as a company, Strata and Identity also symbolise the present and future of the business, as they are the first production of Jacquard cloth in the mill's history, made possible by significant investment.

In 2020 the collections were submitted to the Design Guild Mark's 2D Design category.

The collections were incredibly well received by the judging panel, who not only awarded a Design Guild Mark but also deemed them to be the category's top design and, consequently, winner of the Jonathan Hindle Prize for outstanding design.

David said: "I'm thrilled and honoured to receive the Jonathan Hindle Prize for the collaboration with Bute Fabrics. It's especially meaningful for me as this has been my first time working in textile design, so I'm





extremely grateful to be recognised by such an esteemed panel of judges. Thank you to the whole team at Bute for making the project happen.”

Neither David nor Rachel are strangers to Design Guild Mark success, though. David has previously won three Design Guild Marks for chairs Hardy, Narin and TOR, while Rachel was awarded a Design Guild Mark for the Alchemy collection, also for Bute, in 2018. Clearly, the pair working together was going to be a recipe for success, but how did this collaboration come about?

Rachel explains: “The partnership between Bute and David was initiated by the Bute Fabrics team. The company has always enjoyed partnership developments, such as our collaboration with Timorous Beasties and Barber Osgerby, so we wanted to work with a furniture designer with a similar ethos and focus on sustainability.

“Bute had worked in conjunction with David via the Deadgood team for several years so it was an obvious collaboration. When we approached David, he shared the excitement and passion for the project and understood what we were looking to

develop for the new collection. As David is a furniture designer and uses fabrics with his products, it was hugely beneficial to have his knowledge and understanding regarding how the fabric works with the furniture when upholstered.”

Since its establishment almost 15 years ago, the Design Guild Mark has become a major, covetable and unbiased design award, recognising the pinnacle of UK design intended for volume production. This is the second year running that Rachel and Bute have been awarded a Mark for a design and she is effusive with praise as to the benefit it has in opening the lines of communication with clients.

Rachel says: “The Design Guild Mark is a recognised and valued mark of quality and very much helps supports our brand position in the market. Bute Fabrics have had several enquiries from both architects and designers due to the award and part of their decision making to use our fabric is due to the fabrics achieving the Design Guild Mark.”

butfabricsltd.com

📷 @butfabrics







MANUFACTURING GUILD MARK. BASTIONS OF BRITISH QUALITY

The prestigious Manufacturing Guild Mark has been the mark of excellence, distinguishing Britain's top furnishing manufacturers, since 1993.

It is awarded to British manufacturers that have demonstrated incredible standards across all areas of the business by successfully passing a rigorous, independently reviewed audit against a comprehensive set of criteria, including design, product development, manufacture, HR, financial stability, sustainability, sales and marketing.

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The current holders are:

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Herman Miller

Howdens

Jay-Be

John Sankey

Michael Tyler Furniture

Middleton Bespoke Joinery

Paneltech

Parlour Farm Kitchens

Relyon

Rivelin

Silentnight

Sound Leisure

Treske

Wren Kitchens



Camden Corner by Artistic Upholstery



Beaufort sofa by Michael Tyler Furniture



Chilcomb by Howdens



Ercol Verso High Sideboard



Bespoke bedroom wardrobes featuring Xylocleaf laminate by Middleton Bespoke Joinery



Burgess Beds Diamante bedstead and a Highgrove mattress



Cosm by Herman Miller



Eco Comfort Breathe 2000 by Silentnight



Callero Trolley by Gratnells



Harries Kitchen by Parlour Farm Kitchens



Painted shaker design from Burbidge Kitchen Makers. Haddon range in Mallard Green



Manchester Cathedral Nave choir and altar furniture by Treske



NOOK, a mobile quiet workspace aimed at improving workspaces for introverts and those on the spectrum, by Paneltech



Quarters by Bisley



Relyon Peerless Montacute roomset





Jay-Be Benchmark S5 mattress



Infinity Plus Shaker range by Wren Kitchens



Sound Leisure's SL45 Vinyl Jukebox



Malmö from Rivelin's Woodland collection



The Lounger by Delcor



Synergy by Harrison Spinks



The Fairbanks by John Sankey



Ben Burbidge, Manufacturing Guild Mark chairman, and Dino Mussell, managing director at Parlour Farm Kitchens



PARLOUR FARM KITCHENS

Parlour Farm Kitchens, a Cotswolds-based manufacturer, joined the manufacturing elite in 2021 when the company was awarded the prestigious Manufacturing Guild Mark.

Sponsored by Biesse Group, the Manufacturing Guild Mark has been the mark of excellence, distinguishing Britain's top furnishing manufacturers, since 1993. The Mark is awarded to companies that demonstrate high standards across seven assessment criteria: design, product development and function,

manufacture, human resources, financial stability, sustainability, and sales and marketing.

Founded in 1995, Parlour Farm Kitchens creates fully bespoke British kitchens, offering design, manufacturing, installation and aftercare. Owner and managing director Dino Mussell acquired the business in 2015 and runs the company with his mother Tina Rowley-Mussell and her husband, Austen Rowley, as well as a team of 25 employees, including designers, surveyors and fitters.

Formerly an owner of a well-known Cirencester gastropub, Dino's move from fine food to furniture was driven by upsetting circumstances, as the company's founder Nick Grunfeld, who was a friend of Dino and his family, was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Following Nick's death, Dino and his family bought the business so they could continue building on what Nick had started.

Dino explains: "We thought it would be a great opportunity to continue Nick's legacy.



The company needed investment in terms of new modern equipment and an extension to the factory to help it run more fluidly. This was something we were able to offer."

Since then, Dino and his family have been working hard to build up the business and carve out its own niche in a competitive marketplace.

Parlour Farm prides itself on being able to tailor every element of the room to a precise specification, ensuring that every inch of available space is utilised to build the best performing kitchen possible. It operates from a workshop and an 8,500 sq. ft showroom, with eight large kitchen sets in Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

Like any company, Parlour Farm was shaken by the coronavirus pandemic, but



Dino has continued to be proactive despite the situation, investing where is needed and looking at marketing opportunities to help develop the manufacturer. Attaining the Manufacturing Guild Mark had been long on

Dino's list of aspirations for the business.

Dino says: "I had been aware of the Manufacturing Guild Mark for several years and while having many other accolades, the Manufacturing Guild Mark was one that we really strived to achieve. We wanted to invest and put the infrastructure in place before applying so that we stood the best chance of achieving this prestigious mark.

"Our design processes, manufacturing and installation are all at the highest level. It is no accident that we have clients that come from Smallbone, Plain English and all the other big boys, as we can offer a more personal service, the same quality furniture but at a lower price point."

Ben Burbidge, Manufacturing Guild Mark chairman, presented Dino with the certificate of authentication at a ceremony in November 2021. During his visit, Ben got to experience the same tour Dino proudly gives to Parlour Farm's customers.





Dino says: “We welcome all our clients to a factory tour so that they can see the process that we take, from the raw tulip, oak and walnut coming into our mill. Then they can see it being milled into the material for the frames and doors, essentially they follow their kitchen, boot room, utility, gun room etc. from raw material to finished article.”

Holding the Mark entitles Parlour Farm to publicise the designation of excellence within its own press activity and marketing, something that Dino values and is taking full advantage of.

“We plan on using the branding across all forms of media and we’re even having our website changed to shout it from the rooftops. I feel that if people are looking in the market and doing comparisons, having the Manufacturing Guild Mark will give them the added reassurance to go with us over our competitors. So far, we know of more than £250,000 worth of business that we have won because the Manufacturing



Guild Mark has helped to sway the client, sometimes even when we were slightly over budget.”

With the uncertainty of the pandemic hopefully behind us, the future looks bright for Parlour Farm and Dino is overjoyed by the position the company is currently in.

“We have worked incredibly hard and now have the largest order book that the company has ever seen. We are working with some of the most prestigious properties and some of the smallest which makes it incredibly exciting, and we look forward to times ahead.”

Ben Burbidge said: “Congratulations to Parlour Farm for achieving the absolute pinnacle of awards, the Manufacturing Guild Mark, which recognises excellent UK furnishing manufacturers. The award is a testament to the skill and commitment of all the team at the business, whose dedication ensures excellence is maintained consistently across

all areas of the company. It was an absolute pleasure to meet Dino and be given a tour of the company’s excellent manufacturing facility in the Cotswolds.”

parlourfarm.com

[@parlourfarmkitchen](https://www.instagram.com/parlourfarmkitchen)



Kingston





EDUCATION

Developing the next generation

The pandemic not only brought many businesses to a standstill but also widespread disruption to education and training providers, which were left having to teach students through new, uncharted means.

The lockdowns meant we were regrettably unable to organise our traditional calendar of educational events designed to nurture, inspire and steward talent in the sector.

With unparalleled demand for our welfare support snowballing, we took the necessary decision to freeze most of our education programme until the storm cleared.

As this extremely challenging period of time draws to a close, we are thrilled to be recommencing our education and development programme in the new livery year.

We are committed to investing in the future of our industry and plans have already commenced to invest more in education and development than ever before so that we can correct the skills gap and showcase our great industry as a sector of choice.

With heavier investment, new resources, a clear strategy and support from the industry, we feel very confident that we'll be able to help close the gap.

Why Education Matters

Chris Hyde is learning design director at Activate Learning and co-chairman of our training and education committee



I asked a student who had recently joined the faculty why had they decided to come and study. They replied, 'I wanted to learn the best way and to be the best person I can be'.

Learning is about asking yourself questions and answering the questions others ask you, either as theory or in practice. It forms your identity, confidence, self-esteem, purpose, passion and shapes your 'why'.

The ability to recognise your failures, enjoy your successes and to act, learn and have another go. The resilience of knowing the next time I do that I will ... is a learnt lesson that comes with pain, frustration, and a required growth mindset.

Mastery of a skill through learning can be sequenced, reflected upon, and then perfected. I think that is the easy bit compared with teaching the more difficult 'soft skills' that employers need, like managing one's emotions and attributes.

Education is going through many changes. The way we now teach includes hybrid ways of working that have enabled learners to move between asynchronous activity (online) or synchronous activity (on-site or face-to-face). Theory taught pre-lesson online and then practised on-site at educational institutions is

becoming the norm. However, striking the hybrid balance to make the most impact is critical in how learning is set, held, and landed.

Furniture qualifications are under reform. The Skills Reform Bill centres around three routes, A levels, apprenticeships and T (Technical) levels. The furniture apprenticeships have been reviewed and we await approval. T levels are two-year programmes that will provide an off-and-on-the-job education with external tests and work placements of 315 hours per learner. We will therefore require pledges of

work experience from companies to fulfil this request. Being on the T level development team gives a good perspective on what the barriers will be. The importance of literacies (English, Maths and Digital) are embedded and contextualised throughout this practical programme launching in 2023.

Most worryingly of all, we have seen the mental health of students suffer through the many waves of COVID. One organisation had 44,283 conversations in October 2021, up 42% compared to October 2020, with suicide the





most common issue. We must look above the much-required skill shortages and pay attention to the many individuals who are suffering with anxiety.

It is right that we meet all learners where they are, at whatever stage in their career, to empower them on their learning journey and to find their role in this furniture and furnishing industry. The time to invest in staff, education and training is now.

As we move into our new year, our education career priorities will be to educate and bridge the gap between employers and learners. We will do this by influencing, signposting, and connecting with learners, whether they are school pupils, students, apprentices, graduates, or established employees who wish to follow their passion and progress into the industry to be 'the best person that they can be'.

activatelearning.ac.uk



Young Furniture Maker Awards 2021

Unable to hold our fabulous Young Furniture Makers exhibition because of the pandemic, in 2021 we organised a virtual show with a small ceremony for the award winners at Furniture Makers' Hall

Scan here to watch
YFMA Highlights



The Young Furniture Maker Awards are the student equivalent of our Guild Marks recognising excellence in Bespoke furniture and Design.

Every year we receive a huge number of entries from students for the awards. The designs that impress the judges on paper are traditionally invited to show at the Young Furniture Makers exhibition so they can scrutinise them in person and pick winners.

This year a virtual exhibition featuring 55 shortlisted designs took place online, so all the judging was done using the information and images provided in the application. The judges for the 2021 Young Furniture Maker Awards were Zoë Bonser, portfolio director at Clarion Events; Chris Hyde, learning design director at Activate Learning; Peter Sharratt, technical support advisor at Blum; Alan Styles, managing director at Axminster Tools; and Charles Vernon, Past Master.

The winners were invited to a ceremony at Furniture Makers' Hall in October 2021 where they were presented with their awards by David Woodward, Master of The Furniture Makers' Company, and Zoë Bonser.



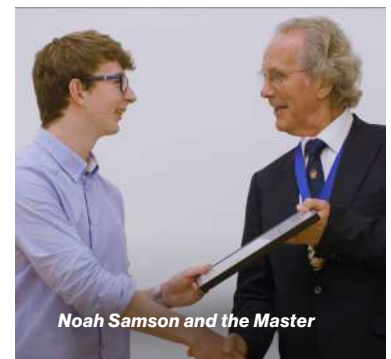
Joe Geehan, Noah Samson, Charlotte McGowan and Harry Peck



Harry Peck being presented a Special Commendation by the Master



Charlotte McGowan and her father



Noah Samson and the Master

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January
**Furniture
Show**

BESPOKE AWARD AND INNOVATION AWARD WINNER

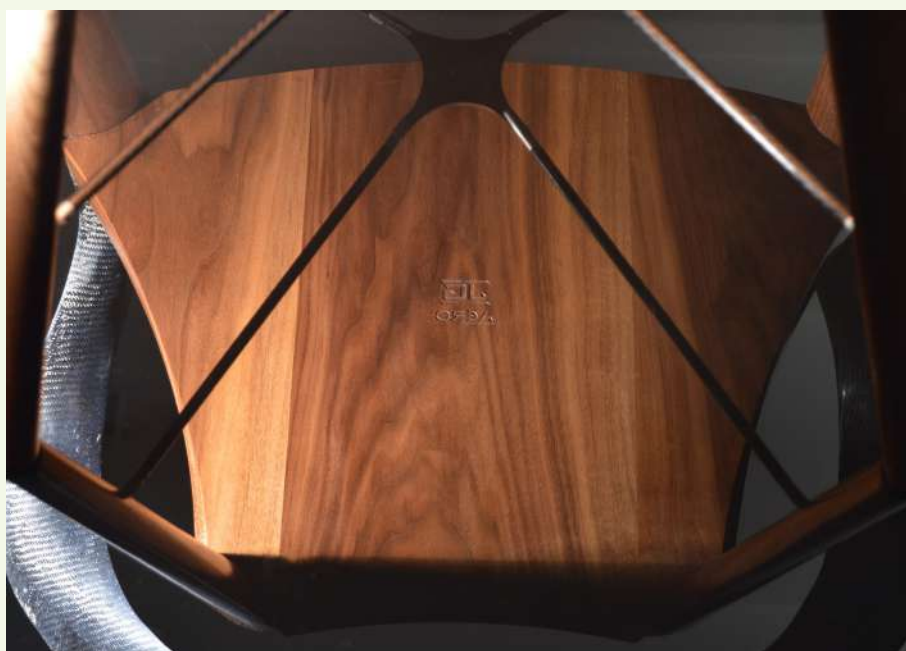
AERO BY JOE GEEHAN

Wolverhampton School of Art Master's student Joe Geehan won the Bespoke and Innovation Awards for his chair Aero, made using American black walnut and carbon.

He said: "Designing and crafting Aero has been an incredible journey testing me in ways I would have never expected. I have loved every second of it. The additional challenges of COVID have taught me how important teamwork and togetherness are in all aspects of life.

"I am delighted to have received the Bespoke Award for Aero from The Furniture Makers' Company. I am very proud to have received such a prestigious accolade. It has been a really big confidence boost as I move into the furniture industry. Thank you to everyone that has helped me get to where I am today."

Second place in the Bespoke category went to Finn Timmins for Regenerated Kumkio and third place to Charlie Teager-Neale for the Onyx Cabinet. Harry Peck received a Special Commendation in the Innovation Award category.



DESIGN AWARD AND BEST IN SHOW WINNER

SET TEE BY CHARLOTTE MCGOWAN

Charlotte McGowan is a graduate of the Kingston School of Art. Her design for a modular lounge chair, Set Tee, won both the Design Award and Best in Show. The piece is based on the idea that triangles always fit within a square, which allows the back to nest within the base. The piece is made from laminated aero ply, foam and woven fabric.

Charlotte said: "Winning a Young Furniture Makers Award has given me some amazing opportunities to display my work, on platforms which might not have seen it otherwise. The awards mean so much to me, as it feels like a validation of all our efforts to produce and design, despite being in a pandemic with limited resources."



"I have known about the awards since I started university and had even visited as an intern at Luke Hughes. The exposure which comes with the award is really beneficial when entering a competitive industry like design, as it introduces us to industry professionals too."

Second place in the Design category went to Harry Peck for Wave Cycle and third place to Jack Buttling for HUDL.



SCHOOL DESIGN AWARD WINNERS

SPIRAL SEATING STRUCTURE BY ANNABEL HARRIS AND TAMBOUR DOOR UNIT BY NOAH SAMSON

Annabel Harris and Noah Samson were the joint winners of the School Design Award.

Annabel said: "I entered the Young Furniture Maker Awards in 2019 and won third place in the School Design Award. That was an amazing experience, not only to win the award but also to exhibit my piece in London and have the opportunity to speak to those in the furniture industry.

"The online exhibition this year was a great opportunity to see the work of other designers and furniture makers. To win joint first place, was a greater accomplishment, especially given the challenges of the pandemic. My piece was a challenging design to create and required many processes and new techniques.

"Winning the award acknowledged all the hard work put into the final design and gave me confidence as a designer. I am currently studying Architecture at Cardiff University, and this award has opened new doors and opportunities in the field of design, which will be valuable in my career going forward. Overall, I am incredibly proud to have been awarded this prestigious award."

Noah said: "Winning this award is extremely important to me. Ever since I came to the show in 2019, I saw the quality of the work on display and I made it my goal to have one of my pieces showcased at the event. When I found out I had won I was more than thrilled to know that people viewed my work in the same light as those from the previous years, and that all my hard work



and dedication throughout the uncertainty of lockdowns was being recognised. I hope that in winning this award it will open up new avenues and opportunities for me to progress into and develop my career further, whether that be solo or within a business."



The Frederick Parker Collection and Archive

Since all of us have had to spend more time at home recently, home has never felt so important. For many it has become a place of work and a schoolroom as well as a place of rest and comfort

Often it has been necessary to make adjustments to the home, to alter the functions of certain rooms, move the furniture around, acquire extra furniture for particular purposes, or simply replace it with something new and fresh. Furniture and furnishings are the ingredients of home, they enable us to create a home to suit our personal and family needs, and in this way they are an expression of ourselves and of our times.

The Frederick Parker Collection provides a vivid reminder that furniture changes over the years, both in its appearance and function. The collection, which is on long-term loan to the London Metropolitan University, includes around 200 chairs dating from the mid-17th century to the present, and each of them is a reflection of their time and the people who made and used them. Chairs are the most evocative of all types of furniture; rather like clothing, they come in a great variety of types and styles and choosing a chair, or a set of chairs, is usually done only after a great deal of thought. Perhaps this is why we find them fascinating, and why the collection is such a useful resource for learning and study.

Our priority, in caring for the collection, is to ensure it is as accessible as possible so that many people can benefit from learning about the chairs and what they represent. While physical access has been severely restricted during the pandemic, we have hosted visits by groups and individuals whenever possible and the feedback has been positive and

very gratifying. However, the pandemic has shown that online access has become even more essential, and we are working now to create a new online catalogue by the end of 2022. This will include high-resolution digital photographs of each chair and detailed descriptions of their history, materials, construction, condition and use.

We also hold the Frederick Parker and Parker Knoll archive, a wonderful resource covering almost 150 years of furniture making. In recent months, whenever access has been allowed, staff in the Special Collections team at London Metropolitan University have been scanning items such as mid-century furniture catalogues and sales brochures, early photographs of the factories and workshops, design drawings and upholstery sample books, which are then published online. These are valuable for anyone interested in Frederick Parker or Parker Knoll furniture, such as owners, collectors, dealers and restorers, and for furniture historians documenting the history of the companies or furthering studies of the home and home furnishings in the last century.

These online resources will continue to be developed and enriched, and as soon as the COVID restrictions have eased, we will resume the provision of tours for adult groups, study visits for students and schoolchildren and touring exhibitions to schools and colleges. For any enquiries about the chair collection and archive, please email specialcollections@londonmet.ac.uk





*Corporate liveryman Carla Barnett, group
HR director at Sanderson Design Group*





MEMBERSHIP

Helping change
the industry

The Furniture Makers' Company is a modern livery company and our membership comprises of individuals and businesses that make up the diverse and creative UK furnishing industry. Although Furniture Makers is in our name, our members come from all sectors within the wider trade, from flooring to fabric, upholstery to bedding, cabinet to kitchens.

At the heart of everything we do are our members. Without them, we would be unable to make the progress we do. Their expertise and hundreds of hours of pro bono time that they gift to us each year helps drive our strategy forward.

Over the past two years we have continued to welcome new freemen and progress existing members onto liveryman status, despite the challenges of lockdowns. Positively, corporate membership is at an all time high, with more companies – whether they be manufacturers, retailers or suppliers – than ever before recognising the significance of what we do and joining in support.

We are proud to represent such a vibrant, forward-thinking and vital trade and can't wait to welcome more individuals and corporates into our ever-growing ranks.

Why Membership Matters

First Assistant Brian Ahern has been a member for almost 20 years. He tells us why membership matters



I joined the Company in 2003 when Robin Clark, managing director of cabinet supplier Corndell, suggested I become a freeman. I had only been working in the industry for seven years then, having joined Corndell in 1996 after many years spent in the electrical trade.

Robin believed I would get a lot out of being a member, and as I edge closer to 20 years of membership with the Company, it's pretty safe to assume he was right.

I like the fact that we are active on so many fronts. Education is a cornerstone and vital in safeguarding the future of British design and manufacturing, as is celebrating excellence; but for me, what we do on the welfare front – supporting people – is what I'm passionate about.

It's the people in the industry that make it special. The trade is made up of companies of all shapes and sizes, but it's the personal relationships that make this a great industry. That in turn is what makes the Furniture Makers special. We bring together companies and colleagues from across all sectors of the trade under one banner to achieve something for the good of the industry.

To me, a perfect example of this is the London to Bordeaux cycle challenge, organised

in 2016 by Past Master Ben Burbidge. It is a week I will certainly never forget.

When I informed my family that I was going to be riding a bike to Bordeaux, my son, Michael, quickly signed himself up too. It was only after completing the 450-mile journey that Michael mentioned he hadn't thought I was serious, or he might not have put himself forward so quickly. The thought of it still makes me ache but cycling with 20+ other members was an incredible experience.

We raised around £60,000 for the charity in the process – it's amazing what can be achieved when we work together as a team. Perhaps that's why I enjoy being a member of the Company so much.

For me, it's incredibly rewarding to be involved with an organisation that is focused on the advancement of the industry. It's through membership of the Company that I feel that I'm able to give back and play a part in keeping our industry vibrant and relevant.

As members, we all have the opportunity to sit on one of the Company's committees to volunteer expertise or get involved with an area that piques our interest. Today I'm the Communications Chairman and Corporate Membership Chairman, as well as sitting on several other committees, including the Southern Region.

The development of our regional committees has been really exciting. They present a massive opportunity for more

people at all levels in the industry to find out about us and get involved with the Company or seek help from the charity if they need it.

We still have a lot of work to do but that is part of the fun. For every new member we bring on board, that is another person who can help refine what we do and hopefully champion our message at their company.



Brian Ahern, Michael Ahern, Edward Tadros and Henry Tadros on the 2016 London to Bordeaux Cycle Ride



FREEMAN

Profile

Noah Morris

Furniture maker Noah Morris was admitted as a freeman in December 2021



I decided I wanted to pursue a career in woodwork when I was in my last few years at school. I really enjoyed the subject and was encouraged by my DT teacher to explore furniture making. I found the Peter Sefton Furniture School and when I went for my interview, I fell in love with the idea of designing and making.

It was an honour to spend a year learning from Peter Sefton and Sean Feeney, building a great base knowledge of designing and making. I then jumped straight into a job making high-end fine furniture, honing my skill over the years, and continuing to learn from some incredibly talented makers.

My goal was always to start my own business as I wanted to immerse myself in the whole process of designing and making furniture. In April 2021, Noah Morris Bespoke was born and I have been steadily making



“

My goal was always to start my own business as I wanted to immerse myself in the whole process of designing and making furniture.

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my way through my first year of trading, enjoying the challenge and variety of running a business.

I specialise in bespoke furniture. I work alongside my clients to design and make the piece to the client's specification. One of the things I love most about making bespoke is the freedom to be creative and how creativity is enhanced by the materials available. Timber is a beautiful natural material and I like to make sure that the material is the centre of attention by not allowing the design to become overly complex or fussy. I particularly enjoy adding the little quirks that make an item personal, whether it's a hidden compartment or a feature detail.

My aspiration for the business is to have a small team of makers designing and making furniture together, bouncing ideas around and creating beautiful, functional furniture for our clients.

I was told about The Furniture Makers' Company when I was training with Peter Sefton and Sean Feeney. They expressed what a great community of people it is and the benefit of having connections throughout the industry. When I had my interview, I enjoyed hearing about the way makers support each other and the charitable work and training the company does all over the country.

Being able to have my admission ceremony in person made it a special occasion, especially after a long time of adhering to COVID-19 restrictions. It was great



to have the Christmas Mixer after as well. I met existing members of the Company and found out much more about what the Company stands for, and other ways to get involved. It was also a great opportunity to talk to other members who have been in my situation and get some helpful advice going forward.

I would like to continue to learn from other makers throughout the industry, making good connections and to teach others what I have learnt. I am also keen to get involved with what is happening more locally in my region.

The area of excellence resonates with me the most. Having spent so much time around very talented makers, I have learnt and developed a great appreciation for excellence in the work of others and in my own work. It is a core value of Noah Morris Bespoke and I hope one day that my furniture can be recognised as worthy of a Guild Mark. I was once told that



nothing is impossible to create when you have the imagination and knowledge to figure out how to make it. This resonated with me and inspires me in my craft.

noahmorrisbespoke.co.uk

 [@noahmorrisbespoke](https://www.instagram.com/noahmorrisbespoke)

LIVERYMAN

Profile

Cherrill Scheer

Liveryman Cherrill Scheer is the founder and director of PR company Cherrill Scheer & Associates



Cherrill being awarded the Stanley Wharton Award by Master David Woodward

Born into the world of furniture, liveryman Cherrill Scheer's career in design has been a lifelong labour of love.

"My life has been totally immersed in the furniture industry," says Cherrill. "My grandfather set up S.Hille & Co in 1906, which my mother, Ray Hille, ran from 1920, when she was designing art deco furniture. After WW2, I spent much of the school holidays in the factory and loved the smell and the feel of the wood and even learnt to use a spokeshave from the workmen. The furniture industry fascinated me as it was no longer inhibited by traditional craft techniques. It was able to explore WW2 technology and materials, enabling designs that could not have been previously envisaged."

In 1951, Hille was manufacturing all the furniture, designed by Robin Day, for the Festival Hall. This meant that for a 12-year-old Cherrill, her weekends were spent at The

Festival of Britain on the South Bank, while her parents supervised the installations.

She spent this time marvelling at buildings such as the Dome of Discovery and the Skylon, which compelled her to train as an architect at Kingston School of Art and the Architectural Association.

It was during her later teenage years that she first involved herself with supporting our charity.

“My introduction to the charity was as a teenager when my brother-in-law, Leslie Julius, was chairman of the Furnishing Trades Benevolent Association. He involved me in setting up a junior committee together with other young people of the furniture industry. I became secretary and loved helping to organise the events – a memorable one being a riverboat shuffle on the Thames with the Temperance Seven jazz band performing.”

With a degree in architecture and passion for furniture, it seemed obvious that Cherrill was destined to work at her family's business. As marketing director of Hille Group, Cherrill was instrumental in promoting their products worldwide, including the iconic Robin Day Polypropylene chairs. In 1991 she founded PR and marketing consultancy Cherrill Scheer & Associates to enable her more time to focus on her passion of encouraging young designers and promoting design and the furniture industry. A prime example of the latter of these objectives was her role in the 1995 National Furniture Forum.



Cherrill at the Design Guild Mark awards ceremony

“Ray Leigh, as Master of the Company, asked me to organise and run the National Furniture Forum at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre. This was the most extensive assembly in the history of the British furniture industry, which was brought together to speak as one voice to the government. The President of the Board of Trade, Michael Heseltine, opened the Forum as he attached ‘considerable importance’ to this conference.”

Throughout her many years of membership, Cherrill has supported countless initiatives to promote design. In the early 2010s, she supported the commissioning and publishing of ‘Modern British Furniture – Design since 1945’, a book written by Lesley Jackson, which we have awarded to thousands of design students around the UK. However, her greatest success has got to be her role in establishing and supporting the Design Guild Mark.

“When Jonathan Hindle and I were talking about setting up an award system for British design of volume-manufactured furniture, I was determined to make it happen. The main aim for the Design Guild Mark is to drive excellence and raise the profile of British design and innovation. It was critical that eminent judges were able to see, feel and even jump up and down on the products, and for the designers to present their pieces in person to

the judges. I do not know of any other award, in the UK, that does this.”

The Design Guild Mark has gone from strength to strength and Cherrill remains an active member of the committee and attends every judging day and ceremony as well as providing her PR services to help promote the award.

In 2020 Cherrill's extensive contribution to the Company and industry was recognised when she was awarded the inaugural Stanley Wharton Award, a new prize that lauds and celebrates the contribution a member has made to the sector with the awardee chosen by the incumbent Master of The Furniture Makers' Company.

Commenting on receiving the award, Cherrill said: “I was delighted to receive the first ‘Stanley Wharton Prize’ because it meant that my peers recognised how my endeavours assisted The Furniture Makers' Company to encourage good design, design education, and innovation within the furniture industry. Being the first to be given the prize was indeed an honour.”

Many in Cherrill's position would have slowed down years ago but her passion for the sector continues to burn just as bright as it ever has done, if not brighter.

hillehouse.co.uk

CORPORATE LIVERYMAN

Profile

Handy

Nicholas Harland-Smith is the co-founder and managing director of corporate member Handy Ltd



I'm the co-founder and managing director of Handy Ltd, which has been supplying and manufacturing components for the bedding and upholstery industries for over 30 years.

I was very academic at school and had planned to go to Law School after my A levels, but 18-year-old me was determined to get a job with a company car. I achieved that dream; I got a job with a company that promised me a car in six months rather than three years and in doing so met my future business partner.

From there we founded Garland Trimmings Ltd and, subsequently, in 1991 Handy Ltd as a joint venture with US company Handy Button Machine Company. We had a primary focus of supplying components to the garment and fashion industry, but early on we also saw great opportunities within the upholstery and bedding sectors.

To begin with I was the travelling salesman, managing the customer relations in the UK and Europe, and my partner managed the internal side of the business. In 1996 Handy became fully owned by ourselves, allowing Handy Ltd to explore more growth potential in domestic and European markets.

In 1998, as the UK fashion industry gravitated towards Far East production, it was important for us to diversify, and that is when the upholstery and bedding markets became a key focus area.

Thirty years on and Handy supplies a range of over 1,500 bedding and upholstery components to hundreds of customers across the UK, Europe and the Rest of World, including many clients that have been with us since the very outset. Crucial to our success is valuing each and every customer as an individual partnership, working closely to innovate and come up with solutions to their production challenges.

We have gone from humble beginnings – the first buttons we sold were made in my parents' garage – to having a dedicated sales and office team and separate large distribution

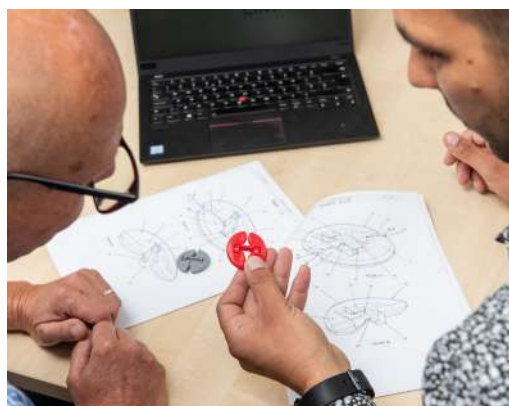
centres based in Essex and Stoke-on-Trent. We now offer several value-added services to our customers including button covering, bespoke packaging, tufting assembly and new product development, which includes our patented Tuft Length Adjuster for mattress tufting and our novel, design protected inner tufting system.

Through this growth we have built a strong management team which means that I can take a step back to focus on product development and emerging trends. This ensures Handy stays at the forefront of the bedding and upholstery industries for components, while also allowing us to diversify across the automotive, aerospace, office seating, and foam conversion sectors.

Over recent years we became increasingly aware of The Furniture Makers' Company through various charity events that we attended and got involved with. What attracted us the most was the Company's strong focus on charity work, education and their partnerships with organisations like Anti-Copying in Design (ACID), to whom we are also closely linked.

As a small company ourselves, being part of something bigger means we can more effectively give back to the industry through charity and education. We love that Handy's values of nurturing skills and expertise and inspiring excellence are shared by the Furniture Makers.

We also recognised the importance of being associated with the charity and the



connections we could make with other industry decision makers.

We have now been a member of The Furniture Makers' Company for three years and two of our employees, Sara Morris and Jonathan Parsons, in addition to me have been admitted as corporate liverymen.

The membership of such a recognised charity has brought us so many new opportunities and we are looking forward to becoming increasingly active with the livery events. This spring we are holding our own 24-

hour table tennis marathon for the Company's Step 2 It campaign and my team are so excited to be holding this event.

Membership of the Furniture Makers has given Sara, Jonathan, and my team a renewed sense of community, becoming a part of something bigger and giving back to the industry in some way. Through becoming more integrated with The Furniture Makers' Company, we hope to raise awareness and spread the message of their charitable work and educational opportunities.

I love being a part of such thriving industries and after 35 years, I still very much enjoy what I do. I love seeing our company grow and our employees thrive within the business. Handy's biggest asset is the people working within the company. They are priceless.

We are proud to be part of this unique and historic British institution and look forward to contributing and giving back to the sector.

handyltd.co.uk



Corporate liverymen Sara Morris and Jonathan Parsons

OUR HIGHLY VALUED
CORPORATE MEMBERS
AND SUPPORTERS





Furnishing Knowledge



The secret to
a great night's sleep



WHITEMEADOW
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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Profile

Martin Jourdan

To be recognised by one's peers as deserving of an accolade such as a Lifetime Achievement Award must be the ultimate honour. However, a humble Martin Jourdan – the recipient of the 2021 award – attests that it's an honour he simply doesn't deserve

On asking Martin how he felt on receiving the award, he said: "Completely astonished, particularly as I believe it is not an award that should be made annually but only to very special people of which I am not one."

We have to disagree with him on this occasion though.

Born into the Parker furniture dynasty, Martin's career started in the industry in

1957 when, at 17, he spent his summer holiday from school labouring in the Parker Knoll timber yard.

On leaving school, Martin joined Parker Knoll full time in 1959. Over the next 14 years he immersed himself in all areas and avenues of the business, ultimately being appointed as managing director in 1973 and then group chairman in 1976. Over the following decade

the company grew substantially, after a series of acquisitions.

As his career was booming, Martin's involvement with The Furniture Makers' Company was just starting. He was introduced to the livery by his father and founder liveryman, Hans, in 1971. A short 20 years later and Martin was installed as Master in 1991.

Throughout his time with the Company, Martin's interest has spread across everything we do, but one of his passions has undoubtedly been the Frederick Parker Collection of chairs, understandably because of his ancestral connection.

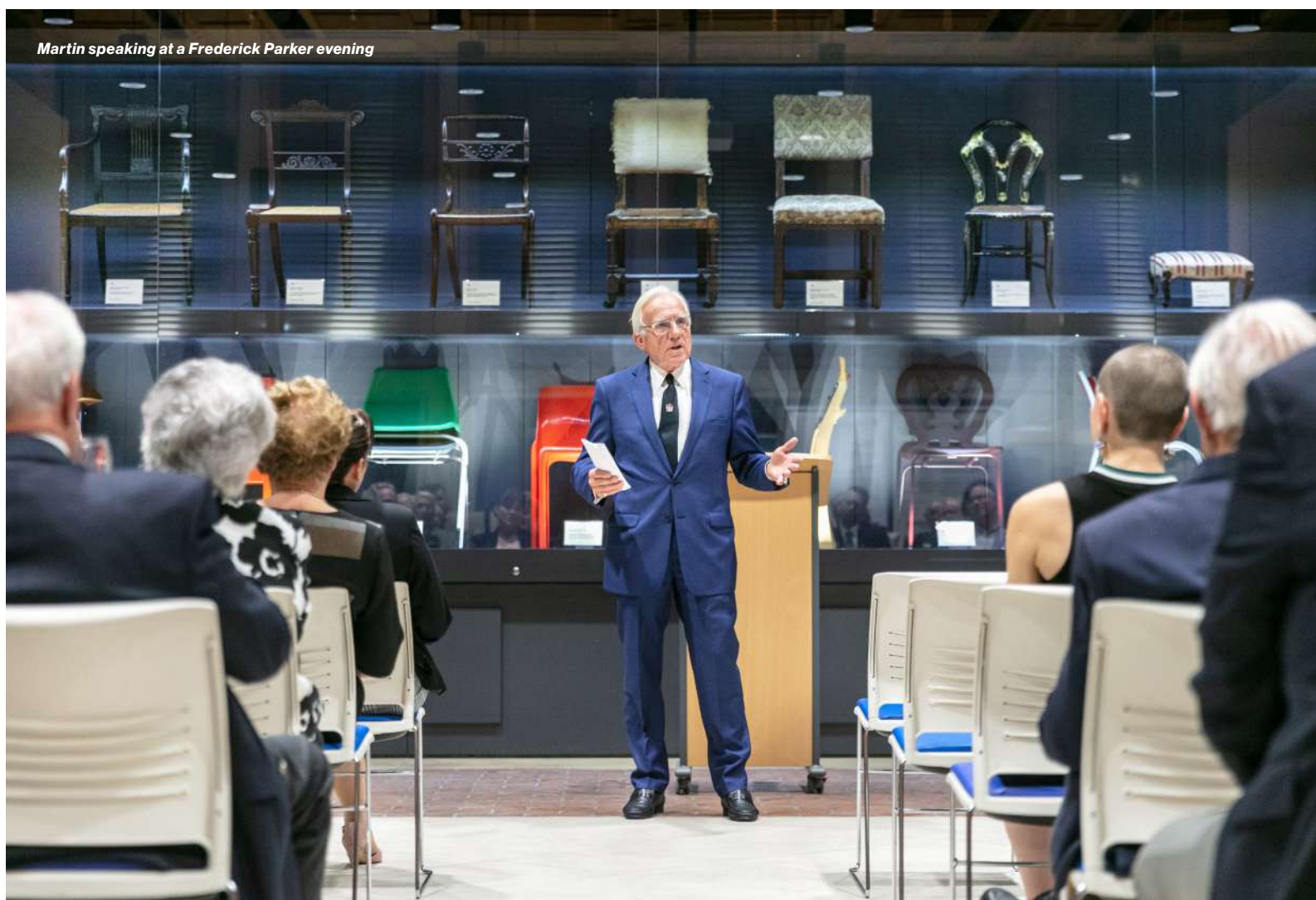
Martin said: "When I retired in 1998 the new management at Parker Knoll saw no value in the Frederick Parker Collection. Together with my cousin, Jonathan Arnold, and my brother, Tom, we raised the funds to buy out that part of the Frederick Parker Collection, which has academic and educational value. I was determined to save my grandfather Tom Parker's legacy and always believed that it complemented the work of the Furniture Makers and added a historical dimension.

"David Dewing, the current Frederick Parker Collection chairman, is doing so well in integrating the intrinsic value of the collection with the Company's educational programme."

When talking about Martin's contribution to the industry, you can't miss out his involvement in the formation of the British Furniture Confederation (BFC). In 2003 Martin was chosen by the Company to oversee



Sir Alan Yarrow, The Lord Mayor Locum Tenens, presenting the Lifetime Achievement Award to Martin Jourdan



the resurrection of a single body of trade associations that would communicate to government, after the initial British Furniture Council disbanded in 1998 after five short years.

Martin chaired what was first called the Furniture Industry Strategic Group through its shaky gestation period, working with industry to form a workable structure that would satisfy the then Department of Trade and Industry. By 2006 the group had changed its name to the British Furniture Confederation and by 2008 it became independent of the Company.

During this time, Martin also helped establish an All-Party Parliamentary Group for the industry.

"I was asked to create a parliamentary lobbying group for the furniture industry

incorporating the Furniture Industry Research Association, the British Furniture Manufacturers Association, the National Bed Federation, the British Contract Furnishing Association and others including the GMB, which had taken over the now defunct Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union. The Labour Party were in government so, through the GMB, Madeleine Moon – a Welsh MP – became chairman and together we added one or two more Labour MPs and several Conservatives. The problem – as ever – was reconciling the differences between the trade associations."

Martin remained chairman of the BFC until 2012, when he was succeeded by Paul von der Heyde. Built on solid foundations, the BFC has gone from strength to strength and today,

chaired by Jonathan Hindle, maintains regular dialogue with government and other influential stakeholders to ensure that all policies and initiatives support a thriving furniture, furnishing and bed sector.

Martin said: "The BFC has become recognised in government as the voice of the industry and has had a helpful influence on legislation affecting the industry, in particular flammability and biomass."

While Martin might modestly shake off his contributions to the sector as ordinary, these are just a few examples of some of the exceptional achievements he has made throughout his 50+ years of membership with us and more than enough to consider him as a very special person.

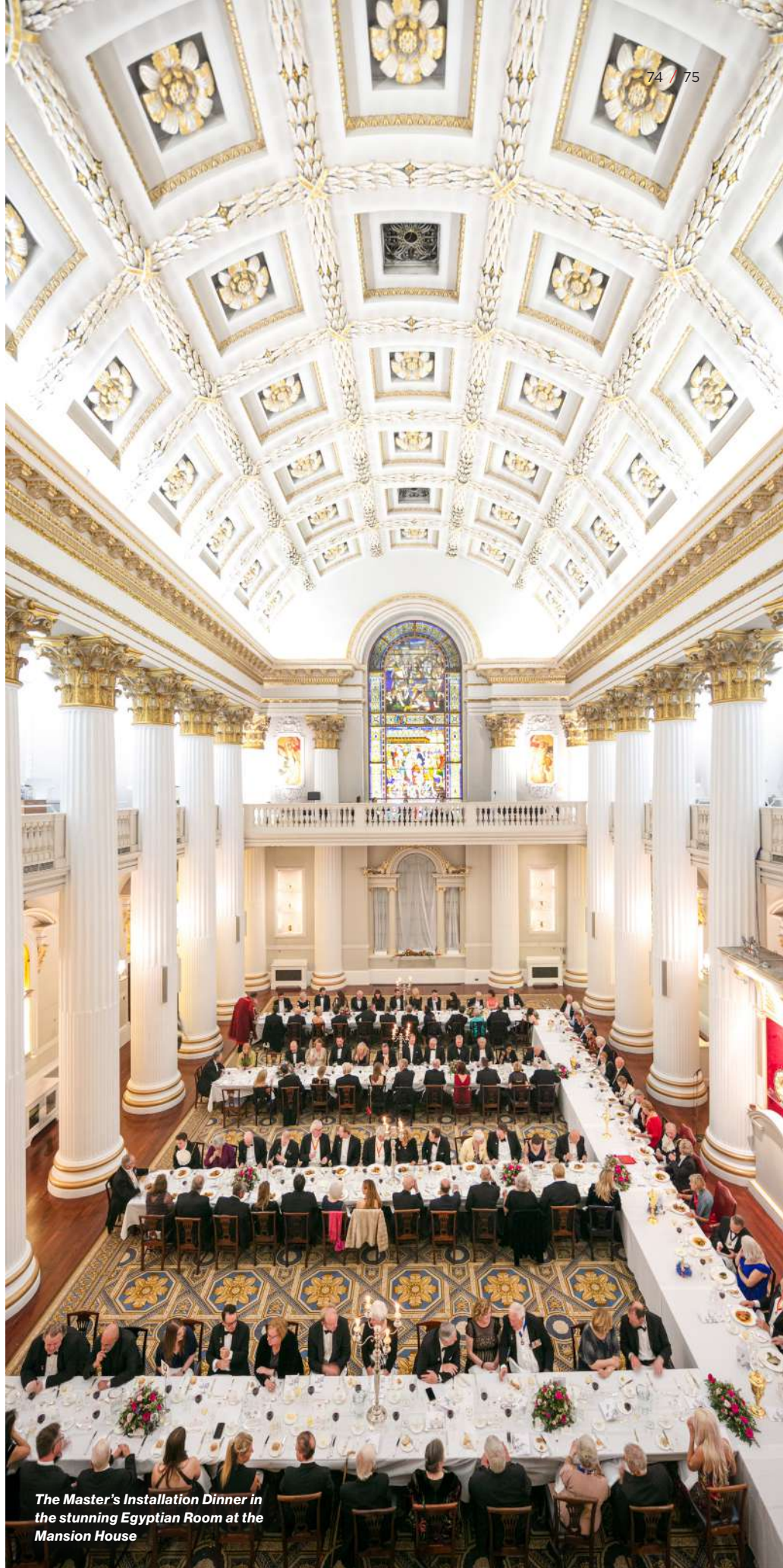
Livery events



A normal livery year would be awash with events taking place in and around the City of London for our members to enjoy and soak up the prestige and history of being part of a livery company. With COVID-19 having disrupted the traditional calendar, some events were sadly postponed or convened virtually, including admission ceremonies for new freemen and liverymen.

That being said, we made sure to make the most of our freedom when restrictions eased and were able to hold some memorable occasions, such as the Master's Installation at St Mary-le-Bow Church, followed by the celebratory dinner in the unforgettable Egyptian Room of the Mansion House.





Fun and fellowship

With 2020's calendar of events having to sadly be consigned to strictly virtual affairs for the vast majority of the year because of COVID-19, it was all the more enjoyable when we were finally able to cast off the shackles of restrictions and get back together in person during the 2021–2022 livery year.

Of course, we had to alter how we ran our ceremonies, fundraisers and dinners to make sure that they were 'safe', 'secure' and 'compliant' in this new world. But the positive outpouring and uptake for events when we were finally able to come together demonstrates the love our members have for the Company and the fellowship they get from it.



Fun at the Wine Dinner



Master David Woodward presenting Past Master Ray Leigh MBE with a commemorative box for 50 years of membership to the Company. Also pictured is Ray's wife, Jean.



Regional activity

The industry we represent spreads far beyond the borders of the famous Square Mile. Over the past few years, considerable work has gone into establishing new and developing existing regional committees so that our members can network, have fun and socialise together at events in their neighbouring area.

For non-members in the industry who would like to get involved with us on a local level, we have introduced a tier of fellowship called 'Regional Associate'. Regional association enables furnishing industry colleagues to build links locally with the committee without the formality of officially joining the livery straightaway.

- Our East of England regions covers Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire and Suffolk and the regional committee is chaired by liveryman Joanna Knight.
- Heart of England region, chaired by liveryman Neil Stevenson, includes Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire Nottinghamshire and Rutland.
- North East region includes Northumberland, Tyne and Wear and County Durham.
- North West region, chaired by freeman Karen Stevenson, includes Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire.
- South Wales region, chaired by liveryman



The South West Golf Day

- PJ Statham includes Blaenau Gwent, Breconshire, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, City of Newport, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea, Torfaen and Vale of Glamorgan.
- South West region, chaired by Past Master David Dewing OBE, includes Cornwall, Dorset, Devon, Gloucestershire and Somerset.



Paul Millard (right) being presented with the Overall Winner trophy at the Teesside Golf Day

- Southern region, chaired by Past Master Peter Keen of Hypnos, includes Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire.
- Yorkshire region, chaired by liveryman Fara Butt of Shire Beds, includes East Riding of Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire.

furnituremakers.org.uk/regional-association



Shooters at Northern Big Shots,
organised by the North West Region



The East of England Region visiting TMJ Interiors



Mayor Tracy Brabin with Jonny
Westbrooke and members of the
Yorkshire Region Committee

Furniture Makers' Hall

Consider us for your next event

If you're in need of a venue for an event, look no further than Furniture Makers' Hall – the heart and home of the Furniture Makers.

The versatile hall boasts three differing sized rooms, making it perfect for both grand and intimate dinners, drinks receptions, Christmas parties, exhibitions, seminars, product launches, presentations and roadshows.

Located equidistant between Bank, Moorgate and Liverpool Street London Underground stations, the hall has state-of-the-art audiovisual facilities and our on-site caterers will make sure you and your guests leave satisfied.

The hall is available for any company or individual to book, but our members receive preferential rates on hiring and catering charges, so take advantage.

For more details, contact:

fmhvenuehire.co.uk

sales@furnituremakers.org.uk

+44(0) 20 72 56 71 00





British Furniture Confederation

By Jonathan Hindle, British Furniture Confederation chairman



The British Furniture Confederation (BFC) is an executive body made up of representatives from the UK's leading furniture, furnishings and bed trade associations. It meets to discuss developments within the sector and strategies to further its aims and communicate these to government. The BFC also provides a secretariat to the All-Party Parliamentary Furniture Industry Group (APPFIG).

Like many organisations, the BFC got used to meeting online throughout 2021 in response to the pandemic, which incidentally didn't prevent the BFC pursuing a packed schedule.

Furniture Makers' webinar

In February, the BFC participated in The Furniture Makers' Company's webinar entitled 'Engaging with Government' – part of the 'Innovation in times of crisis' series.

Mike Wood MP, chairman of the APPFIG, and Mark Eastwood MP, vice chair of the APPFIG, were the special guests with the rest of the panel made up of representatives from the BFC executive, with Jonathan Hindle hosting.

In the webinar, panellists answered questions on engaging with parliamentarians, issues facing the furniture industry and how best to support the industry as the country unlocks following COVID-19.

Member surveys

The BFC member trade associations have continued to consult their memberships through the use of surveys, which help to inform what priorities the BFC needs to have when speaking to ministers, Members of Parliament and other key stakeholders, and continue to emphasise the importance of businesses taking the opportunity to raise issues that concern them.

These concerns are passed on at regular, ongoing meetings with Paul Scully MP, Minister for London and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets), with civil servants within the Business, Energy & Internal Strategy (BEIS) team and in other meetings or letters written to ministers and officials.



BFC members

- British Furniture Manufacturers (BFM)
- British Contract Furnishing Association (BCFA)
- National Bed Federation (NBF)
- Furniture Industry Research Association (FIRA)
- The Furniture Makers' Company (WCFM)
- and associations with many others including Anti Copying in Design, British Plastics Federation (BPF – Flexible Foam Group) and the Association of Master Upholsterers & Soft Furnishers.

BFC lobbying succeeds with four wins

In advance of the 2021 Budget, the BFC made four key requests of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

- Extend the Stamp Duty holiday
- Extend the Job Retention Scheme
- Extend the VAT deferral period
- Extend the Business Rates holiday

The All-Party Parliamentary Furniture Industry Group



Rosie Cooper



Mark Eastwood



Paul Howell



Paul Scully



Greg Smith



Baroness Warsi



Mike Wood



The BFC argued that this would help our industry return to pre-pandemic levels of business, support 330,000 jobs in the sector and £17+ billion of annual consumer expenditure. As is now well known, the Chancellor of the Exchequer responded positively to all four requests.

All-Party Parliamentary Furniture Industry Group

Regular online meetings of the APPFIG have been held throughout 2021 – at which the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the furniture industry has been raised, alongside a range of emerging problems the sector was facing. These issues include steel and foam shortages, high shipping costs, issues at ports, difficulties accessing the Brexit Support Fund, the importance of ongoing membership of European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) and concerns over the cancellation of the Trade Access Programme. APPFIG chairman Mike Wood and vice chairman Mark Eastwood have been actively supportive throughout the year raising these issues with ministers.

In March, the APPFIG held its AGM, which was well attended by MPs. At the meeting, the group was reformed for another year with Mike Wood re-elected as chairman and Mark Eastwood, Rosie Cooper MP and Baroness Warsi also re-elected as vice-chairmen. In addition to these officers, the group was pleased to elect two further vice-chairmen: Paul Howell MP, Member of Parliament for

Sedgefield, and Greg Smith MP, Member of Parliament for Buckingham. The group aims to recruit more parliamentary members, particularly from constituencies with furniture manufacturing present.

Response to DEFRA consultation on waste prevention

In June, the BFC submitted a response to the Department for the Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) consultation on its new waste prevention plan for England. In this response, the BFC cautioned the government on the unintended consequences of treating the furniture industry as a single, homogeneous sector in its plans to consult on an Extended Producer Responsibility scheme for furniture by the end of 2025.

Questions to Irish authorities on flammability regulations and mutual recognition

The BFC has actively engaged with the Irish authorities over the question of continued mutual recognition of flammability regulations and labelling, post Brexit, which is currently not the case. Working with the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and UK Textile Laboratory Forum (UKTLF), the BFC issued detailed guidance for the industry on the differences between the two sets of regulations and still await feedback from the Irish authorities on their decision. Mark Eastwood agreed to raise this issue with the government.

DEFRA study into POPs in domestic upholstery waste

In October, DEFRA circulated the results of a study into whether chemicals listed as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) were likely to be found in the domestic seating waste stream. The BFC sat on the working group to represent the furniture manufacturing sector.

A primary chemical that was historically used in back coatings for upholstery fabric was Deca BDE, which was banned from use in new products and listed as a POP in 2019. The study has shown that these POPs were found to be present in samples taken from the waste stream and often above legal limits for waste, which means they must be destroyed in a specific manner and cannot be recycled. It is important to stress that it is only upholstery at the end of life and classified as waste that is impacted.

The BFC prepared a guidance note to help answer any questions arising from the study and is continuing to work closely with DEFRA, the waste industry and others affected on how to respond to the results of this study and its implications.

britishfurnitureconfederation.org.uk



2 Rifles



The Furniture Makers' Company continues to enjoy a close relationship with 2nd Battalion, The Rifles. 2021 was a whirlwind year for the battalion, culminating in a three-month deployment to Kenya.

2 Rifles began 2021 with a junior non-commissioned officer cadre through February and March, in challenging weather and pandemic conditions. Throughout the six-week cadre, prospective leaders encountered difficult physical tests and were prepared for their future roles in command. By the end of the course, of the 59 riflemen who started, 21 strong chosen men remained to be promoted and given their first stripe by the Army Sergeant Major – a great honour.

Hot on the heels of the cadre, I Company ran their support weapons training, which saw experienced riflemen and lance-corporals from across the battalion go to join the platoons and specialise their skill set in either machine guns, snipers, reconnaissance, javelin, assault pioneers or mortars. This concluded with a final exercise to bring together their respective skill sets. This exercise combined all the specialities, and it set the whole battlegroup up for success in Kenya.

By June 2021, the rifle companies were in full swing with their pre-deployment training, with live firing, building basic skills and establishing their standard operating procedures. 2 Rifles then held their battalion battle-camp and the annual Bramall



The Master presenting an award to a rifleman

Trophy, with stiff competition to prove the finest platoon in battalion. In this case, the reconnaissance platoon proved the winners in a close and competitive event. The summer term ended with battlegroup headquarters deploying to Warminster to be tested in mission planning and execution, prior to the Kenya deployment.

Summer leave provided welcome relief following a busy build-up period and proved a genuine chance for the battalion to recharge and engage with families and loved ones. From the beginning of September, the battalion, joined by the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Military Working Dogs and more besides, began arriving to Kenya in waves. The



battlegroup began in Laikipia Reserve for a challenging 17 days of low-level self-enabled training, culminating in a battlegroup-level lane. Next, it moved to Archers Post Training Area, a phase in which the rifle companies completed a demanding rotation of a company live-fire exercise, an 'enabling' lane, testing their obstacle-crossing skills, and a hasty defence stand. With 48 hours per rotation, and in the arduous Samburu heartlands, the heat proved to be as much an enemy as the Grenadier Guards.

Next, to the much cooler Lolldaiga Reserve for their final exercise, though the steep hills were to prove a different challenge. Over the course of two weeks, they tested new ways of command and control, to keep the tempo turned up high on their enemy. This combined with a battlegroup strapline of 'laser focused on winning'. 2 Rifles were one of only four battlegroups in the past three years to have validated on the first attempt.

Following the exercise, the 2 Rifles Nordic ski team put in a strong effort at the Infantry

Nordic Ski Championships – finishing in the middle of the teams with no training between Kenya and Sweden. The remainder of the battlegroup remained in Kenya, testing new tactics and concepts, engaging with the local community, completing survival evasion resistance and extraction training, undertaking more adventurous training and enjoying the enrichment of cultural activities. This period saw A Company complete a heroic 24-hour endurance charity challenge, raising money for the Step 2 It campaign and gifts for local schoolchildren. The event saw members of A Company run, row and cycle 2,500 miles (from Lisburn to Salamanca to Corunna) and deadlift 630 tonnes, the equivalent weight of Pegasus Bridge. After a long 24 hours and some tired legs, A Company smashed their targets.

The riflemen look forward to 2022 held on readiness in an increasingly uncertain world and are continuing to lead the way with their laser focus on winning, their utter professionalism, and selfless commitment to their country and their communities – swift and bold.

“

Thank you for supporting our charity in extraordinary times

”



The disruption of the coronavirus pandemic and the ensuing restrictions meant we had to think creatively with our fundraising efforts in the 2020–2021 livery year.

While some of our traditional fundraising events were sadly sidelined, we experimented and successfully held virtual fundraisers which made up for some of the shortfall.

Considerable time was also spent planning and implementing a 'Gift in Wills' programme to guide anyone through the process of leaving us a legacy in support of our work.

While none of us ever want to think about death, a gift in a will is often the most meaningful donation that a giver will ever make. We feel very excited about the potential of the programme and the long-lasting impact it could have with helping support people from the trade and ensuring a strong, vibrant UK furnishing industry.

The impact of legacies can already be seen by reading some of the case studies in the welfare chapter of this yearbook.

Fundraising bounced back considerably in the 2021–2022 livery year, thanks to the huge success of the Step 2 It campaign. The

pictures and stories of the campaign give a great account of the fun that was had while supporters raised vital funds for our charity. We thank you all for your generosity.

Looking to the future, the development of our regions presents real opportunity for major growth in both fundraising and membership around the UK, as well as cascading the message of our charitable work.

Thank you for your continued trust in us and your much valued patronage. Whether you've attended an event, organised a challenge, made a donation to a Step 2 It fundraiser, bought a raffle ticket, supplied a lot for an auction, or simply paid your annual charity donation, you've made a difference in some way.

Alistair Gough
Fundraising chairman

THANK YOU

Axminster Tools	David Imrie	Holland and Holland	Sanderson Design Group
Barker & Stonehouse	David Langford	Hotham Services	SATRA Technology
Beechcrown Group	David Tracey	Howdens	Savoir Beds
Belfield Group	Debbie Johnson	Howlands (Furniture)	Shackletons Group
Belledorm	Designer Contracts	Hypnos	Shire Beds
Ben Burbidge	DFS	Jason Clancy	Shoreditch Design Rooms
Biesse Group UK	Edward Tadros	Jay-Be	Silentnight Brands
Bisley Office Furniture	Emma Delea	John Cotton Group	Sir Geoffrey Leigh
Blum UK	Enkev (UK) Ltd	John Makepeace OBE	Sir John Perring
Brentwood Kitchen and Interiors	Ercol	Jonathan Hindle	Sleepeeze
Brian Ahern	Fabb Furniture	Jonathan Westbrooke	Sofa Brands International
British Contract Furnishing Association	Fishpools	Jones & Partners	Stephanie Marsh
British Furniture Manufacturers Association	From the Walled Garden Furniture and Home Improvement Ombudsman	KI Europe	Surface Design Show
Brook + Wilde	Furniture Village	Knoll	Taylor Made Interiors Limited
Burbidge & Son	FX	Lamello	Tempur
Camira	Gary Smith	Lebus Upholstery Ltd	The Clare Foundation
Castelan Group	GB Foam	Lectra	The Graham Kirkham Foundation
CD (UK) Ltd	Gil Carter	Life's Kitchen	The Isaacs Charitable Trust
Celtheath	Goff Associates	Lizzie Shaw	The Lord Kirkham KCVO
Charles Vernon	Graham Marley	Margaret Miller	The Peripheral Productions UK
Clare Family Trust	Grass	Marks & Spencer	The Tusler Studio
Clarenco	Greengate Furniture	Martek	The Virtual Interiors Event
Cliff Rust	Greenlight Commerce	Martin Grierson	The Worshipful Company of Carpenters
Colourfast World	Gresham Office Furniture	Mike Clare	The Worshipful Company of Upholders
Cormar Carpets	Häfele	Millbrook Beds	The Worshipful Company of Woolmen
Creative Solutions	Handy Ltd	Mix Magazine	Tony Attard OBE DL
Crofts & Assinder	Harrison Spinks	Morgan Furniture	Tony Smart MBE Hon DUniv
Daniel Bradley Furniture	Hayden Davies	N E J Stevenson	TrustMark
David and Anne Woodward	Headlam	Morgantel Bed Federation	Upper Thames Sailing Club
David Dewing OBE	Herman Miller	Nicoletti Home	Verco Office Furniture
David Finch	Hettich UK	Nigel Northeast Ltd	Vince Linnane
	HIPPO	Ocee Design	Vispring
		Oliver Heal	Vita Group
		Panaz	Wendy Shorter-Blake
		Parker Knoll	Whitemeadow Furniture
		Paul von der Heyde	William Hands
		Peter Holland	
		Peter Keen	
		Phil Reynolds	
		Premier	
		Rack Systems	
		Ruairi Giles	
		S. Hille & Co (Holdings)	



The Furniture Makers' Company

Furniture Makers' Hall

12 Austin Friars, London EC2N 2HE

furnituremakers.org.uk

clerk@furnituremakers.org.uk

020 7256 5558

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hello@dayonedesign.co.uk

dayonedesign.co.uk



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