THE HALLELUJAH PROJECT

Making Handel’s House Happen
Handel House at 25 Brook Street, Mayfair is where the great composer, Handel, lived for 36 years from 1723 to 1759 and where he wrote many of his most famous masterpieces, including *Messiah*. But at the moment only half the house is open to the public. The Hallelujah Project will complete this important little jewel of our musical heritage – so that future generations will be able to enjoy it in perpetuity.
The Georgian house at 25 Brook Street is unique in the musical heritage of the world:

- Nowhere else can you find a home where one of the greatest composers of all time lived for well over thirty six years, and wrote so many masterpieces.
- Entering the hallowed space where he wrote *Messiah* in just 24 days as well as hundreds of other best-loved works and listening to his music in the place where it was first created, offers a tangible connection to the towering genius himself.

This is a precious historic place in need of completion, so that future generations can enjoy it in its entirety.

Rarely does an opportunity arise to contribute to a gem of a project such as this, so valuable to the international cultural landscape.

We hope you will be inspired to become part of this exciting endeavour and take pride in this everlasting jewel in the heart of London.

This restored house will not only commemorate the great man, but will also carry on bringing the joy of his incomparable music to visitors in perpetuity.

So much genius in such a small place...
Our Patron

We are delighted that His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, has kindly agreed to be the Patron of the Handel House Trust Hallelujah Project.
From our Chairman
Simon Weil

I have been a passionate supporter of the campaign to recreate Handel’s home in London since the idea first took shape 20 years ago. We have come a long way since then, and it is wonderful to be finally on the brink of completing this great mission. The next few years promise to be exciting ones and I hope you will be inspired to join us, by supporting the Hallelujah Project and helping us to “make Handel’s House happen”.
The House in Lower Brook Street (at present, 1939, numbered 57), in which Handel lived and died; as it appeared before the front of the Attic Story was raised.
The Plan

The Building

Handel was the first occupant of 25 Brook Street. He moved in in 1723, when it was newly built. The Hallelujah Project will put back his home as closely as possible to exactly how it would have been when the great man himself lived here.

When the house is completed:

- the façade will be returned to their original state
- Handel's two ground floor parlours (where he received visitors and sometimes sold his musical scores) will be restored as they would have been when he lived here
- the Georgian kitchen in the basement will be fully re-created, with the help of a detailed inventory of its contents that was taken when Handel died
- the front door and original staircase at 25 Brook Street will once more become the main entrance for all visitors, as they were for Handel himself
- The rooms throughout will be dressed accurately with Georgian contents
- Top-quality Georgian-style lighting will be installed throughout the historic rooms to re-create the impression of 18th-century candlelight
- A specially commissioned replica of Handel's chamber organ (currently housed at St George's church) will be brought back to the house where it belongs

Meticulous standards of historical accuracy will be applied to the project, based on records and inventories from the time. The Georgian Group, who are the statutory lead on planning for all Georgian buildings, will be closely involved throughout the design and delivery of the project. And experts on all aspects of 18th-century life and music will be consulted from start to finish.
The Ground Floor Front Parlours

Modern visitors will be able to experience arriving at the house just as Handel's own guests would have done.

Handel's front parlours on the ground floor will be re-created. The two ground floor parlours will be divided by a sliding partition, allowing the space to be opened up for special occasions.
The Basement Kitchen

Handel’s original kitchen in the basement will be meticulously re-created.

Venue Hire

The plan will allow for elegant private events.
Our mission as a charity is to share the greatness of Handel and his music with as many people as possible, whatever their age or background.

In addition to restoring the building, the Hallelujah Project will enable us to enrich the magic of the house for everyone who comes here – our general visitors, professional baroque musicians who perform here, and the many groups who take part in our learning programmes for children, students, visually impaired musicians, members of the local community as well as many others.

These are just some of our plans:

- **Interpretation**: Subtle new technology – including the clever use of music and sound – will be introduced in the Exhibition Spaces to provide visitors with an inter-active way to experience the great composer’s genius.

- **Activities**: Baroque concerts, talks, masterclasses, music performed in 18th-century costume, site specific theatre and other imaginative events will bring the house alive, drawing visitors back time and again to enjoy this inspirational place.

- **Learning**: We will be able to introduce an exciting range of new projects, building on our established reputation for providing exceptionally high-quality learning programmes.
Innovative new learning programmes

As well as maintaining our existing projects for local state school children and outstanding young Baroque musicians, the Hallelujah Project will enable us to devise new and more ambitious projects inspired by some of Handel's own charitable interests. New groups we will create programmes for include:

- **Children in care in Westminster** (in recognition of Handel's philanthropy to abandoned children at the Foundling Hospital)
- **Musicians now suffering dementia**, for whom a reconnection with music can bring therapeutic benefits as well as enhancing their lives (inspired by Handel's support for the Society for Decay'd Musicians in the 18th century)
- **Musically gifted blind and visually impaired children and adults** (in association with the RNIB, and inspired by the fact that Handel sadly went blind in later life)
- **Contemporary composers** attracted to a place where such a well-known composer lived and wrote in the past
- **Teachers at local schools**, for whom we can provide training, support and materials to help them enthuse their pupils with the joy of making and appreciating great music.

“Such a wonderful scheme and such a supportive group of people.”
( Participant in the Handel House Talent project for gifted young professional Baroque musicians)

“Lots of the children just hadn’t heard this kind of music before. Handel became a really important figure to them.”
( Facilitator, ‘Baroque Central’ Project for local state primary schools)

“Best decision I made after graduating from RAM was to apply for this. It’s a family of lovely, warm and talented people. Adore working with them all.”
( Participant in the Handel House Talent project for gifted young professional Baroque musicians)

“The singing gives (the children) a real connection with music of the past. They just love performing and they get excited when they hear the word ‘Handel’ and they can’t wait to sing it.”
( Facilitator, ‘Baroque Central’ Project for local state primary schools)
The plans of the lower ground and ground floor rooms shown here are presented at double the scale of the plans of the higher floors. From the first floor upwards the Handel House Trust owns both 23 and 25 Brook Street; at ground and lower floor level it only owns number 25. These two lower floors of number 25 will be most significantly transformed by the Hallelujah Project.
The Finances

Before embarking on the Hallelujah Project, the Trust had to create a business model that would ensure that the charity would remain financially sustainable after re-possessing the ground floor and basement of 25 Brook Street, previously occupied by a commercial tenant.

During the Covid crisis in 2020 the tenant vacated the premises, and the board formed a view that high street retail would not recover strongly enough to continue to offer a reliable income to the Trust in the near future (as it had always done in the past). The business plan was revised accordingly.

Although the Covid crisis hit the Trust hard, we were extremely fortunate to have already raised considerable funds in anticipation of the costs of the Hallelujah Project, and were further blessed to be notified that we were in line to receive two exceptionally generous legacy gifts.

This strong financial position provided the board with the confidence to go ahead with the Hallelujah Project ahead of the original schedule. On the revised programme, the house will re-open to the public early in 2023.

Three 5-year budget forecasts were drawn up based on varying scenarios regarding possible future income from admissions, events, venue hire and shop sales from 2023 onwards. Even on the "worst case" scenario, assuming a drastic reduction in visitor income to heritage venues following the pandemic, the Trust would be sufficiently financially secure to survive and flourish.

On a more optimistic assumption, that the appetite for ‘real life’ cultural experiences will rebound stronger than ever after a year of deprivation, the Trust should quickly return to an eminently sustainable business model, comfortably covering its own annual operating costs within a year after re-opening and cushioned for the indefinite future by substantial reserves.
The total project costs are set at £7.5 million. This is made up of:

- £3m Hallelujah Project costs
- £300,000 to subsidise operating costs while the building works take place
- £200,000 contingency
- £4m in endowments and reserves to provide the Trust with long-term sustainability after re-opening.

Of this total, the Trust has already raised over £4m (including a match-funding endowment grant of £250,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund).

We anticipate that (including the two expected legacies) we will have raised a total of £5.5m by the start of the building works in autumn 2021.

The Trust is now seeking to raise a further £2m.

The Timetable

The aim of the Hallelujah Project is to complete the recreation of the house and re-open it to the public by 2023 – the 300th anniversary of Handel’s arrival at the newly constructed building.

The project was launched on 23 February 2018 (Handel’s birthday). Since then, RIBA Stages 1 to 3 have been completed and RIBA 4 is in progress.

Key Dates:

- **Planning Consent** was granted for the project by Westminster Council in February 2021
- **Closure of the house** for building works to commence: October 2021
- **Grand re-opening**: March 2023
Support The Hallelujah Project
Help Make Handel's house happen

If you would kindly like to donate to the project please contact us for information

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