



# A FEAST OF THANKS

THE PATRON'S LUNCH AND THE VALUE OF PATRONAGE



## AUTHORS

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## FOREWORD

It is my pleasure to introduce this report. It is both an evaluation of the success of The Patron's Lunch event for the organisations which took part, and a deeper look at the impact of Her Majesty The Queen's patronage on the organisations she is associated with.

I am very grateful to the authors, all of whom are experienced charity evaluators, for providing their expertise free of charge. It was important to the Board of Trustees of The Patron's Fund that we take steps to reflect on the event and make those reflections public. I am pleased to see that the organisations involved reported many benefits: the opportunity to thank volunteers, to raise their profile, to fundraise and to make new connections and strengthen old ones.

I am glad that we have also had the opportunity to look further at the matter of royal patronage. There is not a vast literature on this topic, and I believe the survey we have undertaken of charities who have The Queen as their Patron is the first of its kind.

It is clear that for many organisations, The Queen's patronage is both immensely valuable and also that it is inspirational in pushing them to aim for the highest standards in their work. The report makes a number of recommendations which we believe could help those organisations who have The Queen as their Patron to gain still further benefit from their association.

If I were to underline one observation and recommendation in particular, it would be that there is great scope for collaboration and partnership working between these organisations and more should be done to facilitate it. The report contains a wonderful example of how The Patron's Lunch helped cement an emerging partnership into action between the Marylebone Cricket Club and the Royal Academy of Dance. The organisations are now working together on a project to bring more boys into dance. I hope the organisations of which Her Majesty is Patron can find a way to convene themselves so that more such potential might be uncovered.



**Sir Stuart Etherington**

*Chair of the Board of Trustees for The Patron's Fund*

# INTRODUCTION

On Sunday June 12th 2016, 10,000 guests were invited to The Mall in London to celebrate The Queen's lifetime of dedicated service to charitable good and volunteerism. This was the finale to The Queen's landmark 90th birthday celebrations across the UK and Commonwealth.

Closing the weekend of festivities, The Patron's Lunch celebrated the preeminent role that patronage has played in the 63 year reign of Queen Elizabeth II. As Patron of more than 600 charities and organisations across the Commonwealth, The Queen's patronage is an exemplar of dedicated volunteerism. The 10,000 guests on the day represented 90% of The Queen's UK patron organisations, in a double celebration both of their own volunteers, supporters, and good works, and The Queen's voluntary work as their Patron.

This report is interested in the value of The Queen's patronage. We look first at the perception and use of The Queen's patronage by 220 of the UK-based charities within the Queen's portfolio of patronage. We then consider the extent to which The Patron's Lunch event endorses our understanding of the value of The Queen's patronage.

## What is Patronage?

<sup>1</sup> Bearfield, D.A. (2008) 'What is Patronage? A Critical Re-examination.' *Public Administration Review*. Volume 69 Issue 1 January/February 2009 pages 64–76.

As Bearfield<sup>1</sup> (2009) observes,

'After questionnaireing the literature concerning the function of patronage, Frank Sorauf offered the following assessment: "Very few studies exist of the actual operation of patronage systems across the country. . . In the absence of specific reports and data one can only proceed uneasily on a mixture of political folklore, scattered scholarship, professional consensus, and personal judgement" (1960). Even now some 40 years after Sorauf's initial statement, we still know very little about the function of patronage.'

Bearfield was writing from the perspective of the American state but the same observation can be applied to the UK.

The Dictionary definition of patronage gives five criteria but it is the first – 'support, sponsorship etc given by the Patron' on which our report is focused and where our contribution in understanding patronage is made. In this report we set out a list of valuable attributes which we have identified in The Queen's patronage.

<sup>2</sup> Prochaska, F (1995) *Royal Bounty: The Making of a Welfare Monarchy*. Yale University Press

However, before proceeding it is of importance to recognise the historical context from which royal patronage has developed. Prochaska (1995)<sup>2</sup> charts and defines the development of the relationship between charity and the royal family: 'The rise of royal philanthropy has complex origins, but it should be seen in the light of the transformation of the idea of nobility'.<sup>3</sup> Prochaska places these developments within social, political and religious changes. As the political power of the monarch declines and disappears in the 20th Century it is replaced by

<sup>3</sup> Ibid p7



the emergence of a moral imperative that privilege entails responsibility to the less fortunate and a role for the monarch as the servant to the people who is above the political framework.

This report sets out the range of activities The Queen undertakes as the nation's premier Patron.

## The Research Process

This paper was produced pro-bono by researchers at Cass Business School (City, University of London) and Impact & Advisory at Bates Wells Braithwaite.

Two post-event questionnaires were sent to 220 charities attending The Patron's Lunch in June 2016 (58 responses) and to those same 58 respondents in December 2016 (this time receiving 24 responses). These produced quantitative and qualitative research for this study. Response rates were in line with expectations for postal questionnaires.

Semi-structured focused interviews were conducted by telephone with twelve of the charities between October 2016 and January 2017 to gather additional qualitative data, much of which is included in case studies throughout this report.

This report is laid out in three sections:

- *Patronage recognised* understanding the nature of royal patronage and the value drawn from it
- *Patronage realised* examining how The Patron's Lunch and the events around it enhanced the work of the charities involved
- *Patronage renewed* drawing out recommendations for the future success of royal patronage.



# PATRONAGE RECOGNISED

## Its value over many years

It became clear through our research that The Queen's charities consider her patronage to be 'unique'. A number of them repeated this description. As an emblem and association, The Queen is considered to be 'head and shoulders above everyone else'.

From The Queen's patronage flow many benefits in the way in which the charities perceive themselves, and the way in which others perceive them. The Queen's patronage confers 'credibility', creates 'status', and enables 'recognition'. Most strongly felt and evidenced is the 'pride' endowed by the patronage – and the excitement, satisfaction, and message of importance this passes across charities' staff, volunteers and beneficiaries.

It is left to the patron charities to set the regularity and form of the relationship with their Patron (operating of course within the restrictions of The Queen's available time and wide responsibilities). Some charities we questioned are adept, constant and strategic in their relationship with The Queen via her offices; others had lost engagement and used The Patron's Lunch event to re-engage.

Engagement from the charities seeks both to inform The Queen of their impact and activities, and to seek her involvement and support. Messages of support go both ways. When charities receive requested messages of support, these are considered 'very special for staff and supporters', making volunteers 'feel special and motivated'.

Having The Queen attend their events is of course the highest honour for any charity. Recognised as such, charities request this only at rare events of great importance, making selective, 'intelligent and well informed asks'. For example, The Queen will be asked to attend major anniversaries; to open, for example, major conferences such as the Quinquennial Conferences of the Royal Live Saving Society; or to open major centres, such as the Cambridge Research Institute for Cancer Research UK in 2007.

It is activities such as these which mark The Queen out as a volunteer rather than simply a 'figurehead' Patron. Over the course of her reign, having consistently marked out time, resources and moral support for her patron charities, The Queen has demonstrated a dedicated volunteerism that has inspired many across her charities and beyond.

## Trust and integrity

The honour of The Queen's patronage in many cases both asserts certain standards and drives charities to higher standards of integrity and charitable achievement. The Patron's association is considered to act as a 'seal of approval', implicitly conferring standards and values of 'integrity', 'credibility' and 'trust' which drive the patron's charities to meet these expectations.

This expectation of quality was seen as dynamic: a continual demand for excellence. Interviewees spoke with feeling about the need to be fit to be associated with The Queen. ‘We act in a way that makes us less vulnerable to criticism’, said one charity. Others, such as ABF The Soldiers’ Charity, claimed that their sense of responsibility attached to the royal association influenced the standards to which they aspire and choices they make in their day to day business decisions. Describing this, ABF said, The Queen ‘keeps the standards high. She has a sharp eye for detail’.

### **ABF The Soldiers’ Charity** ‘there is no one higher in the land’

Most eloquent in speaking about the singular importance of The Queen for their beneficiaries, staff, donors and volunteers was ABF The Soldiers’ Charity.

Here The Queen’s multiple representative roles have additional significance, as Head of State, Commander in Chief, and garnering a base of supporters who are typically ‘very pro-Monarchy’ in their world view. They see ‘an absolute corollary between people who value our work and The Queen’.

The sense of high standards and relationship to The Queen is something driven as much by their beneficiaries and audience as the charity itself. ABF remarked, ‘everyone who has ever served holds Her Majesty in the highest regard’.

This commitment to ‘being straight as a die and doing everything the way we should do’ led to ABF being named top UK charity for delivering on its promises in the 2016 Third Sector Charity Brand Index.

This focus on integrity ties into relationships with their supporters. In ABF’s strapline, ‘for soldiers, for life’, the longevity to which they refer is as much for their supporter relationships as for their beneficiaries. They thank all their donors and fundraisers in person, and provide supporter care that includes social media advice and using their regional structure to always ‘collect cheques in person’. The Patron’s Lunch was another opportunity to say thank you to 36 donors, volunteers, supporters and staff who volunteer well beyond their job stipulations.

External impressions of quality in the patron’s charities are just as high. In the crowded charity market place this is an advantage. As one charity put it, with ‘buckets being shaken everywhere, it’s harder and harder to make money. But anything that’s attached to The Queen creates a trust’. Many charities were cognisant of this advantage and actively used it in their branding, throughout their buildings, and as content in their communications.

This trust and approval was leveraged in fundraising drives. The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust cited their newly obtained patronage as having directly ‘driven up our fundraising four-fold in the last 18 months and allowed us to hold events and raise our profile in a way not previously achieved’. The Seashell Trust said that the recent raising of £8 million from trusts and philanthropists was directly related to their patronage, ‘because they know that The Queen has strong associations with successful and well managed charities’.

## Shared identity

Patronage is felt the strongest where – in addition to the role of Head of State – The Queen’s personal interests or additional roles relate directly to the objects of the charity.

The Royal School of Church Music, for example, think of The Queen not just in her role as Monarch, but also in her role as Supreme Governor of the Church of England. Charities whose beneficiaries relate to The Queen’s other roles, such as members of the armed forces whom The Queen is also Commander in Chief, also described a very strong values-based association with their Patron. In these roles The Queen shows that central to civic and organisational leadership can be benevolent support to wider civil society, by bringing her leadership and volunteer patronage together.

The Queen’s role as a volunteer is at the heart of this synergy of ideals. As a volunteer through her active patronage of hundreds of UK-based charities, The Queen sets a standard of volunteerism in the UK. As The Scout Association described it, her own dedication to community service ‘inspires the next generation of 573,000 UK members to a lifetime of service and commitment’. The values demonstrated by The Queen’s volunteerism so closely represent the Scout’s own mission that their highest honour is named after her – The Queen’s Scout Award which ‘mirrors dedication and reflects very closely with the Scouts values of service to the community’.

### Royal Academy of Dance ‘stimulating outreach’

On her ascension to the throne in 1953, The Queen inherited the patronage of the Royal Academy of Dance. It has been a long association and the Academy considered The Patron’s Lunch a ‘huge opportunity’ to give a ‘once in a lifetime experience’ to their members, as well as to thank their Patron.

The Academy selected 300 dancers from 25 of their schools to dance in The Patron’s Lunch parade. That was more than three times as many participants as any other charity. The competition for places saw entrants from as many as 64 dance schools across the UK.

The Academy seized the opportunity of The Patron’s Lunch to engage people across the world, running events in New Zealand, Singapore, the Caribbean – and Birmingham train station.

This activity led to media coverage (including BBC and *Daily Mail*) with an audience reach of some 142 million worldwide and ‘off the charts’ feedback from their participants. Most said it was ‘the best day’ of their lives. The opportunity to dance in such numbers is extremely rare – and it provided a very active way of engaging and reminding the Academy’s members of their shared identity.

The Seashell Trust notes that it was as a direct result of The Queen’s patronage that particular stakeholders and philanthropists have supported the charity. They consider The Queen’s ‘tireless energy and support to her charities’ to be an ‘inspiration and hook’ from which ‘a range of celebrities and high-net worth individuals’ can be encouraged into supporting her charities.





Where these synergies of values and interests exist, organisations typically build upon them – such as the Scouts Award – finding ways further to highlight and propound those values, while simultaneously building prestigious and active links with The Queen as Patron. Being able actively to reflect the shared and widely-recognised values and behaviours of The Queen is a way to build a credible identity to external and internal audiences, and to strengthen the relationship with The Queen herself.

## An enduring and global recognition

Along with the quality and breadth of the association goes the breadth of its resonance across audiences, partners and beneficiaries across the UK and around the world. As the world's longest-serving Monarch, The Queen's reign extends across our shared memory. This longevity creates a deep and rich association and recognition and substantial reach and visibility.

Association with The Queen creates a badge of integrity which makes important statements about the patron charities that are understood globally. Across The Queen's charities, a third of questionnaire respondents said The Queen's patronage strengthened their profile. One charity described this recognition as 'invaluable because everybody knows who she is' and because 'she is very loved around the world'. The patronage provides a positive recognition and one with the ability to resonate across the world.

## Shared interests

The personal regard in which The Queen herself is held bolsters the potential of patronage, making it a force able to effect local and global change. For example, Lepra explained that The Queen's personal interaction with those with leprosy, including her sponsorship of children from the 1940s onwards, 'has set a wonderful example to world' and helped break down longstanding stigmas: 'showing a lack of fear and prejudice set an example to the world'. This is about helping shift policy and public perspectives by leveraging The Queen's personal choices as a signifier of what is socially acceptable.

## Summary

We have found that for those actively engaged with The Queen as their Patron, charities have identified and articulated a number of similar advantages. These include the positivity, depth and reach of recognition their brands and messaging receive as a result of an association embedded with the integrity, demonstrable values and social authority of the world's longest serving Monarch.

The Queen's patronage becomes a virtuous circle: the greater her volunteerism, the more it is recognised and sought. In the next section, we will review how this was celebrated and utilised by the coming together of patron's charities at The Patron's Lunch.

# PATRONAGE REALISED

## The Patron's Lunch 'icing on the cake'

The Patron's Lunch on the 12th June 2016 set out to recognise and celebrate The Queen's patronage and her community of patron's organisations. This was framed in the three words: '*charity, celebration, community*'.

The Patron's Lunch aimed to promote both the patronage and the good works of the organisations themselves, providing them with a story, association, participation and profile with which they could engage their volunteers, supporters and beneficiaries. In this way, The Patron's Lunch set out to celebrate The Queen's patronage by mirroring the advantages of patronage.

Using the intended outcomes of The Patron's Lunch, our research interest here is to consider:

- 1 How did the patron's charities respond to The Patron's Lunch event as an opportunity?
- 2 How successful was their response?  
And further:
- 3 Does this endorse the advantages of patronage we have articulated?

Below we answer these questions by using The Patron's Lunch to explore the central importance to charities of the act of 'thanking'; and as a example of opportunity to stimulate fundraising, relationships, marketing and media interest.

### The importance of thanking

Above all, The Patron's Lunch event was about thanking: a chance to celebrate The Queen, and the efforts and energies of the patron's charities and their volunteers. Thanking is a singularly important part of charitable business: an essential lever to signalling the value of all its volunteer parts. By recognising and celebrating contributions made to charities in resources and time, contributors are valued and respond with renewed energy.<sup>4</sup>

The Patron's Lunch recognised The Queen as the most high-profile volunteer in the country, whose commitment to civil society and volunteerism while Head of State has demonstrated the significance of these attributes to British culture and community. The organisations turned out specifically to thank her 'for such longstanding dedication'.

It was in this spirit of thanking, that The Queen's charities approached the day. They brought long-serving staff, volunteers, supporters and beneficiaries from communities across the UK to form – for one day – the Patron's community as an 'extraordinary and unique' family, headed and symbolised by The Queen's voluntary work as Patron.

Thanking those many contributors who follow The Queen's example in supporting the patron's charities with their time and talents, charities invited volunteers of all types from across the country, from odd-job men to trustees, all of whom – like the Monarch – generously

<sup>4</sup> Habib, J (2006), *Tiny Essential of Raising Money from Foundations and Trust*.  
White Lion Press



participate in their communities. 87% of the charities invited volunteers – and 79% of charities said they were invited in order to thank them. 61% also listed thanking as their primary motivation for inviting staff and trustees. Charities spoke not only of the value of volunteers but of long-serving staff who give ‘huge amounts of devoted service’ as volunteers outside of their paid hours.

For some organisations like The Scout Association with its 120,000 volunteers, thanking is a considerable operation. In their centenary year, the opportunity to involve 180 volunteers within the parade and as marshals was well timed. They used senior members within the volunteer hierarchy to nominate potential guests, focusing on volunteers from deprived areas within their ‘Better Prepared’ campaign.

Despite many comments about the day’s rain, responses from guests were extremely positive. People welcomed the invitation to thank and be thanked, and the result was a positive boost. One Scout attendee described the enthusiasm of the event as ‘the most amazing day: The Scout section was fantastic. People really got a flavour of how fun scouting can be and I don’t think you could have got a better advert for scouting’. Likewise, the Royal Naval Association described the ability of volunteers to attend as a ‘very powerful inducement and reward’.

### Leonard Cheshire Disability

‘year in, year out, they are people we depend on’

Leonard Cheshire has long used contact with The Queen as a means of recognising and thanking volunteers and supporters. Amongst The Queen’s many active involvements with the charity, in 2014 some 200 people attended an event hosted by The Queen at St James’ Palace to celebrate their supporters and demonstrate that ‘everyone is valued’.

With over 3,500 volunteers in the UK this active appreciation of volunteers is essential. To select volunteer guests for the day, a working group was established to select 30 guests to reflect the breadth of service given to the charity.

Holding their Patron in ‘tremendous regard’ volunteer invitees to The Patron’s Lunch found it ‘just incredible to be there’. It is ‘very difficult to thank them: they don’t want payment. To give them something special they couldn’t normally get is great’. Some guests had never been to London before.

Local events ensured send-offs involving the whole Leonard Cheshire community, and paralleled the celebrations of the event in London. Newsletters shared across all Leonard Cheshire contacts gave profiles of the selected volunteers alongside a history of the patronage. This recognition helped bolster ‘the strong community’ of volunteers and reflecting the very best of their volunteers who so often ‘go beyond what you could ever expect or hope from someone’.

As indicated by the enthusiasm of the Scouts, a significant feature of the event’s means of thanks was that it balanced attendance and viewing with participation. 1,067 volunteers from 46 of The Queen’s charities as well as corporate volunteers participated in the parade and supported the running of the day. This included 300 dancers from the Royal Academy of Dance, 10 volunteers from St John Ambulance, 29 members of the Women’s Royal Army Corps Association, 10 Girlguiding girls, and all the enthusiastic support of the crowds of guests. One charity guest





described this ‘sense of belonging’ as their main motivation for attending on the day, saying, ‘we wanted to be there, to jump up and down and show our appreciation, to show we belong to her’. The sense of participation clearly extended beyond the parade and into crowd enlivened by a strong sense of participation: this is one of the many values of events.

For many, this participation made it ‘the best day of their lives’. For the 300 members of the Royal Academy of Dance, it was a rare opportunity to perform at such scale, and provided a welcome low-cost means to thanking and rewarding members, volunteers, and trustees. For Christ’s Hospital school, being able to speak to potential donors while their pupils performed in the parade provided the perfect ‘backdrop’ to fundraising discussions – giving an additional benefit beyond the children’s pleasure of participation.

The inclusive, active nature of participation of course exemplifies the volunteer desire to be involved and engaged. It is therefore no surprise that event participation was so widely valued by The Queen’s charities and their volunteers as a means of thanks and celebration. Echoing this more widely, a number of the charities held smaller-scale street parties across the country, such as Leonard Cheshire Disability within their homes, or in their neighbourhoods, like Reedham Children’s Trust in Croydon.

The use of events as a means of thanks is a well-established practice amongst The Queen’s charities – and explains why the majority used it to this purpose. Events both actively involve people in the thanking and are a means of giving thanks. They recognise volunteerism and social partnership while offering encouragement and routes to emulate the positive actions of others. By selecting a small number to go and be thanked at the event, and then publicising that thanking it says to all volunteers ‘we value you all’ and conveys a feeling of pride in achievement amongst all, invited or not. Charities spoke of events as a means to build shared identity, and the importance volunteers place in charities actively demonstrating their appreciation. These varied from local events to annual national galas – where of course any attendance by The Queen was remembered for many years afterwards.

## Driving fundraising

The Patron’s Lunch was considered by many charities to be a prestigious, ‘once in a lifetime’ opportunity that ‘money can’t buy’. Just as many of the charities recognised the value of the ongoing association with The Queen in engaging with funders and sponsors, so the Royal College of Surgeons felt guests would ‘feel that there was something special’ about their charity in their ability to ‘facilitate their participation in such a special event’.

It therefore followed that just over half (52%) of The Queen’s charities used the event to invite donors. This number was lower than the 87% who invited volunteers. Though donors are a cornerstone of volunteerism, it could be argued that in this celebratory event, the opportunity to thank volunteers was more important. One charity said they had specifically not invited donors because the focus on income would detract from the celebratory nature of the event; others who did invite donors did so with only ‘soft’ fundraising objectives of thanking and building ongoing good will.

Only one in seven of charities responding to our questionnaire had set a specific fundraising target – a ‘hard’ goal. Examples of this included ABF The Soldiers’ Charity who were using the



event to help secure two six-figure commercial partnerships; the King Edward VII's Hospital who were about to launch a £10 million appeal for expansion; and The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust who brought donors from Japan with whom a relationship was 'immediately created' by the prestigious nature of the event.

For those charities using the day to raise immediate funds, a fifth set out to fundraise by running concurrent events or selling tickets in raffles or to highest bidders. One local event raised £1,200, another raised £400. However the bad weather on the day meant one local event ran at a loss of £3,000.

Friends of the Elderly fundraised to cover ticket and travel costs for their guests – but not to achieve a surplus. Amongst those auctioning their tickets to raise funds were Lepra, Christ's Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust, Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) and ABF The Soldiers' Charity. MCC raised £3,700, ABF raised £10,000, and Christ's Hospital auctioned theirs in exchange for commitments to monthly donations, worth £1,800 per annum.

Yet against this, one respondent to the questionnaire complained about the £150 ticket price when they failed to fundraise enough to cover the initial outlay on tickets.<sup>5</sup> Other questionnaire respondents said they had bought the tickets believing the financial outlay to be worth the long-term gains brought by thanking and therefore encouraging their donor and volunteer invitees. Fewer than one in three charities intended to measure the impact of the event by tracking whether or not the financial goals were met, and costs adequately covered.

<sup>5</sup> Charities for which The Queen acts as Patron and who subsequently applied to The Patron's Fund, received a gift of £2,500.

### Reedham Children's Trust

'that's The Queen for you! That's the power that she has'

The Reedham Children's Trust – a relatively small, Croydon based charity – hired a temporary fundraiser to garner interest around The Patron's Lunch. Successes that came through association with the lunch included new sponsorships with Westfield & Hammerson, Citi Group, M&S Croydon and support from Tesco.

Having for years only enjoyed a limited relationship with their local community, the Trust held a street party for local residents and voluntary groups. The Mayor of Croydon was in attendance and the local community responded with positivity – 'now everyone knows us'. New volunteering relationships were created – and the charity set in motion new opportunities for local partnerships.

So successful was this engagement and sponsorship drive that the fundraising post has now been made permanent at the charity. Had they not had the patronage, they reported, 'none of this would have happened, before The Patron's Lunch, there wasn't a hook'.

## Building relationships

The Patron's Lunch demonstrated the ability of The Queen's association to build recognition and then relationships on behalf of her charities. While organisations like Reedham (above) or the Royal Academy of Dance used the event to forge sponsorship relationships, others brought guests

6 In January 2017 a second survey was sent to the respondents of the original first survey.

from abroad, like The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust. In a short second questionnaire<sup>6</sup> with 24 respondents, only one in seven had used the event to initiate or consolidate sponsorship. One of these estimated the total expected value of two sponsorships to be £100,000 over time; another had sought sponsors whose strong association with The Queen meant that ‘leaning in our links with The Queen as a shared future’ would solidify the emerging relationship.

On a local level, a number of the charities set up mirror events across the UK to promote their Patron and patronage amongst their own communities, while they simultaneously celebrated with the Patron’s community on The Mall. There were the ‘send-off’ events from Leonard Cheshire homes, a street party in Portsmouth (by the Association of Royal Navy Officers / Royal Navy Officers Charity), another in Croydon (Reedham Children’s Trust), and the Royal Academy of Dance global events, amongst many others.

On The Mall itself, new relationships were enhanced. The event helped forge a unique partnership between the Royal Academy of Dance and the Marylebone Cricket Club, providing access to bring more boys into dance – already yielding positive results. Aware of the shared strength of relationship with themselves and Coutts Bank, they were able to gain a corporate sponsorship to support attendance on the day – an association and synergy Marylebone Cricket Club and The Royal Academy of Dance intend to explore and further develop.

## Generating marketing and media interest

The majority (81%) of questionnaire respondents were aware of the permanently available ‘hook’ The Queen’s patronage provides, actively using The Patron’s Lunch to provide content for external and social media, and their own communications. This level of awareness and therefore utilisation of media and marketing was over four times higher than the number of charities who invited donors. This possibly indicates greater comfort with awareness raising than fundraising; while some charities stated that they felt using the day to fundraise was inappropriate given it was a day primarily for thanks and recognition.

### Sailors’ Society

‘we climbed several rungs at once – it was invaluable’

On the eve of their 200th anniversary, because they were approaching the event in a flotilla along the Thames, the Sailors’ Society found themselves accompanied by a Sky news crew, featured in Hello! Magazine, and on BBC World. The latter has an audience of two million viewers.

While The Queen’s patronage has always been a point of considerable pride to the charity, there had never been a media angle of such interest. The Sky crew travelled with their guests down the river to the lunch. Since the event, it has been a continual subject of interest to supporters and new audiences through the media coverage.

They produced a ‘thank you’ video circulated to all their supporters, staff, volunteers and members. For those volunteers who attended the event – including one lady who herself was 90 – the event was ‘an incredible way to say thank you to those who have worked tirelessly for us’.





Breaking these figures down further, we see 69% were using the event to produce content for their own communication; the same percentage (69%) used the event to generate social media content; and 23% for traditional media (TV, radio, newspapers) content. Some charities, such as Lepra brought staff specifically to manage media on the day; others, like The Scout Association, brought members, volunteers and beneficiaries to enhance the stories they had to tell.

Exactly half of the charities responding to our questionnaire were interested in the short-term benefits of the media interest; while a slightly higher percentage (58%) were interested as well in the longer-term profile implications. For some this was a national interest; others, like the Seashell Trust and Reedham Children's Trust were interested in using content and the patronage association to lift their local profiles.

For those charities who received widespread media coverage – as with the Sailors' Society, Royal Academy of Dance, and The Scout Association – the impact could be significant. Typically this coverage was greatest in those organisations whose special involvement in the day's parade gave an immediate story for the media. The Scouts used the opportunity to promote volunteering, their media coverage on the day reached an estimated potential TV viewership of three million through various television bulletins. One charity described the coverage as having 'hugely raised the profile' of their work.

## Conclusion

It is clear that the value and privilege of The Queen's patronage is strongly felt across her patron charities. For those charities who do utilise the patronage, it is a 'gold standard' of trust, inspiration, and recognition. This stretches not just globally and towards donors and sponsors, but throughout the organisations themselves, providing stimulating a shared identity and values across volunteers, members and staff.

For some that means a confident strategic use of the advantage, for others – as in the example of the Reedham Children's Trust and Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Fund – the benefits are only now becoming clear. In both cases, The Patron's Lunch was the catalyst for realising that opportunity.

Other organisations displayed consideration in some or all aspects of their approach to the Lunch. This included consideration of invitees, of fundraising, media, and sponsorship opportunities. Very few organisations considered all of these possible aspects of value; many didn't consider any advantage beyond the opportunity to thank the people who support them. Typically, the level of 'success' felt by charities was on a par with their level of advance planning on the issues.

The advantages that did flow from the event were in line with those expected from engaged patronage: pride, integrity, celebratory focus – all leading to positive future change or sustainability for the charities involved.

# PATRONAGE RENEWED

## Recommendations for the future

While The Patron's Lunch organisers made their intentions of the day clear, more could have been done to lift up those charities who feel furthest from their Patron. Clarifying the opportunity and processes of engaging their Patron would be a useful first step; encouraging the charities to set actions and measureable goals for the difference the patronage makes, would be another.

### *Charities should build the patronage into a proactive relationship*

While we have highlighted and shared best practice, there exists variation in the confidence, effort and consideration by which charities seek to engage their Patron. All the patron's charities are recommended to consider the value of patronage we have articulated, and how they can most effectively harness this value.

As a minimum, charities should always pass their annual reports to their royal patron to keep her informed. To move this to more active engagement, charities should select opportunities for further relevant information, or to seek letters of support, forewords, and even attendance and hosting opportunities.

### *The Palace's convening and enabling role*

At its most simple level, Buckingham Place should ensure all patron's organisations understand protocol and access to The Queen, so their engagement is appropriate and proportionate.

In response to the success of The Patron's Lunch, Buckingham Palace should consider what can be gained by convening the community of patron's charities, whether that is virtually or in person. As we hope this report demonstrates, there are shared interests as well as good practice which can be usefully shared across the charities to support their continual improvement and efforts to deliver their mission. As The Patron's Lunch demonstrated, there are many benefits to be gained by collaboration.

All efforts at communication and convening should seek to emphasise shared identities and synergies in an effort to stimulate collaboration. We recommend that a central focus to this should be the quality of dedicated volunteerism demonstrated by their Patron.

### *Extension of engagement to Commonwealth patron's charities*

The Patron's Lunch event demonstrated the global profile and impact of charities of which The Queen is Patron. The Palace may consider replicating and extending any efforts (as above) to further convene and stimulate collaboration across the Commonwealth patron's charities, as well as the UK patron's charities.



## Realisation of duty

Underpinning the privilege of patronage must be – as many of our interviewees keenly spoke on – a commitment to uphold the values and integrity that The Queen’s association infers. Strong relationships between Buckingham Palace and the patron’s organisations are the best means to understand and underpin this duty. It needs to be actively thought about, and is best maintained through the practice of active patronage made possible by efforts of both the Royal Offices and the charities.

## Research into royal patronage

Little research has been conducted into the value of royal patronage: certainly nothing in recent years. At this time in which royal patronage is active across three generations of the royal family, we recommend research is carried out into the differing approaches to patronage as they evolve to meet changing expectations.

## Research methodology

### QUESTIONNAIRES

To engage the broadest range of charities an online questionnaire was circulated to 220 of the Queen’s UK charities on 29th June 2016. This was two weeks after The Patron’s Lunch, allowing the charities time to receive feedback from participants at the Lunch and local events. It also allowed for the impact on relationships, media, and funding opportunities developed through the event to make itself known.

The questionnaire sought qualitative and quantitative responses on: media; fundraising; participant selection; thanking; sponsorship; collaboration; and attitudes and experience of The Queen’s patronage.

The 220 charities to whom the questionnaire was circulated were those who engaged with the event by purchasing tickets (all charities had already been issued two free tickets) and attended on the day. 58 responses were received by 7<sup>th</sup> July 2016 representing roughly a quarter (26.4%) of the charities contacted. This is the typical rate of return for online questionnaires.

These 58 responding charities were sent a second short questionnaire in December 2016. This asked for specific detail about: sponsorship and collaborations; local events; impact of media coverage; and impact of fundraising. 25 charities responded: a response rate of 43%.

### SEMI-STRUCTURED FOCUSED INTERVIEW BY TELEPHONE

On analysis of responses to the first questionnaire, twelve charities were approached for semi-structured 45 minute phone interviews. Seven interviews took place.

Selected interviewees were those who had demonstrably used The Patron’s Lunch as a way to leverage greater impact, be it for media coverage, fundraising, etc. These interviews have been translated into the case studies throughout this report, shared as exemplars of good practice that others may replicate.





#### CONCERNS ABOUT BIAS

When considering our results, we must take into account the ‘positive bias’ within our cohort of responding charities. The respondents were self-selective and for the majority very positive about their patronage and The Patron’s Lunch event. Those who didn’t respond may well have had less positive experiences. The choice of The Patron’s Lunch to send questionnaires only to those who had purchased tickets increased this positive bias by selecting those already engaged and invested.

We therefore view our findings as representative of best practice use of The Queen’s patronage, and not representative of all practice. Our recommendations reflect this.

#### About the authors

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## Thanks

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*Images are the property of The Patron's Lunch.*



