

Appointment of Director

October 2024



Trent Park is recognised by Historic England as being of national and international significance on a level with Bletchley Park. Our vision is to open one of London's grandest houses to the public and reveal the incredible story of the Secret Listeners – a story that has remained hidden in the house for over 70 years.

TRENT PARK

HOUSE OF SECRETS

TRENT PARK – WELCOME FROM THE MARQUESS OF CHOLMONDELEY AND JASON CHARALAMBOUS, CO-CHAIRS OF THE TRENT PARK MUSEUM TRUST

As one of the great English country houses, Trent Park was, in the 1930's, the home of the politician and socialite Sir Philip Sassoon. A major proponent of rearmament in the face of the threats from Nazi Germany, at Trent Park he hosted some of the most influential statesmen, journalists, royalty and politicians of the period.

Following Sassoon's early death in 1939, Trent Park began a second phase in its history when it housed high ranking German prisoners of war. Unaware that they were being listened to by a team of intelligence operators in the basement - the 'Secret Listeners' - their indiscretions provided vital intelligence which aided the Allied war effort.

Trent Park now enters another phase in its life as the Trent Park Museum Trust restores the magnificent state rooms and, in the basement, recreates the bugging operation to show the techniques employed by the teams of Secret Listeners.

Whilst the project has been in development for some time, the team is on the cusp of the final, most exciting stages so far.

The Director will have the opportunity to work with an experienced group of dedicated trustees and leading heritage experts to help lead the project, shape the operational structure of this new museum, recruit personnel and establish relations with stakeholders and the local community ready for a launch in the Spring of 2026.

With considerable public interest in the project to date, which will increase once a PR strategy is implemented closer to opening, you will have the unique chance to be involved with the establishment of a leading historic heritage attraction that will benefit the public for many years to come.

We are not prescriptive about where candidates may have learnt their trade. If you think that you have the vision, skills and experience to take on such an exciting and unique opportunity, we would like to hear from you.



TRENT PARK
HOUSE OF SECRETS

Trent Park Museum Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales with Registered Charity Number 1169382.

March 2024 Edition © 2024 Trent Park Museum Trust



The Marquess of Cholmondeley



Jason Charalambous

**HERITAGE
FUND**

TRENT PARK – A HIDDEN HISTORY REVEALED

Perfect Country House

Trent Park in Enfield, North London, is the former estate of the Bevan and then Sassoon families.

As a charismatic and witty host, Sir Philip Sassoon remodelled Trent Park to be the perfect venue for political and social entertaining. His guests in the 1920s and 30s included notable figures such as Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson, Charlie Chaplin, TE Lawrence, Sir Winston Churchill, the future King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, and the young Princess Elizabeth.

Before his death in 1939, Sassoon served as Under-Secretary of State for Air - a role in which he made dramatic improvements to the Royal Air Force's fighting ability in preparation for the war with Nazi Germany.

War Comes to Trent Park

However, at the outbreak of War the estate took on an altogether different role, giving it special historic importance as it became home to Britain's 'Secret Listeners'. Here, from December 1939, British Intelligence bugged the conversations of nearly 3,000 German prisoners of war, and from 1942, Hitler's captured generals and senior officers. The site was overseen by Colonel Thomas Joseph Kendrick, a long standing spy-master for MI6 who helped change the course of history.

Trent Park's new Guests

By the end of the War, 59 German generals were living in comfort in the house, little aware that the whole site was wired for sound. The secrets they inadvertently revealed helped turn the tide of the War.

When the War ended, the house served a variety of uses and was then left unoccupied for a number of years. Finally, in 2015, it was purchased by Berkeley Homes, who granted the Trust the unique opportunity (following a successful public campaign) to open the evocative ground floor and basement of the Grade II listed house to the public in order to tell Trent Park's extraordinary history.

“Trent Park is of considerable national and international historic interest which bears comparison to the code-breaking work at Bletchley Park”

Historic England, February 2017



Trent Park when owned by the Bevan family, early 1900s



Sir Philip Sassoon with sister Sybil and Charlie Chaplin, 1921



Sir Philip Sassoon (1888 – 1939) who served in WW1 and later as Under-Secretary of State for Air

TRENT PARK – A HIDDEN HISTORY REVEALED

Gilded Cage

During the War, Trent Park was known as Cockfosters Camp and transformed into a state-of-the-art surveillance centre wired with a complex network of miniature bugging devices.

The German generals were encouraged to relax and engage in conversation with undercover interrogators, one of whom was Jewish emigre Ernst Lederer, grandfather of actress and Trent Park Museum Trustee, Helen Lederer.

M Room

Teams of Secret Listeners worked in the basement, in a special room code-named the 'M Room' (M for 'miked'), recording the conversations taking place on the floors above. Intelligence officers (both men and women) worked alongside them translating and processing the information, some of which was sent directly to the Prime Minister.

The Secret Listeners

The Secret Listeners were German emigres (the majority Jewish) who had fled Nazi persecution for Britain, transferred from the British Army's labour unit (the Pioneer Corps) for vital intelligence duties with British Intelligence. Trent Park was part of an extensive intelligence partnership, working with Bletchley Park from 1939, and sites at Latimer House and Wilton Park, as well as with Air, Army, Naval and American Intelligence. The Naval Intelligence team was recruited and overseen from the Admiralty by Ian Fleming (later to become the author of the James Bond novels). Sworn to secrecy under the Official Secrets Act, the majority of these unsung-heroes never spoke about their extraordinary contribution to the War effort.

“Our work was so top secret that we didn't really know whether it had any effect on the outcome of the war. Now that the files are declassified it's possible to appreciate that the work of the Secret Listeners played a crucial role in the secret war”

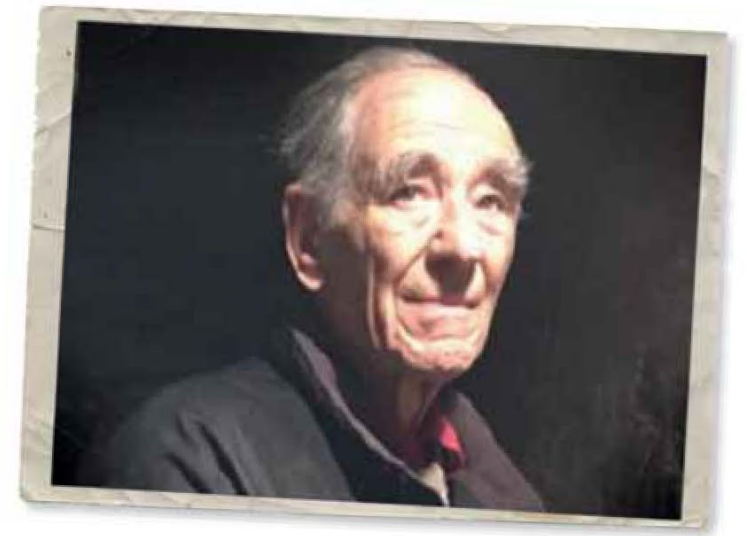
Fritz Lustig, former Secret Listener
(March 1919 - Dec 2017)



General Hans-Jürgen von Arnim arrives at Trent Park after capture in North Africa, May 1943



German generals walking in the grounds of Trent Park with their 'minders'



Fritz Lustig, veteran Secret Listener, actively campaigned for the Trent Park House project

TRENT PARK – A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Revealing the Past Through an Immersive Experience

Trent Park continues to captivate all who engage with its unique history. Our vision is to bring to life the incredible story of Trent Park, engaging visitors and educational groups in a vivid and creative way, combining original artifacts with innovative interpretation. Visitors will travel through the magnificently restored and furnished rooms - Sir Philip Sassoon's socialite and political world - to reveal the later clandestine operation against Hitler's top military commanders. Our aim is to highlight the vital role played by the Secret Listeners who were behind some of the most important intelligence discoveries of the War. Information about new German technology enabled Britain to win the Battle of Britain and revealed details of Hitler's deadly V-weapons and atomic bomb programme.

Telling the Hidden Stories of Trent Park

The stories hidden within the fabric of Trent Park House reveal a varied, dynamic and nationally important history. This is a powerful and evocative house, where the conversations of the past can echo across time to reach us today and inform us about how our world has come to be as it is.

At the heart of our mission will be a dedicated learning and engagement programme for schoolchildren, community groups and visitors alike, which will support the experiences created in the house, the WWII strand in the national curriculum and also the experiences and interests of our varied audiences.

Trent Park House will provide a focus for audiences to enhance their understanding of this complex and tragic period and to further explore some of the more sensitive themes that are part of its history.

For schools in particular, this will include a unique opportunity to engage in immersive, curriculum-linked activity within the original setting and to gain an understanding of the impacts the House and its residents had upon British history.'

Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we have worked with four local schools to develop pilot, immersive workshops for schools based on the Secret Listeners. This project also enabled an oral history and archive research project for volunteers. Both will inform our future public programme, and the results of each can be found on our new website.

“The Trust has just a short period to develop and open this extraordinary house to the public – to share its unique story with the nation in the only place it can be told, and within the walls these events took place. Trent Park helped change the course of history, and with your help we can bring it back to life for future generations.”

Jason Charalambous
Co-Chair of the Trust



The Library with Rex Whistler decoration



Members of the Trent Park House team in the Front Hall



An 'M Room' in the basement used by Secret Listeners in WWII

TRENT PARK RE-IMAGINED

Artifice and Masquerade

There is something of the theatrical about Sir Philip Sassoon's Trent Park, and its subsequent use by the intelligence services during the War - both stories are steeped in artifice and masquerade. We are restoring the main reception rooms with their marble fireplaces, Chinese wallpapers and murals by Rex Whistler with advice from David Mlinaric, the renowned interior designer and specialist in historic decoration.

Our vision for interpretation inside the house recognises this and creates a visitor experience like a play with an enthralling plot. Each act (each storyline) is presented on a different stage (a different room). The play is in two halves - 'upstairs' is a story

of high society with guests from the world of politics, the arts and royalty showered with lavish hospitality and entertainment. Downstairs is a darker story of the secret web that is woven around the German occupants of the house, and what it then reveals about the War, its threats and its crimes.



“The Trent Park project is an extraordinary opportunity to rescue a remarkable piece of British history. It combines the politics and aesthetics of the 1930s with the Second World War’s greatest espionage story. The survival of the building, its collections and archives is remarkable, and their presentation to the public will be a revelation.”

Dr Simon Thurley CBE FSA

Current chairman of National Lottery Heritage Fund and former Chief Executive of English Heritage

Above and Left: Artist impressions showing the Long Salon restored to its former splendour. The main reception rooms will be furnished as they were in Sir Philip Sassoon's time with loans from his family and carefully commissioned reproductions. These will evoke the spirit of the 1930s and set the scene for the events of the following decade.

TRENT PARK RE-IMAGINED

Below: Photograph of the Chinese Room as it was in the 1930s



Right: Artist impression showing the Chinese Room with original wallpaper conserved and reinstated



TRENT PARK RE-IMAGINED

Right: Artist impression showing the room behind the secret door in the Library. The masquerade of Trent Park is revealed – the monitoring and recording of the captives' conversations, all under the control of the spymaster himself, Colonel Thomas Kendrick.

Interpretation includes Kendrick's desk and a 'dolls house' model of Trent Park House with digital interaction revealing to the visitor the activities going on upstairs and downstairs.



*Trent Park spymaster
Colonel Thomas
Kendrick*



TRENT PARK RE-IMAGINED



Secret Listener at the customised listening and recording apparatus

Above and Right: Artist impression showing the re-imagined and restored M rooms. Interpretation explains the incredible ingenuity and skill that made the deception possible - scenic furniture and digital life-size figures showing the Secret Listeners at work

Right: Artist impression showing the German generals going about their business unaware their conversations are being recorded and analysed - what was actually heard, who said it and why - all based on the original transcripts of the real conversations, just as they were heard over 75 years ago.



TRENT PARK – ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE, A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Project Milestones Reached:

The Trent Park Museum Trust has delivered a number of important milestones

- Establishment of the Trust in 2016.
- Formation of a partnership with Berkeley Homes site freeholder agreed in 2017 with planning permission granted that year for the Trent Park House project on the ground and basement floors of the mansion.
- Development of a sustainable business plan for the Trust approved by Berkeley Homes and Enfield Council.
- Appointment of Kennedy O'Callaghan Architects as architects to the project, Simon Thurley and Tori Reeve as Museum Designers and Architrave Services as managers of the project.
- Awarded two grants from National Lottery Heritage Fund for feasibility and pre-opening development work.
- Completion of development work and securing nearly 50% of capital funds needed, supported by donations from a range of charitable trusts and private individuals.
- Securing over £2.9 million of in-kind support from Berkeley Homes towards restoration of the public rooms, as well as the outside terraces and gardens.
- Appointment of David Mlinaric as consultant on historic decoration.

The Next Steps

Having achieved so much, the Trent Park Museum Trust now needs to

- Raise the remaining sums required to complete the project and bring the important story of Trent Park to current and future generations.
- Complete the fit-out of the historic interiors and open to the public by Summer 2025.
- Open a café inside the house and develop an offer for corporate and hospitality hire in some of the public rooms.
- Continue to engage local communities through schools and participation programmes.



Working in Partnership

Once complete, Trent Park House will become an important link, both in content and geography, between existing attractions such as the Imperial War Museum and the Churchill War Rooms to the south and Bletchley Park and Bentley Priory to the north, many of which are within an hour's journey. We will also work with local and national organisations with strong contextual links with Trent Park to highlight themes such as migration and technology. Through our learning and outreach programmes, we are committed to forming meaningful partnerships with local communities.

Artist impression of the Trent Park House café



Sustainable Future

Our business plan projects annual visitor numbers averaging 25,000 during the first 5-year period. The future sustainability of Trent Park House will be driven by admission income, including school visits, repeat visits generated by a programme of temporary exhibitions, and special events.

Additional income streams including corporate hospitality and private bookings, are being actively explored and our business plan can be provided on request.

TRENT PARK MUSEUM TRUST – ABOUT US

The Trent Park Museum Trust is recognised by Enfield Council and Berkeley Homes, the site's freeholder, as the authorised body to oversee the development and opening of the house to the public. Our trustees are:

The Marquess of Cholmondeley, GCVO DL (Co-Chair) is great nephew of Sir Philip Sassoon, who owned and restored Trent Park between 1912 and 1939. He runs family estates and heritage property in Norfolk and Cheshire,

Jason Charalambous (Co-Chair) is a lawyer in the City of London, and is involved in a number of charitable endeavours. From 2014 he led the 'save Trent Park' campaign, resulting in the establishment of the Trust in 2016.

Andrew Kafkaris is a chartered surveyor with past responsibility for the estate management of many historic and prominent listed buildings across central London. He holds a long-held passion for country houses

Helen Lederer is the granddaughter of Ernst Lederer, who served as a Secret Listener at Trent Park during WW2. She is a comedian, writer and actress.

Francesca Mendes is an operations and commercial services professional, bringing experience and expertise from some of the UK's most popular visitor attractions.

Winston Newman is a retired architect responsible for residential and commercial projects, as well as for innovatory design of medical research laboratories

Mark Pemberton OBE was Director of National Collections for English Heritage 2000-2015. He is chair of Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust and sits on a number of heritage boards.

Alan Parkin is a retired chartered chemical engineer who held senior roles for international business development in the oil and gas industry and specialist software companies. He has lived close to and been involved in Trent Country Park for over 30 years.

Azadi Sheridan is the founder of an agency supporting not-for-profits worldwide to best use customer relationship software. He held fundraising roles at the V&A and Tate.

Our project team includes:

Kennedy O'Callaghan Architects

Dr Simon Thurley CBE FSA FRIB FRHistS
- Project consultant and Museum design

David Mlinaric CBE - Historic interiors consultant

Cynthia Wainwright - Fundraising consultant

Anna Husband - Learning and Access

Architrave Historical Services:

Tori Reeve - Museum design and Curation

Chezy Brownen - Project Management

Kate Francis - Project Support

MCA Consulting Engineers - Services design



Artist impression of Trent Park House and grounds after restoration



Trent Park House is 10 mins by car from the M25 and 30 mins by tube from Kings Cross

TRENT PARK – DIRECTOR ROLE



TRENT PARK

As one of the great English country houses, Trent Park was, in the 1930's, the home of Sir Philip Sassoon, politician and famous host. Here in the understated luxury of its fine room's, statesmen, journalists and politicians sympathetic to re-armament in the face of the threats from Nazi Germany, met and planned.

A few months after Sassoon's early death, in 1939, Trent Park began its second and greatest phase, when it was turned into a base to house high-ranking German prisoners of war. Tiny microphones were threaded through the main rooms and channelled down to a basement where operators listened to their conversations. The information from these covert operations had a profound impact on the Second World War. These bugging wires still exist preserved beneath the walls and floors.

THE PROJECT

The Trent Park Museum Trust (TPMT) will recreate the magnificent and important state rooms of the immediate pre-war years using the original furniture, paintings and porcelain loaned to the house from Houghton Hall. The basement rooms will recreate the "bugging" operation in a recreation of the spaces and techniques employed by the teams of "listeners".

The vision for Trent is to create a visitor attraction which tells the story of Sir Philip Sassoon and the house in the 1930's and the role it played in the Second World War. It will appeal to audiences interested in the social history of the pre-war years and the clandestine activities that helped end the War.

It will also appeal to a local audience and to educational groups who will be encouraged to become engaged in both the house and its parkland, through a programme of events, lectures, exhibitions and community activities, bringing the house to life and creating interest and pride locally.

The Trent Park Museum Trust is a charitable trust which has raised funds for the project from a wide range of trusts, foundations and private individuals. It works closely with Berkeley Homes, the developer of the wider site. Once open, it aims to attract c25k visitors per annum and to be financially self-sufficient through a range of commercial activities-admission charges, retail, catering, corporate hire and events. It will also generate new economic activity for the local community.

THE ROLE

The Museum Director will be the Trust's first member of staff, responsible to the Board of Trustees and accountable for the opening and overall operation of the Museum.

Although the project has been in development for some time, it does not have any paid staff, relying upon the trustees to provide advice and practical support and paid experienced heritage consultants for the exhibition curation and project management.

Whilst the vision for the Museum and interpretative and exhibition strategy have been agreed, the Director will be a member of the Project Board contributing to its development. The Director will also oversee and lead on the operational requirements required in the build-up to opening, and once opened.

With handover from contractors scheduled for August 2025 and the launch in the spring of 2026, the Director will join at a point when they are able to contribute to the strategy and direction of the project. The Director reports into the Board of Trent Park Museum Trust.

TRENT PARK – THE ROLE



Key Responsibilities

Develop and Enhance Visitor Experience

- Transform Trent Park Museum into a leading visitor destination, ensuring effective operational systems for ticketing, retail sales, event bookings, and corporate/private hires are fully implemented and optimised;
- Assist with the website revamp closer to opening to include the operational requirements such as, ticketing and retail; and
- Support the development of new parking sites.

Strategic Marketing and Promotion

- Oversee all aspects of museum marketing, from initial launch event planning to long-term strategic promotion, to increase public awareness and visitor numbers; and
- Oversee the PR/publicity strategy closer to the opening.

Retail, Food, and Event Strategy

- Design and implement strategies for retail, food, beverage services, and corporate events to maximize revenue and enhance visitor satisfaction;
- Oversee the tendering process for the cafe (a third party may ultimately carry out the tendering exercise on behalf of Trent Park).

Fundraising and Development Leadership

- Lead comprehensive fundraising and development initiatives to secure necessary financial resources, including the management of donor relationships and development of partnerships.

Financial Oversight and Budget Management

- Hold full financial responsibility, including setting the annual budget, monitoring expenses, and ensuring financial accountability and sustainability;

Staff Recruitment and Development

- Recruit, train, and manage museum staff, including volunteers, to ensure a high level of service, expertise, and engagement;

Stakeholder Relationship Management

- Build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including local authorities, partners, contractors, suppliers, schools, and community groups, to strengthen museum ties and collaborative efforts.

NB with much of the above the expectation is that Trent Park will hire professional contractors to support, and therefore the director's role will primarily be one of recruitment, oversight and reporting to trustees.

TRENT PARK – THE ROLE (CONTINUED)



Person Specification

Essential Criteria

- Proven track record of exceptional leadership in a competitive, customer-focused environment, ideally within the visitor attractions or heritage sectors, demonstrating creativity, vision, and effective team leadership;
- Extensive experience in developing and executing a successful business strategy within a comparable organisation, showcasing strong commercial acumen and strategic insight;
- In-depth understanding of fundraising principles and challenges, with proven experience in building and managing donor relationships and tailoring approaches to meet donor needs;
- Strong experience in financial planning, budget creation, and financial oversight, ensuring fiscal responsibility and alignment with organisational goals;
- Genuine interest and understanding of the heritage sector, with awareness of the opportunities and constraints in presenting historic properties, and a commitment to the Trust's mission; and
- Demonstrated experience in building, leading, and developing a diverse, multi-disciplinary team, fostering an inclusive, motivated, and high-performing workforce.

Desirable Criteria

- Experience of estate management and contract management, with experience in maintaining and enhancing museum facilities and historic properties;
- Familiarity with best practices in museum operations and governance within the cultural sector; and
- Knowledge of marketing, brand promotion, and public engagement strategies to expand the museum's reach and visibility.

TRENT PARK – TERMS OF APPOINTMENT



Contract: Permanent, full-time

Salary: c£60,000

Location: Trent Park EN4 0PS

Pension & Benefits: TBC

Annual leave: 25 days per annum

Probation Period: 3 months

Notice Period: 3 months

How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the Trent Park on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/candidate-opportunities using code PBQUB

Click on the ‘apply’ button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form. The closing date for applications is noon on Thursday 21st November 2024.

The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

TRENT PARK – OUR SUPPORTERS

The Trent Park Museum Trust is very grateful to all those who have supported, and continue to support the development of the Trent Park House project, including:

- **Sir Michael Bear**, former Lord Mayor of the City of London
- **Councillor Nesil Caliskan**, Leader of Enfield Council
- **Bambous Charalambous MP**, Member of Parliament for Enfield Southgate
- **Damian Collins MP**, Member of Parliament for Folkestone and Hythe; Chairman of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee 2016-2020; and author of 'Charmed Life: The Phenomenal World of Philip Sassoon'
- **Michael Dobson** Chairman of Berkeley Group
- **Sir David Jason OBE**, actor
- **Eric Mark** (d.2020), Veteran Secret Listener
- **Lord Sassoon**, Trustee Emeritus TPMT and Chairman, Sir John Soane's Museum
- **Iain Standen FRSA**, CEO of the Bletchley Park Trust; former trustee of TPMT
- **Dr Simon Thurley CBE FSA FRIBA FRHistS**, Historian and current chairman of National Lottery Heritage Fund and the National Heritage Memorial Fund

Trent Park Museum Trust has received endorsements from the following:

Dr Tracy Borman, Joint Chief Curator of Historic Royal Palaces:

"This is a hugely important historic monument, and we must preserve its story for future generations."

General Michael Hayden, former Director of the US National Security Agency and Central Intelligence Agency:

"It is heartening...to see Britain work to preserve such special locations so that they and the lessons they teach will be available to future generations."

Jerome M. O'Connor, U.S. Naval Institute Author of the Year:

"As with the Cabinet War Rooms, Trent Park is part of the story of our lives and our civilization. Its existence connects the past to the present, and its story deserves to be told to future generations."

Paul Rimmer, former deputy chief of defence intelligence Ministry of Defence:

"The vital work done at Trent Park is an important part of the heritage of defense intelligence, the museum will be a tremendous way of bringing this heritage to life and firing the imagination."

Our campaign also enjoys cross-party support from local Enfield and Barnet councillors and MPs

Media Coverage

The project has enjoyed extensive media coverage on national and regional media such as the BBC News, The Today Programme, BBC Radio 4, Channel 5 Online, Radio London, the Evening Standard, The Telegraph, The Jewish Chronicle, London Live News and beyond.

Trent Park has also been the subject of a number of documentaries in recent years, including *Spying on Hitler's Army* (Channel 4 and PBS, 2013), *David Jason's Secret Service* (Channel 4, 2017), and *Home Front Heroes* with Helen Lederer (BBC 1, November 2018).

"Trent Park was such an important establishment during the Second World War and so it would be wonderful to create a historic landmark as a tribute to the essential work carried out there."

Sir David Jason OBE



Eric Mark speaking at the Trent Park reception in the House of Lords, May 2019



Veteran Secret Listener Eric OarN Zith +elen Lederer filming at Trent Park for BBC1