

# LIVERY BRIEFING

July 2025



## Message from the Chair, Julia Sibley MBE

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In June I had the great pleasure of attending the Masters, Prime Wardens and Upper Bailiff weekend in Aberdeen. The weekend was a hugely enjoyable experience, largely down to the incredibly efficient organisation led by the Seven Incorporated Trades of Aberdeen and the exceptional hospitality shown to all at the various venues visited. These included Trinity Hall, the home of the Seven Incorporated Trades of Aberdeen for a black tie drinks reception and supper, with the very special addition of a visit from HRH The Princess Royal, the Port of Aberdeen, Crathes Castle, the Aberdeen Art Gallery, a ceilidh and dinner and culminated in a very special service at Aberdeen's King's College Chapel. The venue for our Masters, Prime Wardens and Upper Bailiffs weekend for next year (5/6 June 2026), together with other details, are still in the process of being finalised but as soon as is practicable they will be posted on the Livery Committee website and advised to all Clerks/Livery Companies. Thank you for your patience.

Several Livery Committee members, including myself and our Deputy Chair, were also present at the recent Common Hall, where Alderman Robert Hughes Penney and Keith Bottomley were elected by Liverymen as Sheriffs of the City of London for 2025-2026; their speeches are below for you and are also available on the Livery Committee website. They will both take office on 26 September at the Admission of Sheriffs at Guildhall (all are welcome to attend) and we all look forward to the beginning of a busy and productive Shrieval year.

Common Hall: Election of the Lord Mayor then takes place on 29 September when Liverymen are, once again, asked to attend and cast their votes to elect our 697th Lord Mayor of the City of London. Please do make a note of the date in diaries and attend if possible.

The Livery Committee enjoyed hosting many Masters, Prime Wardens and Upper Bailiff at the Livery Committee's Reception last month at Mercers Hall, on 4 June. We plan to repeat this reception next year and the date will be announced nearer the time.

The Livery Committee website was launched on 1 September 2020. In its first full calendar year it recorded 107,000 page views. In 2024 it recorded 212,000 page views. For the first six months of 2025, we continue to have good strong numbers. Search engines are the leading referrers with 22,642 for year to date. LinkedIn with 613 is the highest non-search engine referrer. The Barbers Company retains its position as the top Company referrer with 207. In July 2023, the Livery Committee launched its LinkedIn account. This has been a success, and it now has 1,100 followers (up 113 in the last quarter). The job vacancies section of the website was published on 14 February and has quickly established itself as the third most popular static page with 1,037 page views since its launch.

As usual, I have provided a list of dates, including the popular City Briefings and the Warden and Court Assistants' course, and as always, please check <https://www.liverycommittee.org> for the most up-to-date information.

### City Briefing, Thursday 11 September

### Wardens and Court Assistants Course, Monday 22 September

### Common Hall: Election of Lord Mayor, Monday 29 September

### Silent Ceremony, Friday 7 November

Applications for tickets can be made until Monday 8 September. Public tickets can be applied for online for general admission via: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/events/the-silent-ceremony>

Please note that Clerks will be contacted separately by the Remembrancer's Office with arrangements for Masters, Prime Wardens and Upper Bailiffs who, as in 2024, will each have one allocated seat at the ceremony.

### Lord Mayor's Show, Saturday 8 November

Finally, as the summer recess is upon us, all that remains is for me to wish you all a very happy and healthy summer!

With warm wishes,

**Julia Sibley, MBE**  
Chair, Livery Committee

## **Election of Sheriffs, Common Hall, 24 June,**

### **Alderman and Sheriff-Elect Robert Hughes-Penney**

My Lord Mayor, fellow Liverymen.

I stand before you today deeply honoured and profoundly grateful for the trust you have placed in me by electing me to serve as one of your sheriffs for the year 2025-26. Since receiving the nomination from the Court of Aldermen last year, I have been very conscious that it is the Livery who form the electorate for this ancient office.

Accordingly, I have tried to meet, engage with, listen to, and learn from as many Livery Companies as possible — and it has been both a joy and a privilege to do so, and I am very grateful for your generosity, your time and your hospitality. To all those who have extended support and encouragement along the way – from across the Livery, the Court of Aldermen, and the wider City – I offer my heartfelt thanks.

Town Clerk, for good order, may I formally place on record my acceptance of the office of Sheriff.

And as I do so it is with a deep awareness of the heritage and responsibility that comes with this role — the oldest secular office in the country after the Sovereign.

The role of Sheriff is not just ceremonial; it is fundamentally about supporting the Mayoralty in championing the City's global standing and civic mission, and I commit to working with the Lord Mayor, and on a joint civic plan with his elected successor and my fellow Sheriff. The office of Sheriff is also a living link to our City's enduring values of justice, service, and civic duty, and I look forward to working closely with my fellow Shrieval candidate, whom I warmly congratulate.

In that spirit, the Justice for All Series which I will be launching will seek to explore why access to justice is not only a moral imperative but also makes good economic sense. We also look forward to including young people in our programme and will uphold and promote the City's global stature both at home and abroad.

Throughout my career — whether serving in the Army, representing the Ward of Cheap, or working at Rathbones — I have witnessed the power of community. In the year ahead, we will celebrate the achievements of our Livery Companies, support the charitable efforts that make our City stronger and more inclusive, and continue to honour all that makes this City a place of excellence and purpose.

I want to offer huge thanks to my family — to Elspeth and to all my supporters. Elspeth and I are very much looking forward to working with Keith and Kevin during our year together at the Old Bailey.

I am deeply humbled by this opportunity and aim to serve with diligence, integrity, and pride in our City's shared heritage, and our future.

Thank you.

My Lord Mayor.

### **Sheriff-Elect and Deputy Keith Bottomley**

My Lord Mayor, fellow Liverymen.

It is with a deep sense of service that I accept the office of Sheriff of this great and ancient City of London.

It is of course a huge honour, pleasure and privilege to be elected Sheriff.

I will give the role my all and promise to serve you to the very best of my ability. My campaign theme 'Linking livery and city' describes clearly what I want to bring to the role. A deep commitment to, the livery – as immediate past Master Pattenmaker, a liveryman of the Fishmongers and Wheelwrights and Honorary Freeman of the Environmental Cleaners, Hon Secretary of the City Livery Club and member of the Livery Committee – and my city credentials as a chartered banker and elected member of the City Corporation.

The support from the Livery has been fantastic. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I have thoroughly enjoyed visiting some 60 livery companies over the past 9 months. Thank you, on every occasion, for your most warm welcome. I am passionate about our City and the Livery, about our traditions and institutions, and about the role we play in a modern society through our philanthropy and commitment to apprenticeships, education and skills.

In this era of political and economic uncertainty, a strong City is essential. Building on our fundamental strengths and our commitment to innovating. To retain and attract businesses. To drive growth and build economic security and prosperity. To help secure our nation's future and its place in the world. And the Livery plays a unique part in promoting the City and doing business in many trades and professions.

Congratulations to Robert and Elspeth.

My Lord Mayor, I look forward to joining your civic team and, together with Robert, working with Dame Susan Langley (subject to election), in delivering our joint civic plan. Emphasising the value of technical education for young people and linking more businesses with education through the livery. Helping to reduce violent crime in young people by spreading existing best practice. 75% of defendants at the Old Bailey are under 25 years of age and getting younger. Promoting the importance of diversity and the value of the rule of law as a foundation asset of the UK.

Of course, I could not do any of this without the love of my life the man I'm so proud to call my husband, my partner of 26 years, Kevin. Mr Pilates. I know how much he is looking forward to the year. Thank you, Kevin. We are very much looking forward to our year at the Old Bailey with Robert and Elspeth. Together, Kevin and I make a full commitment to the Shrievalty, to the City, and to you, my fellow Liverymen.

My Lord Mayor.

## The Worshipful Company of Woolmen

### 2025 Sheep Drive & Livery Fair

The Sheep Drive & Livery Fair is an annual event run by The Woolmen Company, this year taking place on Sunday 28th September 2025 on Southwark Bridge, London. The Sheep Drive & Livery Fair is a unique opportunity to be part of recreating historic community activities that took place on London's bridges. A long-established charity event, celebrating a Freemans ancient 'right' to bring sheep to market over the Thames, toll free; all in aid of raising funds for The Woolmen Charity and The Lord Mayor's Appeal.

With Southwark Bridge closed to traffic for the entire day and ideally located between St Paul's Cathedral, and Shakespeare's Globe on the Southbank, this will be a truly spectacular family day out. The event has a large footfall as there are over 1000 Sheep Drive participants, their guests, a large group of volunteers and is open to the public.

Each year there is a celebrity guest who participates in the drive and visits the stalls. Previous celebrity guests include Damian Lewis, Richard Corrihan, Kate Humble, Amanda Owen, Michael Portillo, Alan Titchmarsh, Mary Berry, and Nigel Mansell. We also feature in the national press & media.

The Livery Fair will be a mix of stall holders:

- City Livery Companies demonstrating their trades on Queen Street.
- A small selection of artisan food & drink vendors based on Queen Street.
- Wool displays, specialist craft and product stalls –these stalls celebrate sheep, the versatile and sustainable use of wool and are located on Queen Street Place just at the beginning of the bridge.

All of this will take place next to the historic re-enactment of Freeman exercising their right to drive their sheep over the Thames to market.

We have kept our pitch and optional extra fees the same as 2024. The pitch fee includes a plain white gazebo, which will be installed by us and there are also optional extras which include tables, chairs, and power. You are very welcome to bring your own gazebo but it would need to be plain white and please note that the cost is the same with or without a gazebo. Free parking for stallholders is available on the southside of the bridge.

If you are interested in having a stall at the event and would like to discuss further, please email [liveryfairequiries@gmail.com](mailto:liveryfairequiries@gmail.com). It might be that you don't have a product to sell or trade to display, there is the option of supporting an individual / charity or small trader affiliated with your company.

Further details regarding booking Sheep Drive places will be sent in February and normally bookings go live in May. For more information visit: [www.sheepdrive.london](http://www.sheepdrive.london)

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## Lord Mayor's Programme

### Meeting with CEO of Westpac Bank

On 3 July, Lord Mayor met Nell Hutton, Chief Executive of Westpac Institutional Bank. They discussed Westpac's increased presence in the UK and London, with both the high calibre of talent and attractive investment opportunities noted as key reasons, as well as areas for growth such as property, energy and defence.

### State Banquet in honour of the President of the French Republic

The Lord Mayor hosted the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, and his wife, Brigitte Macron, for a state banquet at the Guildhall on 9 July. The Lord Mayor's speech can be viewed online. It was the first state visit by a French President to the United Kingdom since 2008.

### Financial & Professional Services Dinner

On 15 July the Lord Mayor hosted the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP and the Governor of the Bank of England, Dr Andrew Bailey, at Mansion House for the annual Financial and Professional Services Dinner at which the Chancellor of the Exchequer delivers their Mansion House speech. You can read the Lord Mayor's speech, the Chancellors speech and the Governor's speech online. The dinner was used for a series of announcements, including the launch of the Employer Pension Pledge, the new Financial Services Investment Hub, the Government's new Financial Services Growth and Competitiveness Strategy and the Chancellor's Leeds Reforms. This was one of the busiest and most-high profile Mansion House dinners in years, with 370 attendees in the Egyptian Hall to hear the speakers.

### Meeting with Saudi Investment Minister

The Lord Mayor met the Saudi Investment Minister, HE Khalid Al Falih, who travelled to London for the second meeting of the UK-Saudi Sustainable Infrastructure Assembly. The Assembly is co-sponsored by the City of London Corporation, the UK Department for Business and Trade and the Saudi Ministry of Investment. The Lord Mayor and HE the Minister opened the meeting, before withdrawing as attendees discussed how the UK Financial and Professional Services sector can help support the development of large-scale Saudi infrastructure projects and lower their costs of capital for them. The project being discussed for this Assembly was the Prince Faisal Bin Fahd Sports City Stadium.

### Scale Up Showcase

On 30 June the Lord Mayor, in partnership with the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists, hosted the second Scaleup Showcase at the Mansion House, bringing together 18 of the UK's most promising high-growth tech companies and over 240 attendees, including major institutional investors such as Lloyds Banking Group, Aviva, and the London Stock Exchange Group. The showcase aimed to address the UK's scale-up funding gap by connecting innovative tech firms, spanning sectors from Fintech and Healthtech to Greentech and Spacetech, with the capital and networks needed to grow domestically rather than relocating abroad. The Lord Mayor emphasized the UK's wealth of talent and innovation, calling for stronger investment pathways to ensure that British businesses can start, scale, and thrive within the UK.