



# The Conservator

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The Newsletter of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators

## A Message from the Master

### Making a difference

We may be a relatively small modern Livery Company but we are very active socially and professionally; we have a major impact - on our profession, on government, on the City, and on the Livery movement.

As I write we are preparing a team of speakers for the delivery in the Mansion House of the Lord Mayor's Coffee Colloquy on the UN Sustainable Development Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) - the first Livery Company to organise one. At our Myddelton Lunch we will welcome students who produced the best dissertations at the universities we support, who have come from around the world to study here. We also welcome Dr Tony Juniper, Chair of English Nature, who has spent his career protecting the environment.

Coming up on 28 February is our next discussion dinner with Sir John Armitt, our contribution to the Lord Mayor's Knowledge Mile on the Thames Barrier is on 7 March, and our next City Water Debate in six months is on 21 March. We will be welcoming our honorary member and the 695th Lord Mayor of London, Michael Mainelli to our Election Court Lunch on 17 April.

Brunel and Banksy and lots of water will feature in the Master's Weekend in Bristol on 26 to 28 April. Plus there are many other activities to look forward to.

From July to December there were many events and highlights.

Watch out for The Worshipful Company of Water Conservators on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/clerk-water-conservators-livery-company-467999159>

Please follow my blog <https://masterwaterconservator23.blogspot.com/>



## Company

At our installation Court Lunch Dame Glenys Stacey OBE, Chair of the Office for Environment Protection (OEP), was our guest speaker. She spoke of the importance of the OEP to hold the government and regulators to account.

With the Wardens and Clerk we presented a jug of tap water to the Lord Mayor in the Mansion House, and had a fascinating Company visit to HMS Scott in Plymouth.



It was a great pleasure to welcome Sarah Mukherjee MBE, Chief Executive of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, as our guest and speaker for our Michaelmas Court Lunch. In October the Company again supported the Thames Fishery Research Experiment, started in 1967 to establish the environmental conditions of the Thames.

At our Annual Banquet in the Armourers' Hall Dame Fiona Woolf spoke to us about the contribution of the Livery to the City of London. We were entertained by the Strictly a Cappella singers with a selection of modern and not quite modern tunes as is fitting for a modern Livery company.



## City

The Company commitment to the City of London started at the Guildhall where at the Common Hall ceremony the Sheriffs, Bridge Masters and Ale Conners were elected for the coming year. In September I and fellow Masters celebrated the election of honorary Water Conservator, Michael Mainelli, as 695th Lord Mayor in the Guildhall. We are actively contributing to and participating in the Lord Mayor's theme for the year, Connect to Prosper.

The City highlight to date has been the remarkable banquet in the Mansion House with the King and Queen to mark the contribution of the civic institutions of the City of London to the Coronation (Master pictured below with the Livery Climate Action Group).



The Company highlight was probably our magnificent float in the Lord Mayor's Show, generating amazement and wonder (see section Below).

All the Livery turned out for the Garden of Remembrance service and then for the Remembrance Service and Commemoration of the Fallen, in St Paul's Cathedral.

I have had the pleasure of lunch at the Old Bailey with the judges learning about the judicial system, followed by an afternoon in court. Eileen and I have taken afternoon tea in the Guildhall in aid of the Red Cross, and enjoyed a banquet with the Royal Society of St George in the Mansion House. After many carol services and mince pies, the Christmas break was welcome.



## Lord Mayor's Show

As the new Lord Mayor is a member of our Company we had to put on a grand effort for the Lord Mayor's Show. It was amazing team work. Court Assistant Andy Williamson worked on the paperwork and design, while our Thames Warden Dylan Barker turned the idea of the magic tap into reality. Meanwhile Past Master Peter Hall worked hard and successfully secured generous sponsorship from Past Masters and Court Assistants. Liveryman Kevin Clancy contributed a vehicle and over many weeks the plans grew into the magnificent float. Our Clerk ensured that everyone was issued with (and encouraged to wear) the Company sweatshirt and cap, and on the day we were ready to go.

There was a great turn out from the public, older and younger, families and uniformed groups, waving and cheering us on. It was lovely to see the reactions on the faces of everyone we passed. How does the Magic Tap work? We brought pleasure to so many as well as raising awareness of water and environmental issues.



We had good television coverage of the float as we passed the Mansion House with the commentator observing that "talk about the relevance of the Livery, what could be more relevant than water conservation. The Company works to promote the long-term health of water resources and the broader environment".

## Social



We have social events on average once a month, including those aimed at our younger members. The year started with a tour of St Albans and its Cathedral. We watched the Swan-umping and later had an afternoon cruise on the Thames. In September we learnt about Sir Ernest Shackleton's Quest Crow's Nest and many Company members and friends seized the opportunity to exercise the privilege to drive sheep across the Thames.

The Company has had a tour of the Apothecaries' Hall and dined in Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese. We have explored the Mansion House and strong room as well as Westminster Abbey.



## Water Conservation Trust

On behalf of the Water Conservation Trust CIO I visited the fascinating Wilder Walthamstow exhibition by the School of Geography at Queen Mary, University of London. In September members of the Company turned out in force for the Walthamstow Wetlands sponsored walk and raised over £4,000 for the Trust (walkers pictured below). We have actively contributed to the cross-Livery Charity Chairs Group, the Livery Food Initiative and City Harvest, and I was honoured to join Birkbeck, University of London celebrate 200 years in the presence of the Princess Royal at the Mansion House.



For the academic year 2023-24 our Trust is supporting nine university postgraduate students enabling them to complete their Masters' degree courses and has awarded eleven dissertation prizes. In fifteen years we have supported more than 200 students and awarded around 90 dissertation prizes. The Trust is currently reviewing its student programme to ensure that it is giving the greatest benefit.

The Trust has continued to support water and environmental education in schools with further support to the London Museum of Water and Steam because the grant promotes the sector through educational pathways and focuses on local disadvantaged students.

The Trust has supported the NUS Student Eats programme for a number of years. This programme encourages students to design and carry out small projects which establish food growing schemes for students on campus. The best schemes engage with staff and local communities.

Following an inspection visit in 2023, the Trust has continued its support to River Holme Connections, whose mission is to make the River Holme catchment a better place for people and wildlife.

At the WCTCIO AGM, two new Trustees were appointed: Geoff Parker and Tom Flood. Two Trustees stood down - Mike Williamson and Roger Hewitt – as did Hon. Secretary Christine Duthie, who has been replaced by Dharmesh Joshi. Thanks to them for their service.

## City Water Debate

Around 100 senior figures from the water and environment sectors and Livery Companies contributed to the debate on 22 November 2023 on the financing of the water sector. We heard that massive private and public investment is needed in the sector to meet our environmental and water supply targets. All of us must work to reduce per capita water consumption from 145 to a projected 110 litres per day. There is some scope for more, less carbon-intensive 'nature based' solutions, centred on river catchment areas. There is a need to change the governance and regulation of the sector.



## Water

Our Cutter, Water Forget Me Not, and energised crew won the Port of London rowing race in July. In contrast, the Doggett's Coat and Badge Wager Coronation Row up the Thames was very leisurely. We escorted an atomic clock from Teddington to Greenwich and subsequently joined 300 crews from around the world for the exciting Great River Race from Greenwich to Twickenham with our winning team.



## Cross-Livery

We continue to be very active in the Livery Climate Action Group (see section below), Pollinating London Together, the Livery Pro-bono Group and the Livery Charity Chairs Group.



The year started with the Masters' and Consorts' tour of City Churches, then to Harrogate for the Brigantes Breakfast. I have learnt about recycling refuse trucks, Apache helicopters, Air Ambulances, Sussex, the Ironbridge Museum, the Guildhall School of Music, international search and rescue at Lloyds, international trade and regulation at the Mansion House, repairing horses' hooves, and the anointing screen sponsored by the Livery for the Coronation. Highlights have included the Worshipful Company of Musicians' Annual Evensong in St Paul's Cathedral and the Festival of St Cecilia at Westminster Cathedral.



Eileen and I had the honour and pleasure to represent the Company at several events to welcome and introduce the new Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress.

## Consultations

In the past two months, the Company has responded to six consultations. Topics covered included a ban on wet wipes containing plastic (DEFRA), modifying the licence condition relating to poor customer service by utilities (Ofwat), the role that regulators such as Ofwat play and how they function (House of Lords' Industry and Regulators Committee) and three by the Department of Business & Trade: the economic regulation of the water sector, and how the various regulatory and statutory bodies relate to each other; applying the growth duty to Ofwat; and the impact of the regulators on the water and environmental sectors.

While no new consultations are currently under way, we expect plenty to emerge in the next few months. We welcome all members with experience or expertise in areas covered in new consultations to share their thoughts with us. Our work is acknowledged by Ministers.

## Climate Action



In 2022 we were the first Livery Company to issue a Climate Action Plan. The Company has worked closely with Livery Climate Action Group on implementing our plan and Past Master Rob Casey recently completed the "Heart of the City" Climate Action Course recommended and funded by the City Corporation. The combined carbon footprint for both the Company and Trust (including investments) is small at around 40-45 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e per annum (equivalent to less than 3-4 average UK persons) and close to minimal levels without fundamentally changing the nature of company business. To offset our remaining footprint we are looking to fund the tree planting currently under way at River Holme Connections (pictured above, RHC is currently supported by our Trust), which will also lead to an improved river environment.



## Webinars

The Company has continued to deliver its programme of informative monthly webinars. In September Guy Ledger, Divisional Digital Director, Engineering Services, Atkins gave a presentation on the National Underground Asset Register project. In October Dr Adam Read, Chief External Affairs and Sustainability Officer, SUEZ Recycling & Recovery UK presented on "Sustainable Resource Management" which was followed by a talk in December by David Lloyd-Owen on "Water Privatisation". Our most recent webinar in January "Leading beyond the Ego" was presented by John Knights on the topic of future leadership skills.

## New Members

Over the last year we have been delighted to welcome 17 new Freemen and three returning Liverymen. Last April, Hans Jensen, Graeme Mahler, Geraldine McKinney, Suk Nyan Ng, Grzegorz Skowronek and Nicholas Wise joined as Freemen at the Election Court. In July, at the Installation Court, we welcomed new Freemen Adrian Barraclough, Martin Baxter, Graham Edwards, Christine McHugh, Lisa Navarro and Victoria Sayago. In September, at the Michaelmas Court, Matthew Clack joined as a new Freeman and Justin Harper, an existing Freeman, progressed to Liveryman. At the Christmas Court in December, we welcomed as new Freemen Terrence Jerrom, Gerald O'Shaughnessy and Richard Sawle (pictured below). Our new members come from a variety of backgrounds, disciplines and organisations across our sectors including environmental consultancy, law and water quality science.



We were delighted to welcome back the three former Liverymen, David Williams in November and Richard Cherry and Alex Simpson in January.

## Obituary

It is with regret that the Company must inform its members of the sad death of Keith Bury CBE. Keith was a prominent professional in the waste sector, a past president of CIWM, twice president of the European Waste Management Association FEAD and was awarded a CBE in 1993 for his services to the waste sector. Keith's funeral was held on 30th March 2023 at St Peter's Church, Harrop Road, Hale, Greater Manchester. Condolences go to his widow Jean, sons Simon and Christopher and their families.

## Looking forward

I look forward to our programme of activities for the next six months and beyond. The Water Conservators continue to welcome everyone to share our values and objectives, including promoting the art and science of water and environmental management, and a diverse and sustainable environment. We support our professions, standards, education and training through our actions and Trust.

Reflecting our values and commitment to sustainability, we are developing a policy on the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 and how they may be reflected in our activities, charitable Trust and in our personal and professional lives.

We are fortunate that as a modern Livery Company we are open to all ages, backgrounds, traditions and cultures. As a result, we are able to take a broad perspective in our debates, discussions and submissions, with a high level of commitment and confidence in our positions and conclusions. We share and enjoy each other's company and engagement in a wide range of visits, meetings, debates and meals together. We welcome increased diversity in our membership. I must express my great thanks to our Clerk and Wardens, members of the Court and the Company who have worked hard to make everything happen and ensure that we continue to enjoy doing it.

Professor Martin Bigg  
*Master Water Conservator*



## Comments from the Consort



Thank you for the opportunity to represent the Company at Livery events, both in the City and further afield.

Current, former and future Consorts are very supportive of each other and together represent a fount of knowledge about the City and its little-known traditions (for instance [Ale Conners](#), [Knollys Rose](#)). The current Consorts have a special bond as we share many activities; however, as the years of Livery companies run to different timetables, membership is constantly changing.

We all learn from each other about our Livery companies and history. The Water Conservators' Company was firmly put on the Consorts' map by Georgina Drummond who organised a mud-larking expedition. This proved to be so popular I plan to run it again this summer.

City Consorts have our own social programme, often comprising visits to Livery halls and other places of interest within the City. Occasionally visits can be further afield, for instance to the Royal Veterinary College in Potters Bar (courtesy of the then Consort to the Master of the Chartered Secretaries and Administrators who is a senior academic there), or to the magnificent gardens at [Theobalds Farmhouse](#) near Enfield, home of garden designer and Wax Chandler Alison Green.

With other current Consorts I was a guest of the Tallow Chandlers at a lunch in their magnificent

hall, where Consort Janie had prepared all the beautiful autumnal table decorations. (Some Companies have a budget for Consort events.) The Consort to the Master Fletcher organised a Ladies' Luncheon to which Consorts were also invited. We have had tutelage in both wine-tasting (Vintners) and cocktail mixing (Distillers), with the Basketmakers wove our own rush tablemats (actually quite tricky), and had a fascinating talk by Dame Kathryn McDowell, the Managing Director of the London Symphony (courtesy of the Arts Scholars).

An inspirational visit to the Royal Society for Blind Children's Life without Limits Centre, seeing all the amazing equipment available to help the visually impaired lead a full life, left us all wanting a talking microwave! A guided tour of the exquisite exhibition at the Guildhall Art Gallery on the Treasures of Gold and Silver Wyre Drawers was followed by afternoon tea with the Lady Mayoress. Museum trips have included the Brunel Museum in Rotherhithe, organised by the Consort to the Master Engineer, and an invitation from the Master Fan Maker to visit the delightful Fan Museum in Greenwich.

One of the charities supported by the Lady Mayoress helps families living in refuges. The Consorts readily responded when she organised a collection of Christmas presents to be taken to children in refuges, which were delivered by the Hackney Carriage Drivers.

Opportunities for further charitable fundraising expected shortly are a sponsored abseil, wing-walk and sleepout. I will have to think about these!



## Future Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location / topic</b>
25 January 2024	Myddelton Service	All Hallows by the Tower
25 January 2024	Myddelton Lunch	Trinity House
11 February 2024	Tower Bridge Visit	Tower Bridge
13 February 2024	Pancake Race	Guildhall Yard
15 February 2024	Webinar: Tom Spencer	Moorland Restoration & Natural Flood Management
28 February 2024	Discussion Dinner	Speaker Sir John Armitt
7 March 2024	Webinar: Professor Carolyn Roberts	Thames Barrier
12 March 2024	Webinar: Helen Orton, Aguila	Commercial Models for Major Projects in the UK Water Sector
15 March	United Guilds' Service	St. Paul's
21 March 2024	City Water Debate	Bakers' Hall
15 April 2024	Associates Webinar: Alex Money	Making water work for you
17 April 2024	Election Court Lunch	Butchers' Hall
18 April 2024	Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch	Guildhall
26-28 April 2024	Master's Weekend	Bristol
19 May 2024	Tudor Pull	The Thames
22 May 2024	Associates Webinar: Kathryn Pharr	Women in the water sector and the Community of Women in Water
18 June 2024	Admiral of the Port Challenge	The Thames
3 July 2024	Installation Court & Lunch	Apothecaries' Hall

