



The Conservator

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The Newsletter of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators

A Message from the Master



I would like to start this message by thanking everyone (and in particular my wife and consort Sharon pictured above) for their support over the last successful 6 months for the Company. I would also like to thank our Clerk, Wardens and Deputy Master for their help, advice and support. Together we have continued to grow our membership and our relevance in water and environmental matters both within and outside the City. It has been a particularly busy schedule with numerous Livery, Company and social events with key highlights captured later in this update.



In September at our Michaelmas Court Meeting the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators and the Society for the Environment, signed a concordat to work together (pictured above). Both organisations are proud

to have members with a passion for the environment.



In October I was delighted to welcome John Gummer (Lord Deben) to a specially convened meeting of the Company Court at the Oxford and Cambridge Club in London, at which he was formally elected as a member of the Company. John Gummer was previously the MP for the Suffolk Coastal constituency, Chair of the Conservative Party and held various government posts, especially Secretary of State for the Environment. As Chair of the Climate Change Committee, he consistently evaluated and challenged the Government and business on the UK's progress towards net zero.



In November I was also delighted to welcome Barbara Young, Baroness Young of Old Scone, as an Honorary Member of our Company at a specially convened Court meeting at the Pewterers' Hall prior to the Annual Banquet. Barbara Young has a distinguished record in the environment sector including holding

Chief Executive or Chair roles in the Environment Agency, English Nature, the RSPB and until recently the Woodland Trust. She is currently Vice President of RSPB. Both Baroness Young and Lord Deben are great assets to our Company and we are so pleased that they have joined us.

Then in December it was a great pleasure to be one of the Company members who visited the Large Hadron Collider at CERN. I am extremely grateful to our Liveryman Grzegorz Skowronek, who was able to arrange this very special tour for us during a period when the accelerator was shut down for maintenance.

We are fortunate to have individuals from various backgrounds and professions who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to our company. Our collective expertise enables us to tackle complex challenges and find sustainable solutions. It is crucial for us to share our passion for water conservation. Our collective voice and actions can have a transformative impact on the future of water management. By expanding our membership base, we can strengthen our advocacy, increase our outreach, and create a platform for knowledge exchange and collaboration.

I encourage every member to reach out to colleagues, friends, and acquaintances who have an interest in water and the environment. Invite them to one of our lunches, debates, lectures or even one of our many social events and share with them the value proposition of joining our company - the opportunity to contribute.

Dylan Barker
Master Water Conservator



Company Events

Company Lunches/Banquet

We were honoured to welcome a variety of prominent guest speakers at our recent Company lunches including Claire Pillman, Chief Executive, Natural Resource Wales at our Installation Lunch, Dougal Driver, Chair, Society for the Environment and Founder and CEO of Grown in Britain at our Michaelmas Lunch, and Professor Sir Brian John Hoskins CBE FRS, dynamical meteorologist and climatologist based at Imperial College London and the University of Reading, at our Myddelton Lunch.



Lord Chris Smith (pictured above) was our speaker at the Annual Banquet on 6th November where he highlighted the future water resource challenge facing SE England, particularly the restoration of flow in chalk streams, a key issue in his role as chair of Cambridge Water Company.

City Environmental Debate

On the 1st of October the WCWC held its first City Environment Debate. The topic was 'Accelerating the transition to a Circular Ecology' focusing on material resources. The debate was held under Chatham House Rules. The opening slide showed that for the whole world to live as the average of the top twenty developed nations requires the material resources of 3.6 planets. Seven excellent speakers from different branches of the material resources sector presented. An excellent debate followed, and several key themes were identified.

Discussion Dinner

Members of the Company and guests held a dinner, under the Chatham House Rules, at the Oxford and

Cambridge Club in Pall Mall, London on the 14th of October. Our principal guest was Alan Lovell, Chair of the Environment Agency since September 2022. Over dinner we heard a clear and powerful message about the work of the Agency and the challenges it faces. This was followed by wide ranging questions and answers.

Livery Events

As always, the Company has participated in wide range of Livery events over the last 7 months, including the Ceremony of the Jug at Mansion House, the Port of London Rowing Challenge, the City of London Thames Fishery Research Experiment, Common Hall Election of the Lord Mayor, and the Service of Remembrance to name just a few. Further details on all these events and others are available on the Company website under News.



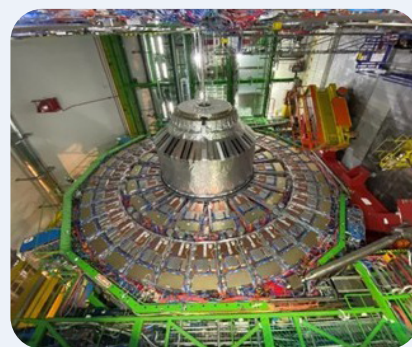
Of course, the highlight is always the Lord Mayors Show, attended in November by the Master, Deputy Master and their consorts (pictured above) who marched along with other modern Livery companies to welcome Alderman Alastair King DL as the 696th Lord Mayor of the City of London.

Social Events

In September Court Assistant Nigel Mattravers very kindly made arrangements for members to visit a Somerset Willow Factory. Members were given a guided tour of the factory, where they were able to see the willow being prepared, baskets being made and also learn about the history of the trade. Then later in September members were invited to join a river cruise to learn about the construction of the Thames Tideway Tunnel and new areas of riverside public spaces are taking shape along the River Thames.

The £4.5 billion Thames Tideway Tunnel has upgraded London's Victorian sewer system, helping it to cope with the capital's growing population, tackling sewage pollution and making the city more resilient. This tour was a fantastic opportunity to learn about the Thames Tideway Tunnel project and see those new public spaces from the unique aspect of the river.

Finally, Liveryman Grzegorz Skowronek who works for the European Council for Nuclear Research offered to arrange a visit to CERN in December for members of the Company and friends when the accelerator was shut down for maintenance and the site was quiet. It was a once in a lifetime opportunity. The highlight of our visit was to the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) which is the world's largest and most powerful particle accelerator.



Our visit also included an inspection of the water facilities as Grzegorz has responsibility for the water which is critical to the operation of the site including the provision of exceptionally pure water, water storage, and the treatment and disposal of wastewater.

Government Consultations

In August after almost three years of activity in making submissions to consultations and producing think pieces we produced an overview document to help in the understanding of key issues and where the company stands. Also in our response to the Ofwat consultations on water efficiency the Company advocated a review of water consumption tariffs. In September we responded to proposed changes to the Planning Framework by the Ministry of Housing, Communities And Government (MHCIG).

Then in December the Company

responded to the Defra consultation on a review of the 2013 Bathing Water Regulations, and over the Christmas holiday we prepared two submissions for the government: one on draft guidance for stormwater overflows and another on a working paper about development and nature recovery. Our submissions reinforce the case for an overarching Strategy for River Management, especially as we await consultations from the Water Commission on the future of the water utility sector. The briefings and all the above submissions are archived on our website under the "Policy Position" section ([Policies and Practices – The Worshipful Company of Water Conservators](#)).



Then finally at the Christmas Court the Company admitted John Hirst and James Lodge as Liverymen and Fiona Daly, Sally Hayns, Neil McAndrew, Rebecca Pow, and Inge Relph as Freeman (pictured above). Lord Deben and Baroness Young were admitted as Honorary Freeman at special Court meetings.

Webinars

We have continued our successful monthly webinar series and topics this autumn and winter included highlighting the key issue of pollution from Highway Runoff, restoring nature in the UK's National Parks, reversing the Water Cycle and finally a presentation on the issue of agricultural runoff from land to rivers. We offer our sincere thanks to all our speakers who gave up their time to prepare and present these webinars helping highlight these key issues. We also staged a special webinar for our associate members on the topic of career options in water. If you missed any of these presentations, recordings of our past webinars are available on our website via this link:

[Past webinars – The Worshipful Company of Water Conservators](#)

New Members

The Company extends a warm welcome to the record number of new members that have joined us so far this year, individuals from various backgrounds and professions who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to our company. At the Installation Court the Company welcomed Liam Hogg, Lee Morton and Gerald O'Shaughnessy as new Liverymen, and Martin Ballard, Avtar Jirh, Tom Morton, Michael Nates, Lina Nieto, Elizabeth Price, Mark Smith, John Ward, Judy West and John Wylie as new Freeman of the Company. At the Michaelmas Court we were joined by Hans Jensen as a Liverymen of the Company along with Chris Baines, Andrew Burton, Jonathan Fisher, Kathryn Pharr, Ivy Tang, Bharadwaj Vangipuram and Phil Williams as Freeman of the Company.

Awards

We are pleased to announce that Liz Price, Professor of Environmental Education and Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor Sustainability at Manchester Metropolitan University, was awarded an MBE in the King's birthday honours, 2024, for her contribution to sustainability education. She was presented with the award by the King at Windsor Castle on 10th December 2024. This award recognises Liz's pivotal role in driving sustainability across education, research, and partnerships at the University. For further details including Liz's biography see the News section of the website.

As part of the bursary programme to support MSc students the Trust was pleased to announce the student winners of The Water Conservators' Dissertation Prize. Fifteen prizes were awarded, for each of the universities supported by the Trust.

Eight prize winners attended the Myddelton Lunch of the Company in January to receive their prize and certificate from the Master. All prize winners will be invited to become an Associate of the Company. Further details on the winners and their dissertations are available on the website via the following link [Congratulations to our Dissertation Prize Winners – The Worshipful Company of Water Conservators](#)



Schools Programme

Our schools programme aims to enhance learning in water related science and the environment in schools, particularly those with high levels of disadvantaged children.

To facilitate this the Trust funds educational visits to Spitalfields City

Obituaries

It is with deep regret that the Company has been informed of the sad death of Tony Williams who was a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators. Tony joined the Company in April 2019. Our condolences go out to his widow Anna and family.

Charity Update

The Water Conservation Trust is the charitable arm of the Water Conservators, supporting education, learning and research in water, waste and the environment. Current activities (recent highlights below) include a University and Schools programme along with support to youth groups such as the Maidstone Sea Cadets.



Farm near Whitechapel and the London Museum of Water and Steam (LMWS) at Kew Bridge. The Trust received the following note of thanks from Green Dragon Lane Primary School regarding a visit in January to LMWS – "The children (pictured above) loved their trip to the Water and Steam Museum. They enjoyed learning about the water cycle, hearing

University Programme



all about how the engines worked and exploring the garden. Many thanks to the family members and staff who accompanied us. We are also grateful to the Water Conservation Trust for a bursary which meant this trip was free for our children". To date over 400 children have benefited from our educational visits.

An important function of the new Quentin Blake Centre of Illustration in Islington (pictured below) will be for children to learn about the history and development of water technology utilising the power of illustration. The Water Conservation Trust has agreed to fund the development of a pilot course which will then facilitate the development of a major learning programme with schools, aimed at engaging with 6,800 pupils and 740 teachers to 2027.



Other Trust activities include supporting River Holme Connections to deliver environmental education and riverfly monitoring with local schools (pictured below), the development of a wildlife area and pond at Cranborne School, and the development of a horticultural area at Northese Manor School. Northese Manor is a special educational needs school based near Lewes, where the students are neurodiverse, most of whom have diagnoses of autism/ADHD.



Click on the following link if you would like to learn more about the amazing work of the Trust - [All our news – The Worshipful Company of Water Conservators](#)

Charitable activities are an important function of all Livery Companies, and charitable giving is an important part of Livery Company membership. Our Water Conservation Trust is largely funded by our members through a process of regular giving. If you would like to join many of our members who regularly contribute to the Trust please contact the Treasurer Peter Hall (peterbhall@hotmail.com) for the relevant forms.

Future Events (see website for details)

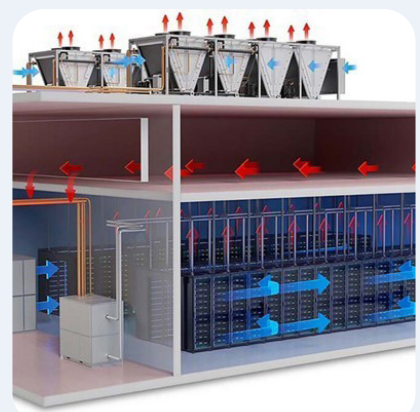
4 March 2025 – Livery Pancake Race, Guildhall
 5 March 2025 – Associates Webinar on Career Development
 19 March 2025 – City Water Debate, Bakers' Hall
 26 March 2025 – Webinar on Data Centres and Water Use
 28 March 2025 – United Guilds Service, St Pauls
 15 April 2025 – Election Court Lunch
 23 April 2025 Webinar – Leadership Lessons From The Ice
 12 May 2025 - Associates Webinar on Leadership
 20 May 2025 – Discussion Dinner, Oxford and Cambridge Club
 2 July – Installation Court Lunch

March Associates Webinar

Our next Associates Webinar will be on Wednesday 5 March 2025 at 6:00 PM. Professor Carolyn Roberts, Water Resource Management and Science Communication Specialist, and Kathryn Pharr, Founder, Community of Women in Water will be focussing on Career development. Registration details will be on the website shortly.

March WCWC Webinar

Tom Cheesbrough, Manager, Design Integration EMEA, Vantage Data Centers will be presenting our the WCWC March webinar on Wednesday 26th March 2025 6.00pm to 7.15pm titled "Data centres, cloud computing and the rise of generative AI: what are the implications for water sustainability?". This webinar will examine the rapid growth of the data centre sector exploring the purposes of data centres, their construction and operation and their environmental impact. Data centres in Europe and the US are significant consumers of



water, primarily for cooling purposes, and as the demand for data processing continues to grow, so too does the emphasis on sustainable practices, including water management in data centres. Click on the following link to register for the webinar <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1249551765969?aff=oddtcreator>

April WCWC Webinar

Sue Stockdale, FRSGS, first British woman to ski to the magnetic North Pole will be presenting our the WCWC April webinar on Wednesday 23rd April 2025 6.00pm to 7.15pm titled "Leadership Lessons from the Ice"



This webinar explores the highs and lows of a team's attempt to ski across the Greenland Ice Cap, uncovering powerful leadership lessons forged in extreme conditions. Through real-life stories of resilience, teamwork, and decision-making, Sue will examine how leaders recognise and leverage strengths, act as coaches to unlock potential, and balance strategic vision with operational execution. Details to register will be circulated soon.

