



The Conservator

Promoting a diverse and sustainable environment

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The Newsletter of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators

A Message from the Master



I am most grateful to my colleagues for giving me this opportunity to be Master of the Water Conservators Livery Company. Water conservation has never been more important, and it's regularly mentioned in our news updates. As a company we are committed to safeguarding water supplies and to wise stewardship of the wider environment. Our strapline is 'Promoting a diverse and sustainable environment', for all!

We promote good practice in water treatment, the prevention of pollution, the improvement of water courses, and high standards in waste management and reuse. We question opinions with debates, webinars and influential policy briefings. Today we are a recognized information resource for Government, the City of London and the general public.

Our charity the Water Conservation Trust, supported by donations from company members, allows us to work with young minds in schools and universities to help enhance water science and to promote innovative approaches to environmental management. Living in Islington I recently visited the Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration. I was able to hear how funding from our charity was allowing them to run a series of workshops for local schools to

learn the value of illustration for a child. It was also uplifting to see what was an abandoned water plant restored for the community to benefit and enjoy.

Throughout the year our members come together not only to share experiences and knowledge but also to meet with like-minded professionals at convivial events in some of the grandest buildings in the City of London.

My own professional career was in environmental conservation, as the CEO of the Conservation Volunteers. I saw first-hand how engaging with nature, particularly as part of a team supports better mental health alongside the environmental improvements. In June I launched Green Futures - Living in Harmony with nature. It will provide opportunities across the UK; it has a particular focus in Dorset supported by the Paul Cornes Fund managed by the Dorset Community Foundation. The fund will allow many young people to take part in water and environmental projects where they live. I'm delighted that the Water Conservation Trust is working with the London Wildlife Trust. Our funds supported by Linklaters will help to deliver their 4-month Green Apprenticeship scheme.

As Master I am supported by my Wardens, Alex, David and Neil, together we will continue to invest to ensure the company is run efficiently. We will deliver our events, webinars and discussion pieces for maximum societal impact and we will seek to actively engage with the business community and their employees.

My key objectives for my year as Master are - Continue to increase the number of company members and help to support younger people to join and widen the diversity of our membership.

It's an expectation of Company members to donate to the Charity. As a Trustee of the Water Conservation Trust I will

actively promote and communicate its outstanding outcomes.

Our Associates program enables many young people working in water management to be part of our company at an affordable cost. We require financial support to enable them to attend our company events, be introduced to senior professionals and to get personal support and advice to help to enhance their career prospects.

I am most grateful to Linklaters and MHA who both supported the Installation Lunch. I will be reaching out to business to increase their engagement and support during this year.

I would now like to thank the outgoing Master Professor Carolyn Roberts, and her consort Stephen for the legacy she leaves. I'm very grateful that I'll have her ongoing support in the recruitment of new members.

As I'm still relatively new to the Water Conservators and the wider Livery community, I'm very helpfully supported by the past Masters, company members and the Trustees of the Water Conservation Trust.

I and my sister Catherine O'Sullivan, my consort, are greatly looking forward to an exciting and enjoyable year.

If you're reading this and are not a member, please visit our website (waterconservators.org) or send me a message and I'll be pleased to have a conversation about the many benefits of joining the Water Conservators Livery Company. Foremost it's a fellowship of individuals who share a vision for a diverse and sustainable environment for all, and its most enjoyable.

My thanks,
Tom Flood CBE
Master
Contact - tomnflood@gmail.com



Our Wardens 2024-2025



Thames Warden

Alex Money is the Founder and CEO of Watermarq, an early-stage firm working on new approaches to valuing water through the application of shadow pricing. He is concurrently a senior academic (part time) at the University of Oxford, where he works

on water, finance, entrepreneurship and sustainable development. He is a principal investigator for Climate Compatible Growth, a £100m research programme funded by FCDO.

In January 2025 Alex was appointed as the first Founder in Residence at the Oxford Smith School, where he works with students and staff to support for-purpose entrepreneurship. He also teaches on various undergraduate, postgraduate and executive education courses within the department, and supervises a small number of doctoral students.

Formerly an emerging markets fund manager at Citi, Alex has around

30 years of experience in finance, enterprise and academia. His other external appointments include Chief Investment Advisor to the Africa Water Investment Programme, and Member of the Global Water Partnership's Technical Committee.

Alex holds a master's degree with distinction in water science, policy and management, and a doctorate in water risk; both from the University of Oxford. He is an author of papers that have been published in peer-reviewed journals including Science and Nature.

He joined the Water Conservators in 2010 and has been a Court Assistant since 2023.



Fleet Warden

Dr David Lloyd Owen, CEnv (FCIWEM, MCIEEM), CGeog (FRGS). After a Doctorate in Applied Ecology at Oxford, I ended up in the 'City' as a technology and mobile communications analyst in 1986. An astute move with smart water in mind. In 1989, I became a

water and waste management analyst. Two years later I co-founded an environmental finance boutique which over time introduced me to my true vocation, consulting about the water sector, which has kept me busy for the past thirty years, ending up with my founding Envisager.

In 1999, Polly and I moved to west Wales, where our children grew up. Looking back, I am something of a pioneer of working from home. Since 2000, I have advised the Pictet Water Fund, the first and largest dedicated water equity fund. I also write for Global Water Intelligence and the UK Water Report and have written (amongst others) three books on water management, technology and finance.

I was Mayor of Cardigan in 2003-04 and am a director of local cultural and publishing initiatives.

The countryside, reading, music, cooking and good wine occupy my free time along with an endless desire to write more books, especially exploring the challenges our water services are faced with. My particular interests with the Company are developing its policy work (coordinating the Company's responses to various consultations from Governmental and other bodies), informing members about emerging areas of concern and supporting debates and discussions.



Walbrook Warden

Neil Reynolds BSc (Hons), CEng, FICE, CEnv, CMgr CCMI is a Chartered Civil Engineer, business leader, and board adviser with more than 40 years' experience delivering major infrastructure, water, energy, transportation, and high-technology projects across the globe.

Beginning his career on construction sites before progressing to international executive leadership, Neil has led businesses employing up to 2,500 people and held senior leadership roles with global engineering and construction organisations, including CH2M (now Jacobs), where he led the International Water Business. His experience spans project delivery, business transformation, governance, strategic growth, and organisational leadership.

Today, Neil maintains a portfolio of advisory and non-executive roles across infrastructure, water, energy, transportation, aquaculture, and technology sectors. He provides strategic advice on governance, growth, investment, and leadership to organisations in both the public and

private sectors.

A passionate advocate for engineering, leadership, and public service, Neil is Chair of the Chartered Management Institute Wales and Immediate Past Chair of the Institution of Civil Engineers Cymru Wales. He is a Freeman of the City of London and a Liveryman and Court Assistant of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators.

Neil is guided by a strong belief that infrastructure - and particularly water - underpins the health, prosperity, and resilience of communities. Outside work, he supports STEM education, environmental stewardship, and has raised more than £55,000 for cancer charities through endurance cycling challenges.



Reflections on my year as Master 2024-25



Climate change is increasingly being experienced through water. Whether in the form of floods, droughts, shifting rainfall patterns or prolonged heatwaves, the impacts of a warming climate are fundamentally altering the way water is managed, stored and valued. The challenge for our Company is therefore not only environmental but also social, economic and strategic. Water and all the associated elements of environmental management lie at the heart of climate resilience.

I have completed my year as Master in the third peak of a heatwave the like of which has not previously been experienced in the normally-temperate UK. As our Court sweated in their gowns in formal City events, the number of heat-related deaths in the UK rose by an estimated 2,700, with half of those attributable to human-induced climate change. We can expect more of the same too. The latest scientific assessments show that further warming will bring more frequent and severe heatwaves, with significant consequences for communities, infrastructure and ecosystems.

Heatwaves place immense pressure on water resources. During periods of extreme heat, demand for water rises sharply as households, agriculture, industry and public services all require greater supplies. At the same time, rivers, reservoirs and groundwater

systems are often under strain because evaporation rates increase and rainfall may be reduced. The combination of higher demand and lower availability creates a perfect storm for water managers.



The effects extend beyond water quantity. Water quality can also deteriorate during prolonged hot weather. Higher temperatures can encourage algal blooms, reduce dissolved oxygen levels in rivers and lakes, and place aquatic ecosystems under severe stress. These ecological impacts affect biodiversity, fisheries and the wider health of freshwater environments. They damage the ability of rivers to dilute our wastes and render pollutants more toxic. Heatwaves therefore challenge not only the supply of water but also the integrity of the natural systems upon which our supplies depend. The challenge is compounded by population growth, urban development and competing demands for limited water resources, as our debates and discussions have often pointed out.

Against this backdrop, the role of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators has never been more important. The Company's commitment to advancing knowledge, professional excellence and sustainable water management aligns directly with the requirements of a changing climate. Effective conservation is no longer simply a matter of protecting water resources; it is about safeguarding societal resilience.

Adaptation must focus on several key areas. First, greater investment in water efficiency can help reduce

demand during periods of stress. Second, improved storage and catchment management can increase resilience against both drought and flood conditions. Third, nature-based solutions, including wetland restoration and improved river management, can enhance ecosystem health while supporting water security. Finally, innovation in monitoring, forecasting and infrastructure design will be essential as climate risks continue to evolve.

The challenge, however, is not solely technical. Public understanding and behavioural change are equally important. Water has often been regarded as an abundant resource in many parts of the world, yet climate change reminds us that reliability can no longer be taken for granted. Building a stronger culture of stewardship, where water is recognised as a precious and finite resource, will be critical in the decades ahead.

Climate change and heatwaves present profound challenges, but they also provide an opportunity for leadership. By combining scientific understanding, practical expertise and long-term vision, the water and environment sector can help communities adapt to a more uncertain future. In doing so, Water Conservators will continue their vital role as custodians of one of society's most essential resources: water itself. I hope to assist with this over the forthcoming years, by promoting our continued growth and influence as a Livery Company, in the City and beyond. I thank all of those Company friends and colleagues who have supported me with their fellowship and advice over the last twelve months and wish my successors every success with their endeavours.

Professor Carolyn Roberts
Deputy Master



Recent Company Events

This year's City Water Debate was held at Bakers Hall in March and addressed the issue of how to meet the predicted shortfall in the public water supply of 5 billion litres per day by 2055. The principal speakers were Alan Lovell, chair of the Environment Agency; Ruth Jefferson, chief executive of Wessex Water; Bukky Bird, group sustainability director at housebuilders Barratt Redrow; Paul Leinster, chair of Water Resources East; and Nicci Russell, chief executive of the water efficiency and conservation organization Waterwise (all pictured below).



The debate addressed the question of meeting the shortfall, which is a consequence of factors including climate change, population and economic growth, with a discussion on how to achieve demand management measures and the infrastructure investment required. The debate attracted a record number of attendees and was held under the Chatham House rule. Click on the following link for a summary of the discussion - [Water in the UK – Too Much Demand, Too Little Supply](#)



This was followed by the Master's Weekend held at Stratford-upon-

Avon in April where approximately forty members of the Company and friends enjoyed a full immersion into all things Shakespeare, including a visit to Shakespeare's school room and the neighbouring Guild Chapel, a theatre performance of Henry V, then boarding a boat for a dinner cruise on the River Avon (see above).

Our Election Court Lunch in April was held at the Watermen's Hall. Guest speaker Dr Stephanie Wray of RSK Nature Repair told those attending that for too long businesses have treated the environmental impacts of what they do as a side effect. Instead, they should be putting the environment at the centre of their thinking and planning.



In May Walbrook Warden Alan Barton hosted a conservation on sustainability at Arup's Offices between Dame Polly Courtice, founder of the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, and Peter Simpson, former Chief Executive of Anglian Water (pictured above), where they discussed the development of politics, policy, economics and corporate attitudes to sustainability over the last thirty years. For further details click on the following link - [A Conversation about Sustainability](#).

Guest speaker for our Installation Court Lunch at the Ironmonger's Hall in July was Baroness Barbara Young (pictured above right), an Honorary Member of the Company. Her speech focussed on how we stop the



accelerating decline of our rivers. She stressed that pollution sources are not just from sewage discharges but also from the built environment, farming and roads, but we demand higher quality for bathing etc. We have not had a political debate on public priorities.



New Members

The Company extends a warm welcome to all the 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. In addition to those listed in the January issue of the Conservator, the Company welcomed Andrew Moore, Steve Thompsett, and Sarah Hendry as Freeman of the Company and Brian Back as a Liveryman of the Company at a special Court meeting at the Bakers' Hall before the City Water Debate. At our Election Court meeting the Master admitted Eileen Bigg as a Liveryman and Stanley Root as a Freeman. Then at the Installation Court we were joined by Chris Clarke, John Curtin, Rupert Douglas-Bate, Sarah Heardman, Jeannette Henderson, Richard Laikin, Richard Lancaster, Sarah McMath, Hannah Muirhead, Tim Munday, Chris Newsome, Steve Sanson, Sandra Sassow, and Stephanie Wray as Freeman (all pictured below) along with Andrew Hine and Tim Weller as Liverymen. Rodney Amster was admitted as a new Court Assistant.

Government Consultations

The Company records it's most grateful thanks to Past Master Peter Matthews who formed and has guided our team that responds to government consultations. The Company continues to respond fully to consultations led by Fleet Warden David Lloyd-Owen with a thank you to all those who contribute. Recent responses have included those on the use of sewage sludge in agriculture to both Defra and the Welsh government, the HSE consultation on restrictions of PFAS in firefighting foams and the Defra 2026 PFAS action plan, and a response to the Welsh government consultative green paper on shaping the future of water governance in Wales. Click on the following link for further details of all our consultation responses - <https://waterconservators.org/consultation-responses/>

Webinars

The Company has continued its successful programme of monthly webinars in 2026. In April Kate Spencer, Professor of Environmental Geochemistry at Queen Mary University, London presented "Climate-pollution risks associated with the UK's legacy landfills", highlighting there are over 20000 legacy landfill sites in the UK which predate the regulatory requirements and engineering design to protect surrounding environments and

people from the wastes they contain. These are now at risk from climate-related hazards including flooding, rising groundwater, increased precipitation, sea level rise and coastal erosion resulting in the release of pollutants.

In May Deborah Feldhaus, Head of Water Resources and Regional Planning at Yorkshire Water gave us a fascinating talk on 'Water for growth, water for nature, water for a resilient future' in which she presented the background to strategic water resources planning and the size of the challenge we face nationally in the context of the second refreshed National Water Resources Framework launched in July 2025 by Defra.

Finally in June, Walbrook Warden Alan Barton continued his series of webinars on sustainability with a talk on "Treasuring our home (planet Earth)", a cross between a wakeup call, and a thought leader leadership piece towards living in harmony with our planet.

The Company also hosted two successful Associates Webinars. In February our current Fleet Warden David Lloyd-Owen, one of the UK's leading authorities on global water systems, and Carrie Park, an Associate of the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators, presented "Career choices in the water sector and Sustainable Development Goal 6 targets in the UK". Then in April Adam Donnan, Chief Executive Officer of the Institution of

Environmental Sciences presented a webinar titled "Navigating the Future of the Environmental Profession". If you missed any of these webinars, most are recorded subject to the presenter's permission and are available to view on our website via the following link - <https://waterconservators.org/events/past-webinars/>

Climate Action

Our thanks go to members for their generous support of our Crowdfunder fund raising page for our annual Carbon Compensation Scheme with River Holme Connections. This is part of our commitment to meet the City Corporation's target for Livery Companies to achieve "Net Zero" by 2040 but also helps RHC to improve the river environment in the River Holme catchment (pictured below). The scheme agreed by the Court involves raising funds to plant trees in the River Holme catchment to compensate for our remaining Company and Trust carbon footprint. We successfully achieved our target ensuring we remain as one of the leading Livery Companies in implementing our Climate Action Plan.



'Water for growth, water for nature, water for a resilient future'



Water Conservation Trust

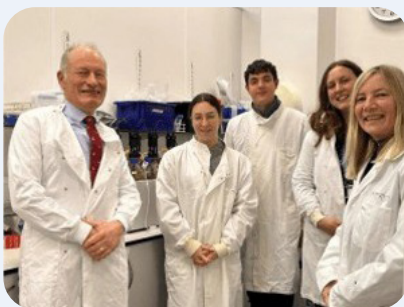
The Water Conservation Trust is the charitable arm of the Water Conservators Company, supporting education, learning and research in water, waste and the environment. Current activities include University



and Schools programmes along with support to youth groups such as Maidstone Sea Cadets. Charitable giving is a core purpose of the Livery, and our members give generously to support the Trust that currently distributes around £70k per year. If you would like to join many of our members who regularly contribute to the Trust please click on the following link : [Charity Update](#) or contact the Treasurer Peter Hall (peterbhall@hotmail.com) for the relevant form.

Universities Programme

We offer financial help to MSC students who might not otherwise be able to participate in courses and undertake a wide range of water and environmental research: subjects include micro plastics, flood risk management, fracking and monsoons. We offer prizes and certificates at our Myddelton Lunch for the best dissertation at each supported University. We also mentor graduates and provide careers guidance. We have supported more than 210 students and awarded over 110 dissertation prizes. The Trust is providing £30k in funding to provide bursaries for students at 6 universities for 2025/26.



Schools Programme

the last 10 years the Trust has supported projects at many schools to enhance water related science and environmental learning including installing and renovating school ponds, equipping a STEM laboratory, installing weather stations, restoring school wildlife areas, supplying river education packs and supporting disabled

children with craft and learning facilities. We focus our funding on schools with a high percentage of disadvantaged children.



Our 2025/26 programme with current project funding in brackets includes:-

- Mayfly in the classroom sessions and YII Student for River Holme Connections (£5K/ann)
- Educational visits and Steam Explorers at the Museum of Water and Steam (£4k + £2.9k)
- Educational visits to Spitalfields City Farm (£4k)
- The schools educational programme at the new Quentin Blake Centre (£6.2k)
- Ysgol Y Gogarth School to support children with craft-based projects (£1k/ann)
- Developing growing and green spaces with rainwater harvesting at Winton School (£12.2k)
- Renovation of a horticultural area and greenhouse at Northease Manor School (£1.3k + £5k)
- Awarding pupil prizes to schools for projects associated with science and environmental learning.

Green Futures

At the May 2026 Trust meeting our current Master Tom Flood presented to the Trustees the aims of Green Futures for young people, introducing them to outdoor green environments, and requested that Trustees consider contributing to this programme. Trustees agreed to work with partners on agreed co-funded projects with a water or

environmental related background, allocating in the first instance £5-10,000 for appropriate projects.

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

Future Events (see website for details)

WCWC Functions:

Wednesday, 23 September 2026: Michaelmas Court & Lunch, venue TBC.

Tuesday, 6 October 2026: City Environmental Debate, Arup, London.

Thursday 5 November 2026: WCWC Annual Banquet, venue TBC

Wednesday 2 December 2026: James Lodge Memorial Lecture, Linklaters HQ London.

Thursday 10 December 2026: Christmas Court, Lunch & Carol Service.

Friday 29 January 2027: Myddelton Church Service & Lunch, Trinity House

Thursday 15 April 2027: Election Court & Lunch, venue TBC

Thursday 1 July: Installation Court & Lunch, venue TBC

Livery and Social:

Thursday 23 July 2026: Port of London Authority PLA Rowing Challenge, River Thames.

Sunday, 27 September 2026: WC of Woolmens' Sheep Drive, a London Bridge.

Monday 28 September 2026: Admission of Sheriffs, Guildhall.

Tuesday 29 September 2026: Common Hall for Election of the Lord Mayor, Guildhall.

Friday 13 November 2026: Silent Ceremony Admission of Lord Mayor, Guildhall.

Saturday, 14 November 2026: Lord Mayor's Show, City of London.

Friday 12 March 2027: United Guilds Service, St Paul's Cathedral.

