



## **FAREWELL BULLETIN FROM THE RT HON THE LORD MAYOR**

**7 November 2024**

As the baton prepares to pass from the 695<sup>th</sup> to the 696<sup>th</sup> Lord Mayor at the end of this week, I wanted to share with you some thoughts and reflections on the past year.

### **Connect to Prosper**

The 'Connect To Prosper' theme set out to celebrate the many Knowledge Miles of our Square Mile, the world's coffee house – a place that brings together people from around the world to seek solutions to global problems ranging from AI to zoological conservation.

You may have heard me speak of the 40 learned societies, 70 universities, and 130 research institutes within two miles of Guildhall that we have connected with over the course of this year.

Many of you will have joined us at one of the series of seven experiments:

- Time dilation at 22 Bishopsgate with the National Physical Laboratory;
- The measurement of oceanic microplastic levels while circumnavigating the UK with Wetwheels;
- Pollinator counts with Pollinating London Together;

- ‘Measuring the Monument’ to solve the 350-year mystery behind the vibrations that thwarted its secondary use as a giant telescope;
- The use of thermochromatic paint on the Mansion House roof with CDSM;
- The City Nature Challenge, recording biodiversity across three City gardens; and
- The Lord Mayor’s Sustainability and Biodiversity Conference hosted at Mansion House, and the Thames Seagrass Restoration project.

Well over 100,000 people (comfortably more than it takes to fill Wembley Stadium) have been involved in our 106 Knowledge Mile lectures; with thousands more attending our 25 Coffee Colloquies to discuss how to make further progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Running through the Connect to Prosper theme, the pillars of Commerce, Community, and Charity have bound together much of the activity that has taken place over the year.

I have been privileged to travel the world over 100 days to 25 countries. Along with our major trading partners, these trips have ranged from new partners in ASEAN to nine trips focussed particularly on reinforcing our European connections (hopefully this will be the final year that Brexit is on the agenda).

Most recently, I have become the first Lord Mayor ever to visit Iceland and Laos, and the first in decades to visit Bermuda, Vietnam, Latvia and Estonia. Wherever I have travelled, the warmth and deep affection for our City has been intense.

## The 695<sup>th</sup> Lord Mayor's Initiatives

During the course of the year, whether abroad or at home, we have sponsored six key initiatives on Sustainability, Mental Health (with GALENOS), Constructing Science, Smart Economy Networks, Space Protection and Ethical AI.

On **Sustainability** and climate, the City Carbon Credit Cancellation Service with C2Zero gives individuals and businesses the ability to purchase and retire carbon emissions allowances directly from the high-quality UK Emissions Trading Scheme, and we have also focussed on new ESG products and transition finance.

The **GALENOS** project led by Oxford University and supported by MQ Mental Health, Lord Mayor's Appeal, and Wellcome Trust is speeding up and improving the quality of mental health research globally.

Our **Constructing Science** project has already achieved an agreed standard for biolabs in urban areas, spinning out a Life Sciences community in the City.

The **Smart Economy Network Initiative** could help boost economic growth around the world using X-Road open source technology for trade documentation and digital verification.

Our **Space Protection Initiative** connected with outer space and beyond to keep space 'clutter free' - in aid of investment, meeting 40% of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, security, shipping, and telecommunications. London Market insurers pledged to provide Space Debris Retrieval Insurance Bond if governments require them as a condition of launch. And the 56 nations of the Commonwealth concur with our proposal as part of their CommonSpace programme.

And finally, our **Ethical AI Initiative** has promoted international standards for regulating AI - specifically ISO 42001, the AI management system – through a course, an accord, and a consensus.

The course was taken by more than 6,000 people in 600 firms across 60 countries. The Walbrook AI Accord and the AI Quality Infrastructure Group secured agreement across 38 countries to use ISO 42001 for regulation. And the Coffee House Consensus - where \$32 trillion of the \$77 trillion of assets in the International Corporate Governance Network have already pledged their support for ISO 42001, and launched a permanent Investor Council on Responsible AI.

### **The Livery**

Connect to Prosper would not have been possible, or indeed have had anywhere near the impact it has, without the help and support of the formidable Livery community.

I am immensely grateful to you for your support in launching the 'Livery Experience', an initiative that has been introducing our City to a wider international audience domestically and on which I have heard nothing but positive feedback.

While on my travels I have thoroughly enjoyed hosting ten international 'Livery Coffee Connect Teas' – deepening partnerships and providing the opportunity for impromptu connections and discussions for liverymen and liverywomen overseas.

It has been a delight to launch the first Proud to be a Freeman Days, the first at Midsummer Common Hall, and the second at Michaelmas Common Hall.

You have risen impressively to the challenge set on the Armed Forces Covenant, with signatures among the Livery having risen from seven to 52 companies (those who are still yet to sign up, [please do contact Captain Paul Hill](#) for more information).

The Livery's connectivity has been further helped through the Livery LinkedIn Community, which I am delighted to say has now reached more than 2,000 members (please do continue [to sign up here](#)).

In June, in the City of London, we hosted the National Livery Weekend, which will truly live long in the memory thanks in large part to the generous support and sponsorship provided by the Livery and the Corporation.

I have been lucky enough to enjoy your kind hospitality at no fewer than 60 Livery dinners (perhaps I should have taken up my tailor's offer to put a little extra 'banqueting room' in my robes!) While I'm disappointed that the constraints of the Mayoral diary have meant that that number couldn't be higher, it is still a record for a Mayoral year and I hope that I have found time to connect with every Livery company in some way during my time in office.

### **Set Piece Highlights**

These highlights align too with some of the more traditional highlights, from the opening Lord Mayor's Show to state banquets with Japan and Korea, a festival of music, horse riding and numerous charity events including, of course, the annual abseil (which Elisabeth will forever now refer to as 'The Jump').

We were proud to host what we hope will be the first of many Thames Days, held on the fourth Sunday of September to coincide with UN World Rivers Day. We also held the City's first ever Pepys Day, which took place during the week of the Great Fire of London.

And we were delighted to revive a City tradition with the first Lord Mayor's River Progress in 51 years. On our cruise up the river to Staines-upon-Thames to view the London Stone, we were accompanied by, among others, the newly appointed Water Bailiff and Under Water Bailiff, both posts that have also been resurrected this year.

## **Charity**

As this final bulletin comes the day after the Grand Finale night before, it is perhaps only fitting that I should end on the subject of charity. The Livery has been incredibly generous in the support that it has given to the Lord Mayor's Appeal this year – whether through last night's Grand Finale, the hugely enjoyable Bavarian Ball earlier in the summer, or as part of this year's City Giving Day, which involved a record-breaking 603 City businesses.

This year has seen more than £900,000 raised to fund four full Royal Mathematical School Bursaries in perpetuity at Christ's Hospital. We have also raised around £300,000 for the London Symphony Orchestra. And the half a million pounds raised for military veterans through the Big Curry Lunch has been boosted through sales of a new Big Masala Sauce, and I was delighted that famous chef Cyrus Todiwala (recently appointed our Honorary Collector of Toll on Wine at Customs House) joined me in the Mansion House kitchens last month to show me how to cook properly with it!

## **Au Revoir but not Goodbye**

As my year comes to an end, I would like to thank both sets of Sheriffs and their Consorts for the support that they have offered to me and Elisabeth.

We wish Alastair, the incoming Lady Mayoress and the two Sheriffs – Alderman Gregory Jones KC and David Chalk – the very best for their time in office.

I know that you will support them as generously as you have supported me and Elisabeth, and that they will be outstanding representatives for our Livery companies and City.

And once the customary period of post-Mayoral ‘purdah’ is over, I look forward to continuing to play an active role in the civic and Livery life of our great City – hopefully now forever properly defined as “the world’s oldest democratic workers’ & residents’ cooperative”.

May Elisabeth and I send you our very best wishes and most hearty thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Mainelli". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli  
The Rt Hon the Lord Mayor of London**



*Pollarding a beech tree at Burnham Beeches, Dorneywood.*





*Sweating it out with our newly appointed Honorary Collector of Toll on Wine at Customs House, Cyrus Todiwala, as he shows me how to cook with Big Curry Masala.*



*Me and Elisabeth join the Wetwheels team as part of the experiments series.*





*Me and Elisabeth taking home a memento from this year's City Beerfest.*