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# Foreword by the Lord Mayor



The Lord Mayor (©City of London)

*When I spoke as Sheriff at the Entrepreneurs' Election Court Banquet in 2022, I expounded upon how the business of "enterprise" is utterly essential to the City of London.*

I am delighted to have been asked to write this foreword, and I make no apology for repeating that message here as Lord Mayor!

I have made entrepreneurship and finance for growth a cornerstone of my mayoralty. Financial literacy, business education and enterprise skills are needed now perhaps more than ever. I am so pleased to see that, despite the competing priorities for its time and financial resources, the Company of Entrepreneurs' programmes of charity (both financial and human) are focussed on equipping and supporting future entrepreneurs with the skills they need to flourish.

The Entrepreneurs' Award in Social Innovation has proven that we do not have to choose between profit and purpose. Ethical, Impactful, Innovative enterprises can thrive here in the City of London because of the City's unique and ancient history of business mixed with compassion. The Livery (of which the Company of Entrepreneurs has demonstrated it is a key player) was built on these values, and EASI has demonstrated for its second successive year that the spirit of ethical enterprise is alive and well here in this great City.

My fellow Aldermen and I see a future Worshipful Company of Entrepreneurs as proof of the importance of entrepreneurship to the City of London. I want entrepreneurs here to have the highest possible platform from which to champion innovation and growth, and to support the work of the mayoralty in delivering that message to our friends and partners internationally too.

Gary has delivered a terrific programme of charity, events, and opportunities, and I am delighted to commend to your reading this 9th edition of Dare, Create, Succeed. It is a fitting showcase of another busy and impactful year for your remarkable Company.

**Alderman Nicholas Lyons**

**The Rt Hon. the Lord Mayor of London 2022-23**



# *Welcome from the Master*



**The Master Entrepreneur, Mr Gary Dixon**

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It was an honour to be Installed in November 2022 as the ninth Master of the Company of Entrepreneurs. While the process of becoming Master, after progressing through the Warden roles, takes three years, it was still not a great deal of time to prepare for a wonderful, sometimes frantic, but ultimately hugely rewarding year as Master of our wonderful Company.

So much has happened since my Installation that I sometimes look back and feel the months merge into each other. Now that I approach the end of the year, I look back with great fondness on all of the opportunities afforded me to serve the Company and the City of London.

My year started as we were all still coming to terms with the sad death of our greatest monarch, Queen Elizabeth II. Indeed, I was at black tie dinner for incoming Masters on the very night of her passing. The year of 2023 however has been more positively defined by His Majesty King Charles III's Coronation and the wonderful pageantry and spectacle that showed the UK at its finest. I don't think any of us will ever forget such a special day. Our community of Freeman Entrepreneurs continues to grow and flourish. At the time of writing we sit at a total of 204 Freeman, with more admitted every quarter. It is a sign of our success, and focus upon quality experience, that sees a continued demand to join our ranks. Not everyone who applies, far from it, is suitable to be admitted at the time of their application, and some people naturally end up disappointed. We do try however to encourage very early stage entrepreneurs to achieve the business growth they need to become eligible to join us at a future point. Our evolution into a Worshipful Company in 2024 will further facilitate "earlier career" entrepreneurs with different categories of membership.

The Entrepreneurs' Trust continues to make grants to worthy beneficiaries while growing to support our desire to become a full Worshipful Company. The backbone of our giving is now firmly centred around our Entrepreneurs Award for Social Innovation (EASI) where we look to support the brightest, most impactful Entrepreneurs in their attempts to change the world. I am extremely grateful for the financial support given to EASI by the University of Leicester, Trading 212 UK Limited, Tribe Advisory and CCLA Limited in relation to this.

In order to help support our charitable trust, I pulled on my very own running shoes and ran the London Landmarks Half Marathon in April to raise money for our Trust. I am most grateful to our Freeman for the generosity of their donations, which together with some of the aforementioned support, added over £13,000 to our fund. I was most pleased on the day to see some of our Freeman on the course, cheering me on and making sure that I got round.

Our progress towards full Livery Company status continues apace. I was pleased, accompanied by Alderman Alastair King (our own Middle Warden plus also our Sponsoring Alderman) to attend Guildhall in March 2023 to explain our progress towards the standards set for us to move to full Livery status. After our presentation, and some questioning, we were pleased to receive positive feedback and be asked to go and start to prepare our submission for consideration.

At the point of writing, we as a Company have surpassed the financial targets set for us to achieve and have explicit support from a large percentage of the other Livery Companies. I very

much hope that our progress and engagement with the City is recognised for progression in early 2024.

The year of 2024 will be a special one for us. As we approach our 10th birthday, we should also achieve full Livery Company status, as noted above. A most significant event is also expected towards the end of the year. Our very own Middle Warden, Alastair King, is preferred for progression to be Lord Mayor, subject to election in September 2024. All being well, Alastair will become the 696th Lord Mayor and we look forward, with pride, to supporting him in his Mayoral year.

As my year draws to a close, I offer up my heartfelt thanks for the help afforded to me in my year as Master and to everyone from the Company of Entrepreneurs. With your help, we will continue to grow and thrive. Thank you all.

Dare. Create. Succeed.

**Gary Dixon**  
**Master Entrepreneur 2022-23**





# *Installation of the 9th Master Entrepreneur, Gary Dixon*



Succession and celebration go hand in hand each year as the Company of Entrepreneurs commemorates the anniversary of its foundation with the Installation of its new Master - bringing with it an opportunity for reflection and rededication.

On 24th November, 2022 Freeman Entrepreneurs (of all faiths and none) were welcomed with their guests to the church of St Vedast-alias-Foster to witness the installation of Mr Gary Dixon as the 9th Master Entrepreneur. Opening with Thomas Grinfield's majestic hymn "Here in Constant Quick Succession", the new Master and the new Senior Warden (Mark Huxley) read passages illustrating significant transfers of leadership throughout history. The choir's haunting rendition of "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" provoked goosebumps as the assembly reflected on the dramatic succession of prophetic leaders in the reading they had just heard. The new Honorary Chaplain, the Reverend Sophia Acland, expounded on that same theme.

The vast and opulent Goldsmiths' Hall was then the setting for the Installation Dinner – and, with the Hall's bedecked for Adventtide already, bright candlelight contrasted sharply with the darkness outside. The new Master spearheaded the stream of smartly-dressed diners from the church to the Hall, and, safely inside, received them warmly into the dazzling and festive Drawing Room. To the popping of corks, the hubbub of conversation grew and grew as more and more guests were

welcomed. Mr Dixon, once relieved of his handshaking duties, was whisked into the throng to be congratulated and toasted.

The Entrepreneurs' Company is known for the generosity of its welcome wherever it dines, and Freeman and guests were delighted by an extended reception and entertained throughout by Alison Holford's Bridgetower Quartet. The quartet's crafty rendering of 1980s punk rock anthems for string ensemble raised eyebrows and drew smiles of admiration from around the room!

Dinner itself was remarkable, terrine of ham, then roasted cod, then a rich autumnal crème caramel with plump, macerated raisins. The indulgence of the food was matched with rich, festive wines, and rounded off with decadent chocolates, coffee, and port. Throughout, the talented musicians entertained – cheerful and eager on strings and piano – and matched by the enthusiastic singing of Grace.

The custom of the Installation Dinner is that the new Master be invited to set out their vision and priorities for the year ahead. Before doing so, Mr Dixon graciously thanked his predecessor – acknowledging Judy Hadden's highly successful year in the footsteps of so many Past Masters. In celebration of that succession, it was the Master's duty and privilege to ring the Dan Doherty Memorial Bell in homage to Founder & Master Dan Doherty, who had founded the Guild of Entrepreneurs in 2014. The year ahead would, he said, be one of rededication and stability, with a focus throughout on the continued improvement of the Company and the Trust's governance in anticipation of progression to Livery in 2024.

He paid tribute to his own business mentor Geoffrey Pointon who guided him through his early years. Sharing some of his experiences of entrepreneurship that chimed with many Freeman in the room, the Master also thanked his wife Linda and his daughters for their support whilst building his business – especially as he needed to remortgage the house!

Returning to his theme, Mr Dixon reminded Freeman that the Trust's fundraising was a central part of the process, and remarked with pride that there were now so many Principal Benefactors that a second board for their permanent commemoration was now on display.

It was his pleasure to introduce Professor Turi King - familiar to many in the room as the academic who led the DNA verification during the exhumation and reburial of Richard III. In her dual role as professor of public engagement and genetics at the University of Leicester, she held the audience spellbound with her tales of forensic investigations, and the mysteries unlocked by her research.

Rightly applauded, Professor King proposed the evening's final toast, to the Company of Entrepreneurs, coupled with the name of the Master. As the Company looked forward to another year of growth, it was the sincere wish of all those present that it may it flourish, root and branch.



# Legacy Giving



One of the central tenets of the Livery world is charitable giving. The Livery movement is the second biggest donor of charitable money in the UK, behind only the National Lottery on an annual basis.

The Company of Entrepreneurs plays its own part in this charitable giving by raising money for the Company of Entrepreneurs Trust, which in turn grants money to worthy beneficiaries in line with the objects of the charity. Through our EASI initiative, funded by the Trust, we provide invaluable support to early stage entrepreneurs who are tackling crucial, global issues and trying to change the world for the better.

The Company is grateful to all Freeman who contribute to our charitable trust on a regular basis. As you may expect, we also look to other ways whereby Freeman may help support us. Not many are aware that we encourage Freeman to consider leaving a legacy gift to us in their will.

## How does this work?

Nobody particularly likes to think about dying. It's not something that we actively contemplate. That's a shame, really, as it's the one thing in life that is absolutely certain. It is therefore sensible for everyone to prepare a will to ensure that your assets, whatever they are, are inherited by people in the way that you want. We would like to ask that, when considering your legacy wishes, you consider a bequest to the Company of Entrepreneurs. It should be a relatively simple thing to amend an existing will to bequeath a fixed amount, or a percentage, to our trust. Any such bequest would be gratefully received at a (hopefully far) future date when, inevitably, your time comes to pass on. If you do not have a will, now would be a good time to make sure that your wishes are properly recorded. Dying without having a will in place can complicate your inheritance and certainly lengthen the time it takes to settle your assets amongst your loved ones. Even if you don't wish to leave a legacy to the Company of Entrepreneurs, getting an up to date will in place is a very sensible thing to do. Take that step now and enjoy the peace of mind (and if you consider benefitting us, that would be most appreciated).



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Dare, Create, Succeed  
The Company of Entrepreneurs  
Drapers' Hall  
Throgmorton Street  
London  
EC2N 2DQ

Clerk  
**Duncan Simms**  
clerk@entrepreneurscompany.org

Editor  
**Rita W Bologna**

Advertising sales  
**Mark Layzell**

Editorial Team  
**Thank you to the Master, Senior Wardens and all Freeman Entrepreneurs for their editorial contributions.**

Designer  
**jake@jakedavisdesign.co.uk**

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# Lord Mayor's Show



At 11:03, after observing two minutes silence for Remembrance Day, we set off from our position on London Wall, heading ultimately for the Royal Courts of Justice at the Westernmost border of the City limits.

With 125 official "floats" taking place, we proudly processed in front of a vintage London red bus in position number 38. All around us were colourful and musical performers, who were a pull a sight to behold. Jugglers, stilt walkers, drummers, dancing pandas to name but a few of the more exotic participants plus many representatives of the UK's military forces.

Passing Guildhall, the crowds became five deep, with many Aldermen and representatives of the Corporation of the City of London. Upon approaching the Mansion House itself, we all paused to pay our respects to the attending Lord Mayor, who was kind enough to return our waves, while also demonstrating to the attendant BBC reporter this year's technological VR enhancement for viewers on live TV. Amongst the official guests in the Mansion House seating area, I noticed four Freeman from the Company of Entrepreneurs who were cheering us on vociferously. We really do get everywhere!

Next year's parade will be a very special one for the Company of Entrepreneurs, as our very own Senior Warden, Alderman Alastair King DL, will (subject to a confirmatory election at Common Hall) be installed as the 696th Lord Mayor of the City of London. In recognition of this we intend to play our full part in this celebration, with our own actual float and will need the committed support of many of our Freeman to ensure we do Alastair proud and put on a great show. Watch this space!

The Lord Mayor's Show is the oldest, longest, best loved and least-rehearsed civic procession in the world. It is an ancient show of London's independence, a mediaeval festival of pomp and pageantry and a modern celebration of our strength and diversity." So sayeth the official website for the 2023 Lord Mayor's Show, which we took part in on 11 November.

The sun was shining and the sky was a brilliant blue as we lined up alongside the other Modern Livery Companies to pay our respect to the 695th Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli, who had been installed just the day before in the ancient Silent Ceremony in Guildhall.



# *Hatch Enterprise Partnership with the Company of Entrepreneurs*

We are delighted to announce a new partnership with the Company of Entrepreneurs Trust, who share our mission to build a better world through entrepreneurship!

As a charity we are only able to provide the support we do to underrepresented entrepreneurs thanks to our partnerships with like-minded organisations and individuals across the ecosystem.

Our Head of Philanthropy Rosie Pannell was delighted to recently accept a grant of £2,500 from the Company to support the delivery of our mentoring programme for aspirant entrepreneurs. This grant covers a range of administration, infrastructure, and marketing needs to increase the reach and impact of our work.

In addition to their financial support of our 1:1 Consultations programme, Company members generously share their valuable time and experience with Hatch founders as expert volunteers, including Company Master Gary Dixon:

"I myself took part in some mentoring for a group of early stage Hatch entrepreneurs earlier this year and very much enjoyed the session. The energy and enthusiasm from the participants was palpable and I was most pleased to offer some help and guidance in the middle of a great day."

Ed Goodchild, a member of the Company, volunteered to provide expert feedback at a Hatch Demo Day. He said: "I had the privilege and pleasure to be part of a "friendly dragons" session organised by Hatch Enterprise UK in their Incubator Demo Day.

"Hatch has a simple aim to 'support underrepresented entrepreneurs to develop the knowledge, confidence, and skills needed to launch and grow a business.' Happy to report it certainly does.

"And in our group session it was a pleasure to hear four business ideas delivered with style and conviction, which both renewed and recharged my confidence that problem solvers are hard at work to make a difference."

Having such experienced volunteers willing to share their vast industry knowledge with new founders is incredible, and makes such a huge difference to Hatch programme participants who are just starting their journey.

One founder to benefit from support from the Company of Entrepreneurs said: "Barnaby my mentor was superman - he was able to understand the storytelling to perfect my pitch - he gave me invaluable insight into how to market my product to anyone!

"His experience in marketing wasn't a dim light inside of him - it was a beacon - a torch that he was able to pass to me to help light my way. Incredible experience."

We are so pleased that this partnership has already had such a positive impact, and very much hope to continue collaborating towards our shared mission of democratising entrepreneurship.

## **Hatch Enterprise: Information about our work**

Hatch Enterprise is a social justice charity supporting underrepresented entrepreneurs from across the UK to imagine, launch and grow organisations that are sustainable, successful and have a positive and lasting impact on their communities. We do this by delivering tailored programmes, workshops, masterclasses, events, funding opportunities, and mentoring to those often excluded from entrepreneurship, working to connect beneficiaries to a vibrant supportive community and helping them build the networks they need to start and grow their ventures.

We recognise that talent is equally distributed but opportunities are not. Too many people, whether they're disabled, female or nonbinary, or from an ethnic minority background, are unfairly prevented from realising their entrepreneurial potential. We're committed to building a fairer society by levelling the playing field and opening up more opportunities for anyone to turn their idea into an impactful business.

Since launching the charity in 2014 we've supported around 8,000 UK entrepreneurs to flourish including 1,119 in just the past year, marking a rapid scaling up of our support offering to meet rising needs. We specifically target support to founders who identify as female or another marginalised gender, or who are from an ethnically diverse background, to ensure that the power of entrepreneurship is accessible to all rather than just the privilege of a select few. Over 60% of the founders we support are from an ethnic minority, and over 80% are female or from another marginalised gender.

In the UK there is still a long way to go before we reach real equity in this sector. Only one in three UK entrepreneurs is female, a gender gap equivalent to around 1.1 million missing businesses, and women are twice as likely as men to mention family responsibilities as a barrier to starting a business. Two in three Black business owners have been discriminated against in their past entrepreneurial efforts, and Black founders received just 0.24% of venture funding in the past ten years.

Entrepreneurship is powerful - it is a tool that can be used to change individual prospects as well as the prospects of an entire community. It is the people who are directly impacted by the big issues that are usually best placed to solve them, and with access to the right resources one idea can be enough to change the world.





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# Common Hall 2023

Lured by the prospect of fancy dress and a civilised luncheon, and in confident anticipation of their civic obligations as Liverymen Entrepreneurs in the near future, enthusiastic Freemen Entrepreneurs again flocked to the City's two Common Halls in 2023.

## MIDSUMMER

The Election of the City's two Sheriffs occurs in early summer, on or around the longest day of the year (as a reminder of less hygienic times, the participants at Midsummer Common Hall still carry posies of flowers to ward off the miasmic aromas of the City's streets). So it was that, on Monday 26th June at Guildhall at midday Alderwoman Sue Langley and Alderman Bronek Masojada stood for election as a double aldermanic shrievalty, supported by the City of London.

Generous seating in the non-voting areas of Guildhall allowed Freemen Entrepreneurs and their guests to comfortably watch the proceedings live-streamed to gigantic screens – noting with no little satisfaction that the great hall itself was packed to capacity with thickly-robed voters!

The theatre of the election unfurled – with the assembled Livery vociferously approving both candidates, and the Common Serjeant (His Hon. Judge Richard Marks KC) conferring earnestly with his colleagues to determine the result.

The serious business of Common Hall concluded, all thoughts and footsteps turned to photographs and well-wishing in Guildhall Yard, before the short walk to lunch.

## MICHAELMAS

Two significant City set-pieces take place in September each year – the Admission of Sheriffs on the eve of St Michael's day, and Common Hall on Michaelmas Day itself.

The two Sheriffs Elect, Alderwoman Dame Sue Langley and Alderman Bronek Masojada formally took over from Alderman & Sheriff Alastair King and Sheriff Andrew Marsden at a short ceremony at Guildhall on 28th September. Those lucky enough to have secured invitations to the Sheriffs' Breakfast thereafter were formally attired in morning dress and hats (your correspondent, sadly, had to go back to the office and, despite having put on a tie, felt unusually under-dressed!)



Common Hall on 29th September was preceded by the traditional church service at the Corporation's (and the Entrepreneurs') church of St Lawrence Jewry next Guildhall. City grandees, clergy, officers, and Clerks were out in force to throng the church for a short service of thanksgiving, led by the new Guild Vicar, Fr James Titley (sporting a handsome moustache). A bight procession of Aldermen and Ward Beadles then moved across to Guildhall for the election of the Lord Mayor.

Alderman for the Ward of Broad Street, Michael Mainelli, was to be supported by the City of London for election, and Broad Street residents and electors (which includes the Company of Entrepreneurs) were out in force to see if the City's wishes would be ratified by the Livery.

With so many Aldermen in nomination for the City's highest office, there was a degree of suspense in the Hall as the Common Serjeant read out the names – requesting that "as many of you as would have" each candidate raise their hand. Alderman Mainelli recorded overwhelming support from the Livery, and anticipation is high for the Mainelli mayoralty, which begins in November 2023.

## FOUNDERS & FOUNDERS

London's medieval bellfounders' workshops were clustered in Lothbury in the very heart of the City. The noise, stench, and perilous heat was perhaps too much for many of the more refined members of the metallurgical fraternity, and it is no surprise that the Worshipful Company of Founders chose to base their later Halls on its land some half a mile away. On the pleasant pre-prandial stroll from Guildhall to Cloth Fair Freemen Entrepreneurs mused that they were each founders of a different kind, and a growing affinity with the Founders' Company has blossomed into a firm link between the ancient and modern.

By kind permission of the Master Founder, the "Founders & Founders" lunched together in Midsummer and Michaelmas this year, and were joined, variously, by deputations of Gold and Silver Wyre Drawers, Clockmakers, Tax Advisers, Scientific Instrument Makers, Poulterers, Fletchers, and International Bankers in Founders' Hall. There was much to enjoy in addition to the fine food and company, and diners enjoyed a unique moles-eye view of Great St Bart's, and the impressive display of the coats of arms of Master Founders.





# Home Grown

*London's leading home for Business*



When Zoom, the company that saw its share price climb 300% during the first year of the pandemic, is asking its employees to return to the office, it's a sure sign that the office is well and truly back. The big tech firms are not the only ones calling for their employees to give up the work-from-home mentality, many businesses note the important boost to the economy and increased creativity and wellbeing amongst employees that office working can bring.

The return to town does look slightly different when compared to pre-pandemic figures. Many choose the Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday slots and train operators have reported a plateau of passenger numbers still short of pre-pandemic numbers. Whilst this might mean you actually get a seat on the days you choose to commute into the office, there is also a new mindset around where you go and what you do on those days. With a more limited amount of time spent in town, but the same amount of business still needed to be done, the natural progression for the fresh approach to office days is to combine your business with pleasure.

The pandemic made way for a new breed of private members' clubs where work and play merge and the demand for them shows no sign of slowing. Soho House's membership waiting list has hit a high of 95,000 as those who are back in town seek out the interchangeable 'third space' where work morphs into a place to socialise. Gone are the days of Pall Mall's traditional, stuffy clubland, and here to stay is the new generation, catering to every community. So where across London is this balance done best?

Home Grown is the only members' club that has been entirely designed for experienced entrepreneurs, scale-ups and their investors to socialise, connect, build ideas and relationships. London's private members' clubs have evolved over the years and Home Grown, as part of the Home House Collection, has been a pioneer in the private members' club sphere for business and is at the forefront of business clubs. As well as spaces purposely created for members' needs, all set over six-storeys of a stunning Georgian building, the club facilitates entrepreneurs by hosting intimate dinners, business seminars, breakfast briefings and social drinks, curated to help them grow their network and realise ambitions with serendipitous outcomes inevitable. Members have access to over £5k's worth of exclusive business benefits from sales lead generation, leadership coaching through to accounting and legal support, as well as access to a network of reciprocal clubs worldwide.

It's the sheer breadth of events that Home Grown has on offer that makes the merging of work and play so unique. You can be sitting with a glass of wine, listening to some of the UK's top technology journalists talking about what stories catch their attention on the first floor, whilst the entire ground floor has been turned into a crime scene, with individuals in full character (and even fooling some of the staff). Another room might have a serial entrepreneur talking about their business failures at one of the club's very successful F\*ck Up Nights, or there might be a table tennis championship taking place in the basement, coached by Olympic champions. Their flagship business Rockstar series has welcomed to the stage some of the best in British business including former Dragons, Piers Linney and

Richard Farleigh, Kelly Hoppen, Gerald Ratner, Green & Black's founder Jo Fairley, Pimlico Plumber's Charlie Mullins to name just a few.

Richard Farleigh, Entrepreneur and Former Dragon, BBC's Dragon's Den

A one-stop shop for entrepreneurs and investors. What really sets Home Grown apart is their members' events which provide access to valuable insights and support scaling founders on their growth journey.

The breadth of investors who use the club, from crowdfunding to venture capitalists, angel investors, and even hedge funds, really helps to bridge the gap between entrepreneurs and those looking to scale their business with investors. If you're looking for that next round of funding for your business and you're in the city less than before, then meaningful opportunities, like regular pitching events and their Million Pound Menu: Meet the Investor Supper Series over an intimate dinner setting and seven-course tasting menu, makes for a more efficient process.

So yes, we're not quite back to the office full time, or in town every day of the week, but there is a perfect retreat for those days when you are, and you want to strike the work-play balance just right; it's Home Grown.

Piers Linney, Entrepreneur, investor, and former Dragon on the prime-time BBC show Dragons' Den

Home Grown has become a base in central London where I can network, socialise with fellow members and work, especially

with businesses I am involved with that have jettisoned offices. The club has also been the venue for several events in which I have participated or partnered with the club. Unlike other clubs, Home Grown defines itself as a business club which accommodates the need to be able to work and communicate, which can be difficult in more social clubs. It is also a great, central venue for events with clients, colleagues and prospects.

Stephen Page, Freeman & CEO SFC Capital & Home Grown's regular pitching event Crocodile Lair

Everywhere you go in Home Grown there are entrepreneurs, scale ups, founders and investors. The fact that that DNA runs throughout the community, for example, conversations within the club are focused around the ecosystem of entrepreneurship, is crucial to what is going to make Britain a better place over the next few years. So the more that can be done on innovation and entrepreneurship, the better, and hopefully Home Grown remains the centre for a lot of that activity.

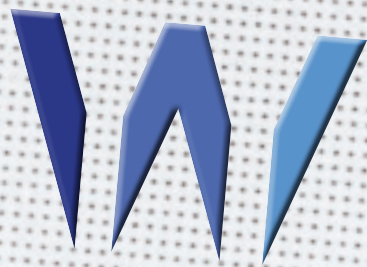
Freeman of the Company of Entrepreneurs are invited to arrange a one day membership pass together with a guest for full use of the club's facilities, a complimentary drink and access to any members events for the day.

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# *Livery Climate Action Group*



The Company of Entrepreneurs has joined the Livery Climate Action Group. This group was formed in 2021 to gather support for Livery Companies and Guilds to manage their impact on climate change and the environment by reducing carbon emissions and making responsible use of resources.

Freeman Ben Martin has been named as the Single Point of Contact for the Entrepreneurs, and has attended an initial meeting of the group. The principal topic of the meeting was the way in which Livery Companies manage their investments in the light of their potential impact on the environment. Decisions on investment are increasingly focussing on the sustainability of the activities of the business in which investments are being made.

The Livery Climate Action Group facilitates mutual self-help for Livery Companies and Guilds to grow their knowledge and expertise in the practical measures they can take towards a sustainable, adaptable and resilient future. This will allow them in turn to influence and encourage their associated professions and trades in the City and beyond.

The Group provides educational materials to help Companies engage with schools and other outreach activities.

The formation of the Group was inspired by the City of London's Climate Action Strategy approved in October 2020 which sets goals for the City to achieve net zero emissions by 2040; for buildings, public spaces and infrastructure to be resilient to climate change; and for people in the City and beyond to benefit from a clean, green and safe environment.

Livery Companies are being encouraged to develop climate action plans to assist them in their endeavours to achieve carbon reduction targets for their members. A number of Companies, including the Wax Chandlers, Engineers, World Traders, Architects and Water Conservators have recorded short videos, published on the LCAG website, outlining their own approaches to the reduction of carbon emissions.

The Entrepreneurs' membership of the LCAG reflects the importance placed on sustainability by the Company. The Raleigh Lecture, held in May 2023, was based on the theme of sustainability and was delivered by Tim Bovy, an experienced ESG (Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance) specialist. Lively debate among the 100-plus students from a number of schools emphasised the importance that is being placed on protection of the environment among the younger generation.



# Education Committee Activity

## Aldridge Foundation – Paddy Willis

This has been a busy period with the Aldridge Foundation. Freeman Paddy Willis has been focused on supporting the students at the UTC Media City in Salford, where they study digital creative subjects. He has assisted the formation of a Limited Company which, as a subsidiary of Aldridge Education, will market the services of the students to local businesses. The students will gain invaluable experience of delivering work to a client brief as freelancers whilst they continue to study.

Following delivery of a commissioned “entrepreneur primer” for the Foundation, Paddy has also been interviewing founders, including fellow Freeman Rick Lowe, Amy Hopper and Jon Spree. These have been conducted on site or virtually for Years 12 and 13 and have been well received as part of the college’s enrichment programme.

Paddy also ran a business simulation exercise for a dozen year 12 students. Over four hours working in small teams they had to make decisions about the mobile phone shop they were managing to improve their balanced scorecard over four trading periods. The session rated an impressive 9.5 out of 10 on a range of feedback questions. This all feeds into research Paddy is doing for his new venture which will promote skills development using similar digital simulations.



## Future Leaders – Paul Cleaver

The Education Committee has started a relationship with the Future Leaders Programme which aims to give disadvantaged 16-18 year olds access to aspirational careers.

The Programme is run by Faheem Khan, a very dynamic deputy head of a school in East London, who has grown this in just a few years to cover 750 students in 125 schools.

While it would be wonderful to reach every student the current educational system does not even offer the keenest students a way to find out how they can access professional roles, so Future Leaders fills this gap by asking students to apply to join and then apply again to take part in each activity. This means that the students who take part are the ones who really want to advance and who are going to do their best to join in and get

something out of it, which in turn makes them very rewarding young people for potential future employers to engage with.

So far Faheem has brought one group to the Raleigh lecture in May and we are aiming to help him make best use of the Livery network to access relevant partner companies, and then to provide an entrepreneur-specific module for him for those students who might want to build a business of their own or work in an early stage business.

Please visit <https://www.futureleaders.uk/> for more information and get in touch with Paul Cleaver if you would like to help develop our support for Future Leaders.



## Sir George Monoux College – David Mellor and Ben Martin

Sir George Monoux College, is an award-winning Sixth-Form College located in Chingford, North West London, and has been linked with the Company of Entrepreneurs for several years. In March 2023 the College was visited by David Mellor and Ben Martin at the invitation of Sabina Khan to hold a session with their Year 12 pupils with a view to stimulating interest in Entrepreneurship.

The session was based on a game that David Mellor has introduced previously called Time Zone Trader, which depicts scenarios from 3 periods in history – USA during the 1970s, South America during the 14th Century, and England during the Crusades. The students were trading from a position in the year 2290, and were given a selection of materials and commodities with which to trade. Each of 4 groups of 5 students was tasked with making as much money as possible from trading in the different time periods, with marks being granted based on a series of suggested values.

All of the students found the session enjoyable and valuable, inasmuch as they were negotiating with each other and discussing options for maximising value from the exchange of goods.

The Company of Entrepreneurs will continue to engage with the College in future years – the College was one of a number of schools represented at the Raleigh Lecture in May 2023.



**Christ's Hospital School – David Mellor and Ben Martin**

The Company of Entrepreneurs' partnership with Christ's Hospital dates to the foundation of the Guild, with the Guild's Founder Dan Doherty seeing the strong entrepreneurial spirit at this unique charitable school. Some 29% of Christ's Hospital alumni go on to found their own businesses and there is a deep vein of social entrepreneurship with 10% of former students establishing charities and 43% volunteering each month. It is truly a school that breeds changemakers.

The coming year will break new ground in this valuable partnership with the piloting of a new mentoring and innovation programme for budding entrepreneurs in their first year of Sixth Form. Working with volunteers from the Company of Entrepreneurs a small group of students at Christ's Hospital will work through the process of establishing an enterprise and benefit from in-depth expert support in the area of their passion. By the end of the programme students will understand both the theory and practice and have the opportunity to develop their enterprise idea while still at school. The aim will be to both encourage more students to turn their dreams into reality and to ensure that their ideas are as close to market reality as possible by the time they leave school.

**University of East London – David Barker and James Talbot**

The University held a Female Founders' Day on 31 May 2023 at the Docklands Campus, during which pitches from 6 students who had set up their own businesses were made, and judged by a panel that included Pierre N Rolin, founder of Ankh Impact Ventures – who also sponsored the event.

The top prize of £5,000 was awarded to Ashlea Cromby for her Mansimble Tea and Estate venture, providing high-end teas from the Kangra region of India. This was notable from the Company of Entrepreneurs perspective because Ashlea had been mentored by James Talbot, the Company's Junior Warden, and a member of the Education Committee. The University holds a series of pitching events every year, also attended and supported by Freeman of the Company of Entrepreneurs.





# Unlocking Opportunities:

## *A Glimpse into the Company's Expanding Outreach Activities*

*By Johnny Manning*

The year 2023 has brought about a remarkable expansion in the depth and breadth of Outreach activities at the Company of Entrepreneurs (CoE). Our established programs are flourishing and emboldening, while exciting new connections are taking their first exciting steps.

### **London Business School: A Cornerstone of CoE's Initiatives**

At the heart of CoE's outreach initiatives lies our enduring partnership with the prestigious London Business School (LBS). The Summer School mentoring program, a perennial favourite, continues to thrive. The "Ask an Entrepreneur" series has as ever delivered engaging insights into the world of entrepreneurship. Mark your calendars for the upcoming event on October 30th, where we will delve into the topic of "How to Build a Brand," with our regular host, Barnaby Winter, taking the stage. Then, on November 20th, new Freeman Simon West will lead an in-depth discussion on "How to Automate and Scale Your Business." These events are not to be missed

### **Asian Women's Resource Centre: A Source of Inspiration**

Rita W Bologna continues to lead CoE's support for the Asian Women's Resource Centre. We are proud to have provided talks for victims of domestic violence as part of our "Inspirational Women" series, offering a glimmer of hope and strength to those in need.



### **Urban MBA: Entrepreneurial opportunities for all**

This year, we welcomed Urban MBA as a newcomer to our outreach efforts. They invited us to the culmination of their entrepreneurial program, where we had the privilege of offering our supportive judgement on student pitches. Subsequently, we matched these budding entrepreneurs with mentors for a six-month support program as they embarked on their entrepreneurial journeys.

### **EASI (Entrepreneurs' Award in Social Innovation): Celebrating Success**

EASI celebrated its second successful event, building upon the foundation laid by the Judy's initial innovation. The grand finale took place at Blue Orchid's stunning new rooftop terrace, where we awarded £10,000 and a 12-month package of support and fellowship to the deserving winners.

### **Hatch: Fostering Underrepresented Entrepreneurs**

Our new partnership with Hatch, aimed at supporting underrepresented entrepreneurs in launching sustainable and impactful businesses, is gaining momentum under the capable stewardship of Glynis Wright. We have already provided eight "Friendly Dragons" to date, with many more exciting collaborations on the horizon.

### **But that's not all**

CoE continues to make a positive impact by supporting various organizations, including Culture Mile, Project Re:Make, UnLTd, Restart Ukraine, and The Samuel Wilson Loan Trust. Moreover, we are actively exploring new connections with David's Sling. The historical imperative of livery companies to bolster those embarking on their entrepreneurial journeys remains the bedrock of our Outreach activities, and 2023 stands out as a truly remarkable year in our pursuit of this mission. The committee extends an open invitation, as always, to any additional Freeman who wish to lend their support in this field.

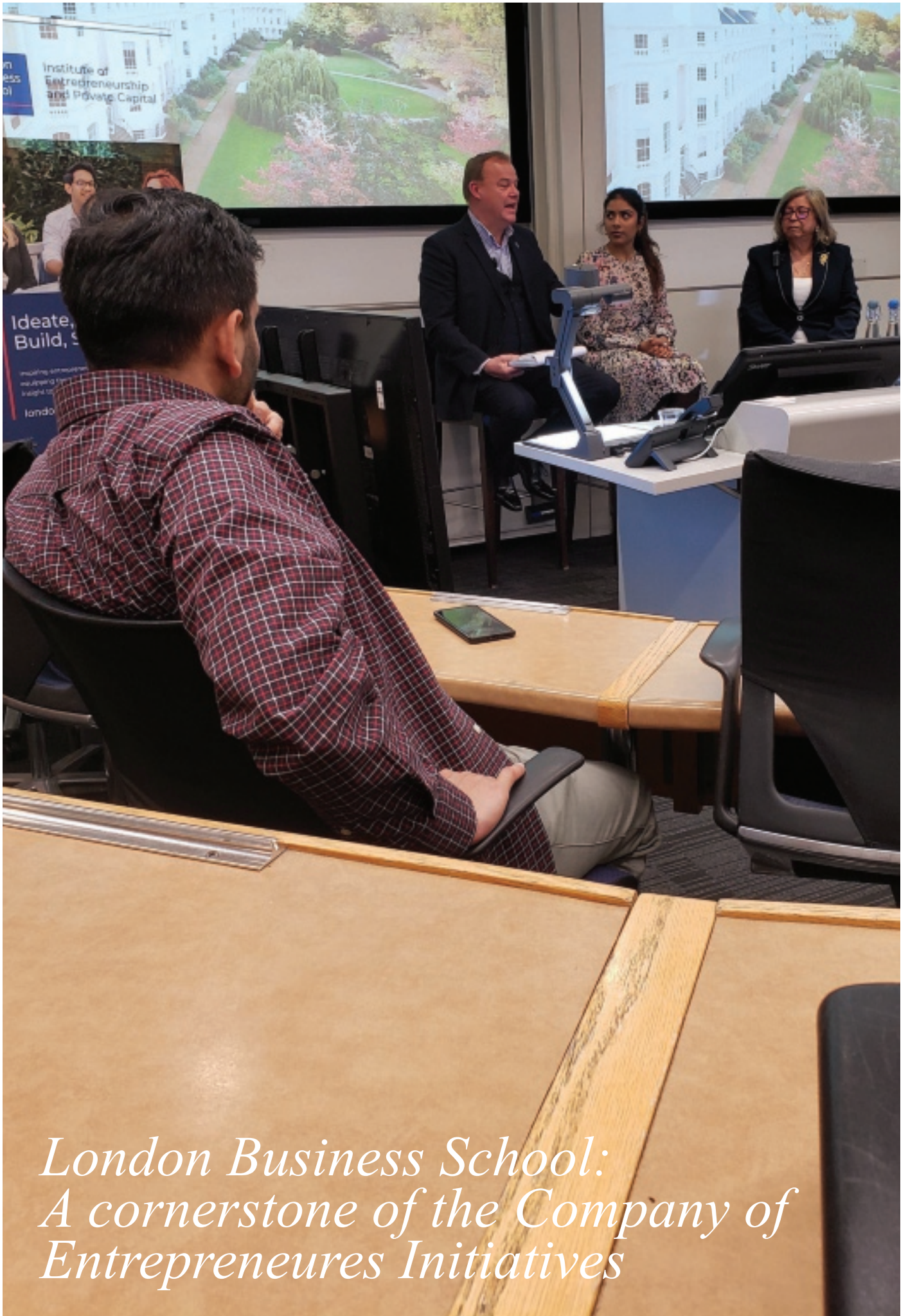


### **Crisis Venture Studios: Innovation to end Homelessness**

CoE remains committed to supporting Crisis Venture Studios in their mission to accelerate the end of homelessness through entrepreneurship. Pippa Watmough and Kate Jolly's Ideas Labs and Office Hours have provided invaluable support to members who have experienced homelessness. They serve as a vital sounding board for entrepreneurial solutions at the early stages, offering mentorship to those who have bravely taken the next step in launching their ventures.

### **University of East London: Nurturing Future Entrepreneurs**

David Barker's efforts at the University of East London have been instrumental in nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit among students. Through a series of talks and events, the university empowers students to chart their own entrepreneurial journeys and become their bosses, all alongside their 'regular' degrees.



*London Business School:  
A cornerstone of the Company of  
Entrepreneurs Initiatives*



# *Social Drinks*



# *A Day in the Life of an Almoner for the Entrepreneurs*

*Andrew Pullman is Almoner for the Company of Entrepreneurs and gives an insight into what that actually involves*

Last year I wrote an article about being appointed Almoner to the Company of Entrepreneurs. It was clearly early days for me in the role, and I shared what I thought it would involve. Twelve months on I have the opportunity to open up about how I actually do the job, and can give a bit more insight.

The 'nature of the beast' is that almost everything that lands on the Almoner's desk is confidential in some way – either to an individual only, or often to a small group of people who need to be involved. However, despite this significant caveat, I will try to lift the curtain a little without disclosing anything sensitive.

## **The Starting Point**

Often the starting point is a call or email from either the Clerk or one of the members of the Court. Typically, a sensitive situation has arisen with one of the Freeman and some input is required.

For much of the last year I have been helping to deal with the small group of people, who for a variety of reasons have been given dispensation to pay an emergence rate for membership. A few have hit upon hard times – either through their entrepreneurial activities which have encountered problems, or as a result of personal or family challenges. Whatever the reason we have tried to be as supportive as possible. The Covid lockdown is still working its way through, and there have been several people who have had difficulty recovering their businesses.

## **Advising on Policy**

As a matter of policy, we do encourage Freeman who are struggling with the financial aspects of membership to make contact – usually the Clerk is the best person in the first instance. Thereafter I can get involved in follow up discussions. Sometimes it is clear that for various reasons it makes sense to step down from the Company, and then re-engage when the situation has improved.

Another area of work is advising on people policies for the Company. Although we do not have very many employed staff – only one, in fact – we do have a growing membership and several others who provide outsourced support in a variety of ways. How Freeman behave is important, and very occasionally people need to be reminded about best practice. This is where I bring out my Human Resources hat and advise on how best to deal with individuals who have transgressed. Suffice it to say, this does not happen very often!

## **My Consiglieri Hat**

Quite often I get approached, and have to don my 'Consiglieri Hat'! What do I mean by that, in case you have not seen the Godfather movies? Since my day job is helping to manage



people via my People Risk Solutions HR consultancy, or my Reg Tech firm PeopleClear, I often get asked to help solve employment related or personal matters. These can range from recruitment queries, performance problems, or to how to navigate through a redundancy exercise. More often than not, people just need to check out whether they are being treated fairly by their employer.

Within the Company I do get asked for advice regarding professional relationships between Freeman. It never ceases to amaze me how people can create personal problems by communicating badly – 9 out of 10 people problems simply occur because someone did not tell someone else something, did tell them in a poor way or left it too late to communicate. My advice normally starts by suggesting that the two parties speak to each other, and then unravel the misunderstandings that have occurred.

## **Adding Value**

My main objective through all my people discussions is trying to add value. Having had the benefit of over 35 years working experience in the City of London, in a variety of roles, I like to think that I can bring some real life experience to the Almoner table. As I have said, most problems boil down to a failing in communication somewhere and that can usually be resolved.

So, if you do feel you would like someone to talk to about an issue within the Company, please do not hesitate to get in touch directly or via the Clerk. We will help in any way that we can.



# *A year as Junior Warden.*

*James Talbot - Junior Warden*



It has been an eventful year and great fun! I have learnt lots about the inner workings of the Company and the Corporation as well as the Livery more generally. The Clerk and my fellow wardens have been very helpful getting me on to the Wardens and Court Assistants City Course and a Public Speaking workshop at Watermen's Hall. Both were useful introductions and timely for my first speech at The Master's Installation and my promotion at Goldsmiths. This was a bit of blur with a new freemen ceremony, me getting sworn in, donning the robes of the Office for the first time, standing in the receiving line and then being clapped into dinner. Despite my fears, my speech welcoming the visitors went reasonably well even though there were a couple of train crashes pronouncing some of the names. I have to say that I thoroughly enjoyed it all.

On the wider livery front, my duties have been light with only some extra dinners and talks. These are often to a last minute cancellation which one of the more senior wardens have not been able to accept. Two tips. The first is to always make sure you have a clean wing-collar shirt; you never know when you might need it! The second is if you ever get the chance to go to a Mansion House Dinner, take it. They are great fun and a pleasant opportunity to meet some very interesting people.

The most memorable talk for me this year was Rory Stewart (talking) on Populism, Poverty and Hope in the 21st Century at The World Traders' 36th Annual Tacitus Lecture. Not only was the talk fascinating but it was also intriguing to see the Guildhall work managing the 1,000 guests.

Internally, there has much been going on. I have enjoyed/ relished seeing how it is all organised by the Clerk, taking note so that I can plan my year in due course, more about that later. As Court Assistant and Warden, I have been very privileged to be part of the process moving us from Guild to Company and to Livery. The Master and Senior Warden with the guidance of the Clerk have been working very hard to steer us through all that this requires. The amount of process and diplomacy is rather demanding!

Leading on from this and as we go into our tenth year, I have been helping as we explore the need for a different structure. This is in part because we will soon have not only Free but also Livery women and men. It is also an opportune time to review what works and what needs to be improved as we have grown to over 200 members since our foundation in 2014.

Not only is Alastair King our Middle Warden but he is also a Sheriff and Alderman and now he has been confirmed as Lord Mayor from 2024. This is a great honour for the Company. Unfortunately, it does rather clash with his installation as our Master. As such he will stay Upper Warden for another year and I have agreed to move forward. It will be an exciting year as we get more involved with all things Mayoral and become a full Worshipful Company.

The last and most recent highlight that I will mention here is the new badges for the Wardens. It has to be said that they were needed especially as we seek to join our more established peers as a full Worshipful Company. If you have not already seen them, they are rather special and will be worn with pride for many decades to come.

It has been a wonderful year as Junior Warden and I have very much enjoyed working with everyone to navigate the challenges and define a path as we move into our second decade. I look forward to meeting more of you at the events whether they be the grand dinners or more informal monthly drinks.

**James Talbot**  
**Junior Warden**



# *The Middle Warden*

## *Alderman & Sheriff Alastair King DL*



The Middle Warden's diary has certainly not been his own this year! As readers will recall, in addition to his Aldermanic responsibilities in his Ward of Queenhithe, Alastair was elected by the Livery in Midsummer 2022 to serve as one of the two Sheriffs of the City of London (a role, we are reminded, that predates the office of Lord Mayor).

This was the latest in Alderman King's many civic responsibilities - beginning with his service as elected representative for the Ward of Queenhithe in the City of London. He has over 24 years' uninterrupted service; first elected as Common Councilman in 1999; was appointed Deputy for the Ward in 2006; elected Alderman in 2016 with over 96% of the vote; he was re-elected unopposed in 2022.

During Alastair's 12-month term as Sheriff, he resided at the Old Bailey (Central Criminal Court) until September 2023, during which he hosted a special series of themed lunches at on

matters pertaining to Women and the Law with leading sector experts, including those on FGM, Gender and the Law and Domestic Abuse and the Law, Menopause and the Law, Free Speech, Forced Marriage, Human Trafficking/Safeguarding and Grooming.

Further, Alastair organised a series of functions at the Old Bailey, celebrating London as a factor in the success of some individual immigrant communities. These include with the Jewish Communities (held in conjunction with the Jewish Leadership Council with Guest Speaker Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis); the Sikh Communities (with leading Kirtan singer Manika Kaur and Guest Speaker Simon Aurora of B&M Stores); the Hindu communities, the African-Caribbean communities, and the Muslim communities.

As if that wasn't enough, Alastair had further greatness thrust upon him by the Worshipful Company of Masons - elected in June as Master for 2023-24. The Master Entrepreneur was delighted to have been a guest of Alastair's in this capacity at a superb luncheon in September, with neither gentleman quite sure who should be bowing to whom!

Not to be outdone by his fellow Sheriff, Andrew Marsden - who tied the knot during his year at the Old Bailey - Alastair was delighted to announce his engagement (to Miss Florence Walker) in September this year, with a date set to be married in 2024.

Nevertheless, the Middle Warden has not shirked his responsibilities here, and Alastair has been a steadfast contributor to the work of the Company. He has supported the Master and the other Wardens throughout the year - applying his lawyerly mind to the implementation of the Court's strategy for the growth of the Company. As Aldermanic Sheriff, Alastair has also been able to support the Company of Entrepreneurs' Trust: offering the Trust the use of the Old Bailey for the EASI showcase last year, and affording entrepreneurship a very prominent platform right here in the City of London.

So, what next? Alastair's progress through the Company looks assured, indeed, the Election Court this year returned Alastair's name for election as Senior Warden of the Company of Entrepreneurs. He might have otherwise cautiously looked forward to serving as Master Entrepreneur from November 2024, but at the time of writing, and having now served his requisite year as Sheriff, Alderman King is being supported by the City of London for election as Lord Mayor in September 2024! Subject to election by the Livery, Alastair will expect to serve as the 696th Lord Mayor of the City of London from 8th November 2024. Understandably, perhaps, he has advised the Court of his preference not to progress to the Mastership that same year! We therefore look forward (subject to election) to Alderman King assuming the role of Master Entrepreneur in November 2025 instead.

Alastair is assured of all our best wishes in his current and future positions, and we are thrilled that one of our own is on his way to the top!



# Senior Warden - Mark Huxley

I always enjoy this moment when the request comes through from our Communications Committee for some words to be penned for the magazine. It's a great opportunity to press pause on what is always a busy year, reflect upon it and to then cast my mind ahead into next year. Which of course will be a landmark one for both the Company and myself as we hopefully complete our progression to full Livery, becoming a Worshipful Company standing alongside our peers in the City and I having the honour of serving as our Master. More about that later.

I think it is only right that I start this article by saying a huge thank you on behalf of us all in the Company to Gary Dixon for his fantastic stewardship as Master of the Company this year. As is his way, he has quietly gone about his duties, without any hue or cry, helping get the Company in the best shape possible for us to be presented for progression as and when our time comes. He has done a huge amount of work behind the scenes, which many will not have seen, but its impact can be measured by the fact that by mid-summer we were ready and able to be presented at any opportune moment to the Aldermanic Court. In fact, he has tried his hardest to get us in front of them this Autumn, but as at the time of writing this, it would seem to be their wish that we wait until 2024, for that moment.

Gary said at the outset that he would continue to drive the fellowship we foster and like you I hope, have many happy memories of events we have hosted where this has been plainly obvious. A particular standout for me was his reintroduction of our Appreciation Supper this year following the enforced Covid break. He oversaw it being refreshed in both content and venue, which saw us at the Innholders Hall, enjoying a myriad of presentations of Livery dining from himself, Beadle, Honorary Chaplain and Principal Guests; including a former Lord Mayor, a former Sheriff, and the Master Clockmaker. We even polished up a Loving Cup for the occasion. I hadn't realised how much I missed that. It really was a fun evening, with a great turnout and one that still lives amongst my top 2023 happy memories.

It has been wonderful to once again attend our various Court Meetings to witness the admission of new Freemen who have helped swell our ranks. I'm humbled every time I hear their own entrepreneurial stories as well as how much they are already committed to help share their skills and learnings with others. Like every other year it means new friendships are forged as our fellowship deepens and the sum of our parts grows. It's therefore been particularly great to see just how many have immediately stepped up to support our Committees or projects such as EASI, helping us play our own part in giving back. Long may this continue. Mentioning EASI, we all owe another debt of gratitude to Immediate Past Master Judy Hadden for once again harnessing her great can-do spirit to make this another success. As I look in my own year, I will remain committed to ensuring that the legacy continues and that we hopefully take it to new heights.

It goes without saying that I am hugely excited for my own year ahead. I was admitted to the Company in November 2017, which was an honour enough. To think that I sit writing this article, knowing that I will be installed to serve the Company and all our Freemen in November, is far beyond anything I could have ever imagined then. I will fully embrace the year to ensure we complete the journey started by our founders to see us attain our place amongst the rest of the City Livery. This is of course a huge achievement for us all. For my part I am focused upon seeing this as the end of a very big chapter in our history as we turn the page to begin a new one. A hugely exciting period for us all and following the lead from all our Past Masters, something that will truly manifest itself as long as we keep the fellowship we have built, which really has come to define us amongst our City peers.

You all know me well and I love the social side of what we do, which is something I'd like to harness more within the Company. We have a wonderful calendar of formal events. I'd like to try and grow that out to provide more accessible, informal and lower cost events in and around the City, where we can enjoy its riches, both historic and modern. I hope we can align to the many projects underway like the City Belonging Project that are striving to make the various City communities both inclusive and thriving.

I'd like to thank everyone for making my year as Senior Warden as fun as it has been and I look forward to hopefully continuing in the footsteps of my predecessors as we march into our next year.

# Dan Doherty Memorial School

## Summary of the Project

Thanks to the support of the friends and family of our greatly missed friend and Trustee, Dan Doherty, Learning for Life established the Dan Doherty Memorial School in rural Nepal in 2017. Together we have been providing education for vulnerable children from marginalised communities in Dan's memory.

The Dan Doherty Memorial School is situated in the remote, mountainous region of Makwanpur, Nepal. Makwanpur is one of the poorest regions in the country; infrastructure is inadequate, there is very limited access to education and healthcare services, and opportunities for sustainable employment are scarce. The majority of the population are from marginalised communities or ethnic minorities, who suffer disproportionately from the impacts of climate change, the Covid-19 pandemic and economic and social exclusion.

The Dan Doherty Memorial School seeks to address these inequalities by providing education for children, who have either dropped out of school, or have never had access to schooling, enabling them catch up on the education they have missed and become re-integrated into the mainstream education system. The project covers the cost of a teacher's salary, education materials for the children, school maintenance and running costs. This year 32 students (20 girls and 12 boys) have been enrolled in the school and are now receiving a quality education. In addition, the project is providing a space for Community Action Groups and women's groups to come together and support the management of the school and other local initiatives.

## 2022/23 Project Update

The Covid-19 pandemic caused substantial disruption to schools across the world, and unfortunately the Dan Doherty Memorial School was no exception. Nepal suffered several waves of Covid-19 and national lockdowns meant that all educational establishments were forced to close. However, the teacher in the Dan Doherty Memorial School was able to continue to teach small groups in outside spaces. This meant that children continued to benefit from some formal teaching and that their families could maintain contact with project staff and seek support, which was a vital line of communication during the difficult times.

The pandemic also meant that LfL were not able to visit the project to conduct monitoring and evaluations activities. LfL, therefore commissioned an external evaluator to visit the project on our behalf and assess project activities, outcomes and propose next steps. The evaluator found that the school was well supported by the local community and that children's grades and access to mainstream school had improved as a result of the SEC classes. However, the evaluator also found that challenges associated with the pandemic have meant that the School Management Committees need more support and training from project staff to enable them to take over the effective management and implementation of the schools. We have therefore updated our implementation plan to ensure more support for the SMCs and community engagement activities. The evaluator also identified that further teacher training is now required as the original teacher has moved on. LfL will therefore be providing additional funds for teacher training and community mobilisation

activities as well as our ongoing support for the teacher's salary, educational materials and running costs.

## Key Achievements for 2022/23

- Children have now returned to a normal schedule following the Covid-19 lockdowns. Project staff stayed in contact with beneficiaries throughout the lockdowns to provide support and ensure that children reenrolled in the school once the lockdown was lifted.
- This year we have enrolled 32 children, who had either dropped out of school or were vulnerable to dropping out, all of whom are now receiving quality education, with an improvement in attendance and progress. Of the 32 children, 20 (63%) are girls. Seventy percent are from marginalized indigenous communities (Prajā) and the remaining 30% are from Dalit families.
- During the classes, children are learning grammar, handwriting, drawing, maths and science. Children also enjoy the extracurricular activities on offer and the educational toys available in the SEC.
- In a survey of parents 90% expressed that they were happy with their child's progress in school and that their attainment had increased since joining the SEC.
- The community have been at the centre of the project development right from the project's conception, throughout the construction process and they continue to be involved in the day-to-day management of the school and are assisting with the management and maintenance of the school and school buildings.
- A library room and facilities are being utilised by the wider community.
- We have run disaster awareness sessions to ensure our students are aware about and well prepared for potential disasters.

## Project Objectives for 2023/24

- To continue to provide quality education in a secure, child friendly environment for at least 25 vulnerable children.
- To enable at least 15 children to enroll in mainstream school by the end of the year.
- To provide training on child friendly teaching methods, multi-grade teaching and child protection for 1 teacher.
- To raise awareness of the importance of education and secure future support from local stakeholders.

## How you can help

We will need £5,000 per year to run and monitor each school, this is broken down in the table below, but we are grateful for any amount you are able to spare. In return for your support for one of our centres we will be able to provide you with regular updates of how the children are doing; we could even arrange for you to visit the project.



# *Our Chaplain Sophia Acland shares her story*

*Rev'd Sophia Acland*

I came to London to work as Associate Vicar at All Hallows by the Tower, on the east side of the City, in October 2014, just a month before the Guild of Entrepreneurs was formed on 24th November that year, so we have a shared City history. I think my role as Chaplain will be the closest I come to being able to claim to be an entrepreneur - ! - but I do have business experience, having a background in book publishing and having also jointly run a manufacturing company for ten years.

My colleague Bertrand Olivier was the Guild's first Chaplain until he left London to become Dean of Montreal Cathedral in Canada. I came with him to a number of Entrepreneurs' events and much enjoyed hearing the stories members had to talk about their lives and the very varied businesses they had grown. I was particularly impressed by those who were serial entrepreneurs, having started companies in several very different fields. I also liked the fact that there is a strong link you all share: although Fishmongers do not need to be fishmongers, Entrepreneurs do all need to be entrepreneurs.

On the retirement of Bertrand's successor, the Rev'd Canon David Parrott, I was therefore delighted to be invited to become the Company's third chaplain, and was sworn in during the 9th Master's Installation Service in November 2022. It has been a privilege since then to start getting to know people better and to be involved in some of the Company's special services and events. Highlights of the year for me have ranged from the lovely, shared carol service at St Michael Paternoster Royal to magnificent dinners and lunches - the setting for some excellent conversations - and a really interesting evening in May listening to the pitches of the 2023 EASI finalists, each of them with impressively innovative ideas, energy and vision.

In July, it was a real pleasure to welcome members of the Company for a trip to Barking Abbey which, like All Hallows, was founded in the seventh century by St Ethelburga, the Company's patron saint. Encouraged onwards by a delicious home-made tea provided by the church warden there, supplemented by some pink fizz thoughtfully sent ahead by the Clerk, this was a wonderful summer evening spent exploring the abbey grounds and gate tower. As a female cleric in what was until quite recently the male bastion of the Church in the City, I find Ethelburga a great role model: a strong woman who had the authority to lead a double monastery housing both monks and nuns, and who spearheaded the introduction of Christianity in her local area, but who yet cared selflessly for her community and neighbours, including during a time of plague. I hope Entrepreneurs, especially the many female members of the Company and those mentoring female-led start-ups, find her story similarly encouraging.

The earliest City of London Guilds were religious fraternities as well as trade bodies and so chaplains have been part of the life of the livery companies since the beginning. Freemen of any faith and none are of course all made very welcome at the Company of Entrepreneurs, and whatever your approach or background I believe we all have many things in common: a concern to help others, to promote community, to encourage people to share their gifts for the common good, to value and care for each other. Having grace said at a Company dinner may mean different things to different people but it is a chance for all of us to take a short time out to 'count our blessings': to recognise the good things in our lives and perhaps to reorient ourselves according to what seems truly important or worthwhile.

The promotion through the EASI awards of a number of businesses tackling environmental problems is something that particularly resonates with me, since I am an Area Lead on the environment for the Church of England in the City and central London, trying to help local churches and their congregations to grow greener, and focussing on our challenging goal of Net Zero by 2030. Another shared concern is in the field of pastoral care: at All Hallows we provide a chaplaincy service to local businesses and visitors and are accustomed to providing a 'listening ear' to those in need of support or a chat about something that is worrying them. I hope that perhaps I can be of use to Entrepreneurs too in this way, complementing the work of our Almoner, Andrew Pullman.

So thank you for asking me to be your Chaplain - it has been an honour to join you and a great pleasure to be part of the Company's life in the past year. My particular thanks to the Master for his welcome, the Clerk for his support, and to the Senior Warden for his time and kindness getting me up to speed on all things Entrepreneurial: I look forward to his year as Master soon to begin.





# *The Appreciation Supper*

*Innholders' Hall, by kind permission  
of the Master Innholder*

What a wonderful evening we had celebrating the installation of our newest Freeman, Kevin Cutler, Sandra Roycroft-Davis and Simon West as well as all things City with its traditions and fine dining in the heart of the City.

Innholders' Hall is small and very beautiful Hall and has a staggering array of silverware which was kindly made available to us to experience the varied customs from the Rose Bowl, something that I haven't experienced before, and the flourish of the Loving Cup.

The thought behind the Appreciation Supper is that we learn about all about these old City customs ahead of our Election Court Banquet in July.

We were treated to the most delicious and varied menu accompanied by well chosen wines. Our Chef for the evening was Herbert Berger, who is to shortly retire after a 55-year career which has seen him win Michelin stars at three different London restaurants.

After dinner we heard from Hon. Liz Green, principal guest of The Master. Liz is a former Sheriff of the City of London, as well as a Past Master of the Master's Mother Livery Company – the Framework Knitters. She is presently serving as the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire. The Master's other guests were Alderman Sir William Russell, who served an historic two-year term during COVID-19 as the 692nd Lord Mayor of the City of London and the Master Clockmaker, Mrs Jane Pedler, accompanied by her Clerk, Miss Camilla Szymanowska.

The Appreciation Supper is one of the highlights of the annual diary and is well worth attending to experience and learn all the City's idiosyncrasies.







# *Master's Weekend – May 2023*

Master Entrepreneur Gary Dixon invited members of the Company to Leicester for the traditional Master's Weekend in May 2023. This proved to be a great success, particularly since one of the highlights of the weekend was a visit to the Leicester Space Park, one of the highly successful programmes that the University of Leicester has developed.

Upon arrival at the Space Park the visiting group were met by Professor Martin Barstow, who has been a key member of the University staff for more than 20 years. His long-term involvement with the UK's activities in the realm of Space exploration has given him a deep insight into all aspects of the country's role, and particularly our prominence on the international stage.

The tour began with a look at the Space Park's Concurrent Design Facility, where scientists and engineers can begin their designs with a "blue-sky" approach to conceiving and developing the components needed for the construction of satellites and other devices that will form part of the ever-growing UK contribution towards international Space collaboration.

Following that, the group were shown the 3-D printing equipment that is being used to fashion complex components for Space vehicles from a range of lightweight but strong composite materials. The University of Leicester has made significant investments, with support from the UK Government, into the sophisticated tools and machinery necessary for the construction of the specialised components that make up the highly complex devices that will be launched into Space.

This specialised suite of equipment includes a large Double Walled Isolator, which allows some of the conditions found

in Space to be replicated under laboratory conditions. In conjunction with other sections of the laboratory, simulations of the environment and conditions encountered in Space can be modelled to ensure optimum performance when actually deployed into the Space programme.

As well as large clean-room areas, one of the key precautions taken in the Space Park laboratories is ensuring that no biological contamination occurs. An Astrobiology Containment area has been set up, to make sure that no cross-contamination leads to unwanted effects for the scientists working at the Space Park.

The tour concluded with a fascinating discussion, led by Professor Barstow, highlighting the important role being played by the UK in international Space exploration. It is a little-known fact that the UK is one of the leading nations in net spend on the development of the human skills and the physical architecture needed to support the international research programmes. Globally, £300 billion is being spent each year on Space-related activities.

The UK was the first nation to undertake a comprehensive earth-observation activity from space, leading to significant improvements in our understanding of subjects as varied as land-use and soil conditions, and the study of climate change.

The Master thanked Martin Barstow and his team for a fascinating and thoroughly enjoyable morning, and for the valuable insights that he had shared about the contribution that the UK, and particularly the University of Leicester, are making to international Space programmes.





### **A Feel-Good Extravaganza: 42nd Street Shines Bright at The Curve, Leicester. Rating: ★★★★★**

It was an afternoon of glitz, glamour, and theatrical magic as The Curve in Leicester played host to the latest production of the timeless classic, '42nd Street', and the Entrepreneurs were able to enjoy it as part of the Master's Weekend. With its vibrant energy and breath-taking performances, this rendition of the beloved musical transported the audience back to the golden age of Broadway. From the moment the curtain rose, it was evident that this production was going to be uplifting. The set design and opening film shots transported us straight into the heart of 1930s New York City, with its towering skyscrapers, illuminated billboards, and bustling streets.

The cast was excellent, with each performer exuding boundless energy, great timing, and an obvious passion for their craft. The leading lady, relative newcomer Nicole-Lily Baisden, portraying Peggy Sawyer, captured the audience's hearts with her charm and exceptional dancing skills. Her transformation from a timid chorus girl to a star in the making was a pleasure to witness, and she commanded the stage with grace and elegance.

The supporting cast was equally exceptional, bringing a dynamic range of characters to life. The charismatic director, played by Adam Garcia, the tough but caring choreographer, and the seasoned veterans Ruthie Henshall and Les Dennis added depth and humour to the production, complementing

the dazzling dance sequences and show-stopping musical numbers. The chemistry among the ensemble was palpable, and their synchronized routines were executed with precision and flair, leaving the audience spellbound. We even got to watch their warm up exercises before the show, when we were given a fascinating back stage tour. There is something quite special about watching 24 actors dancing tap seemingly effortlessly in unison!

The musical numbers themselves were a feast for the eyes and ears. From the iconic "Lullaby of Broadway" to the infectious tap-dancing extravaganza of "We're in the Money," each song was delivered with energy and showmanship. The choreography was well executed, with the cast's nimble footwork and intricate formations showcasing their energy, talent and skill.

In summary, the latest production of 42nd Street at The Curve in Leicester was highly enjoyable. From the choreography to the acting performances, every aspect of the show was high quality. It left the audience on their feet and clamouring for more.

If you are a fan of musical theatre, or simply in need of an evening of pure joy and entertainment, do not miss this new production of 42nd Street which has now gone on tour to Sadler's Wells in London till 2 July 2023, and then on to Canterbury, Leeds, Bristol, Plymouth, Cardiff and nine other locations until May 2024. A happy band of Entrepreneurs headed off for our final evening black tie dinner afterwards ... and I am sure I spotted a few tapping feet and humming of tunes along the way.

**Andrew Pullman - Freeman Entrepreneur and Almoner**



# The Master's Year

Being the Master of the Entrepreneurs Company has afforded me so many opportunities to visit people and attend events, I have almost lost track. In order to give people a flavour of my year, I thought I would share a summary of some of the great experiences I have had.

At the very beginning of my year, in fact the day after my Installation, I was delighted to accept an invitation from the Broad Street Ward Club to attend their Annual Civic Lunch, in the crypt of Guildhall. Ward Clubs are a vital part of the civic and social side of the City. The Entrepreneurs sit within Broad Street Ward and they were kind enough to invite me as their guest. Principal speaker was Sheriff Andrew Marsden, and Professor Michael Mainelli, the now incoming Lord Mayor, was also in attendance at his home ward.



Livery Companies are very good at warm welcomes and fine hospitality. I experienced both from the Blacksmiths Company, at their Epithany Court lunch in January. It was wonderful to meet with the Master, Wardens and Court Assistants in such a convivial setting. I enjoyed speaking with past Lord Mayor Sir Charles Bowman, a fellow guest, as well as seeing Alderman Alastair King, our Middle Warden, on his "home ground". The Blacksmiths are Alastair's Mother Livery Company, and I am pleased that we are forging closer ties with them.



Our military affiliations afford us great opportunities to see into their world. And so it was with the RAF Rapid Air Capabilities

team who invited us to visit RAF Brize Norton for the day in March and experience some of their activities close up. It was fascinating to step inside their large scale personnel airplanes and see exactly what they can do. Ending the day on a flight simulator, landing the plane into Gibraltar was not something I had expected to do but was a fantastic experience, nonetheless. Shrove Tuesday now sees the traditional pancake race held in the courtyard outside Guildhall. The weather was kind to us and a full morning's "racing" took place. Each year the competition is massively oversubscribed and I was pleased to take part in the Master's qualifying race (for, I thought, the right to enter a full team in 2024). Held over 3 heats with 12 teams, competition was fierce, however I somehow managed to win. Imagine my embarrassment 90 minutes later when I had changed out of my gown and, importantly, running shoes to find that I had also (unknown to me, due to a total lack of understanding of the rules), qualified for the Grand Final. Unable to take my place in the final, it was probably not a bad thing as Tony Jarvis, then Master of my Mother Livery Company, the Framework Knitters, was also in the final, finishing a close second to a young liverywoman 30 years his junior. I suspect it would not have gone down well, if I had also pipped him to the post.

Speaking of my Mother Company, it has been my pleasure during the year to attend their events as normal but with the added distinction of not having any responsibility on the evening at all. A great pleasure! Mechanised knitting within the UK is a much smaller trade now than it was 30 years ago, but the Company does well to continue the traditions of its 366 year old heritage. It is known as one of the most welcoming Companies within the Livery, with a number of Consorts of past Masters of other Companies choosing to join it.



Each year the Masters of the Livery Companies of the City of London meet for a special weekend of activities and fellowship. Traditionally held in Ironbridge, the last two years have taken on a more regional theme and my Consort Linda and I had the pleasure of heading to Glasgow in June, on the invitation of Lord Mayor Nicholas Lyon and his Sheriffs Alastair King and Andrew Marsden. A wonderful weekend of tall ships, art collections, motor museums, whisky tastings, bagpipes, haggis and Charles Rennie McIntosh was much enjoyed by all and allowed us all to foster the friendship which defines the whole Livery movement.



Each spring, the Lord Mayor is kind enough to host a civic banquet for all Masters & Consorts. Ably accompanied this year by his Sheriffs, we were hosted to a lovely evening at Mansion House. It was one of those grand occasions that stays with you forever. My grateful thanks go to Lord Mayor Nicholas Lyons for his kind hospitality.



In May I was delighted to offer Freeman and their family an opportunity to join me and Linda and visit Leicester, where I live as part of my Master's Weekend. Over two days we crammed in visits to the University of Leicester Business School to discuss innovation, the Space Park to see cutting edge space exploitation science the King Richard III visitor centre, had a behind the scenes tour of Curve theatre and watched a performance of 42nd Street. It was a jam packed couple of days with everyone having a great time. We finished off with a black tie dinner at Knighton Hall, the residence of the Vice Chancellor of the University of Leicester, who greeted us with welcome drinks. My heartfelt thanks to all Freeman who came.

Throughout the course of the year I have had to continue to hold down my daytime Board roles and do a lot of juggling of diaries. One of my pleasures is being the Pro Chancellor and Chair of Council at the University of Leicester. Just to confirm that I do indeed like wearing official gowns, but not always in blue and yellow, I would like to share this photo of me officiating at one of our graduation ceremonies. It is always a pleasure to see such happiness from families and friends as their loved ones graduate and cross the stage. I am particularly pleased to give back to the University, as I was an undergraduate there in the 1980s and was invited to join Council there in 2009 to help them with their business spin out activities before working my way up to Chair. Being an Entrepreneur clearly brings opportunities....

You never know when a new and interesting sporting opportunity will turn up. In August 2022, in Past Master Judy Haddon's year, we entered a three-person team into the inaugural Inter-Livery Petanque competition. In what was a lovely evening out, we built lots of new friendships and ensured people knew who we were. I have to be honest, our petanque skills were pretty much non-existent, but we were plucky losers. In fact we didn't win a game and went out in the round-robin stage. Undeterred, the same team re-formed in August 2023. We started out in traditional form, and lost our opening game 5-0. Suffice it to say that we then showed true entrepreneurial spirit, fought back and won the other games in the round. We won our quarter final and the our semi final. We entered the final in a strong frame of mind but against an experienced team from the Architects Company. Disappointingly, we lost the overall competition on the final ball of the final end, but we came away with our heads held high (together with some nice bottles of wine, as well, I am pleased to report). Next year, we return!

The City of London is all about tradition. Even people not involved in the Livery movement are aware of the right of a Freeman of the City of London to drive their sheep across the Thames into the City. And so it is that once each year, Freeman do exactly that. While I've been a Freeman of the City of London for almost ten years, I have never before exercised my right but this year I did. Naturally, sheep driving while wearing my badge of office alongside fellow Entrepreneurs had a major draw to it as well. The day turned out just right. We had kind weather and overcame the train engineering works that tried to stop half a dozen of us making it into the City on time. Everyone had a splendid time, much fun was had by all and that one errant sheep of ours, that tried valiantly to head across on its own to frolic on the South Bank, was wrestled back into its pen.



As my year ends, I prepare for one of the most special experiences of the year. In actual fact, it is likely to be one of the most special experiences of my life. I am delighted to be representing the Entrepreneurs Company at a Banquet at Mansion House in the presence of King Charles & Queen Camilla to acknowledge the role of the City in the King's Coronation. Note, however, that the invitation isn't for Gary Dixon. It is for the Master of the Company of Entrepreneurs, which is absolutely right. It is a testament to how far we have come, in just nine years since formation, that we are now on the invitation list for such prestigious events. I am immensely grateful to have been afforded such a special opportunity to represent the Company at so many wonderful and varied events.

**Gary Dixon**





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# *Aldermanic Candidate - Rita W Bologna*

The Company of Entrepreneurs were proud this year as Court Assistant and Patron Rita W Bologna stood in one the most contested elections in the history of the City of London. She took 3rd place out of 9 candidates at the Aldermanic election for Langbourn Ward. Supporting businesses and communities is her true passion. Born in Tanzania, Rita is a British Asian, raised in the UK since the age of 2, from humble beginnings in Leicestershire. Before meeting her husband William, she was a single mother for many years facing several cultural and personal difficulties. Throughout her life, she has faced the tough challenges of diversity and inclusion, which has given her the experience and knowledge to know how to make a difference to all people.

Rita is a Serial entrepreneur with over 25 years of experience in initiating and building new businesses, since the sale of her city-based companies in 2017, she is now fulfilling her desire to 'give back' to the city. Her moto to her voters was 'My time will be your time'.

She was one of the first minority ethnic females to be awarded 'Business Woman of the Year, and 'Best New Company' by the Newsquest Group whilst working as a Police Special Constable. Her late father was her inspiration, he was an insurance agent who worked for over 30 years for Sun Life of Canada and through his hard work and tenacity was one of first Asians to achieve the Million Dollar Round Table. He went on to build a successful business empire. Childhood memories of how an Asian family can grow and achieve in the UK, has given Rita the experience and knowledge to know how to be an inspirational leader.

Rita has built some valuable networks and connections in the London Market in insurance, public, private, charitable and government sectors, that will enable her to bring long term relationships to a future Ward and the City of London. She will most certainly represent the wards interests to the City of London corporation and be a powerful voice for change and continual improvement.

'It's the inclusion of equality and diversity to ensure that we all support one and another, in our great City of London, that I believe will enrich our city for the future generations to come'. Rita says.

We are the world's leader for business, so our modern city should be represented with diverse thinking and a fresh approach. The city has rewarded Rita with a wonderful business career, she therefore, looks forward to standing again soon, in the hope of winning an Aldermanic seat.

We at The Company of Entrepreneurs support her all the way.





# *New Members and Membership in the Future*

**T**wenty Five more Freemen were admitted to the Company of Entrepreneurs in 2022-23 (8 at the end of Judy Hadden's Mastership and 17 so far during Gary Dixon's Mastership). The standard for the Freedom remains very high. The Company is now beginning to look ahead to its progression to becoming a full Livery Company, and with it a three-tier membership system. The new Member classes of Apprentice, Freeman, and Liverymen will represent entrepreneurs and those with business or personal interests in entrepreneurship across a much-enlarged organisation.

When the time comes, the Court anticipates that the number of Liverymen Entrepreneurs will be capped at 150, and that roughly half this number will be promoted from amongst the Freemen in the first 12 months. The criteria for the Livery will be as strict as it currently is for Freemen, and the new Freeman class will be expanded to include those entrepreneurs who are still actively building their businesses, as well as other professionals and employees working consistently in or with start-ups and company founders. The Apprentices will principally be for younger people starting out in their entrepreneurial journeys, or still studying for qualifications in business.

It should now be the ambition of every Freeman Entrepreneur to become a Freeman of the City of London. It will only be possible for Freeman Entrepreneurs who are also Freemen of the City of London to be clothed as Liverymen Entrepreneurs.

Please contact the Clerk's Office for an application form. A fee of £170 (currently, though set to rise in April) is payable to the City of London on receipt of the form. The Clerk, or his assistants can give you more information about this process.



**Mr Chris Daniels**

Chris is a tech and maths-focused entrepreneur, with multiple current Chair, NED and CXO positions. His main entrepreneurial role is with a drone business, Flare Bright Ltd. He is also a Director of ARPAS, the drone industry trade body.

Chris spends 1-day a week as the Royal Society Entrepreneur-in-Residence at Oxford University Mathematics Institute. He sits on the EPSRC's Mathematical Sciences Strategic Advisory Team, which funds academic maths in the UK. He is also on the advisory group of the new UK National Academy of Mathematics and is a Fellow of the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications.

Chris spent 10 years delivering financial solutions for top multinationals at Barclays, HBOS, and Lloyds Banks, focusing on derivatives and structured capital transactions. Chris subsequently

led Lloyds Banking Group's award-winning London 2012 B2B Olympic and Paralympic Games sponsorship activation.

He gained a mathematics degree from Oxford University before a 5-year Short Service Commission with The Parachute Regiment. He subsequently studied an MBA at IESE Business School in Barcelona.



**Mr Dinesh Dhamija**

Dinesh Dhamija has had a highly international career in Business, Charity and Politics.

He is the founder of ebookers.com. Ebookers was a Nasdaq and LSE listed company, with 2000 employees in 12 countries. Dinesh sold ebookers when sales reached a moderately successful \$1 Billion. Dinesh was made a member of the UK Travel Hall of Fame and was UK Businessman of the year 2003.

He has started many charities and given over £5 million to various causes.

Dinesh became an MEP for the Liberal Democrats from London in 2019 until Brexit.

He has now gone back to business and started 2 green energy businesses in Solar and Hydrogen. During COVID he wrote about his entrepreneurial journey in "Book It!" a publication which he modestly tells me is available on Amazon.

He is a Fellow of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge and a member of the Guild of Cambridge University Benefactors, and is a 2022 Principal Benefactor of the Company of Entrepreneurs Trust



**Mr Mark Heath**

Mark grew up listening to his Father talk excitedly about starting up a Lloyd's insurance Managing Agency. The plan was to join the family business after he

“wasted other peoples’ money” to get trained up (!) but he got “side tracked” by gaining a varied experience within the insurance sector.

During his most recent tenure at AIG he held various executive roles spanning COO of their Bermuda insurance company including their US / London offices, ran AIG’s UK Aviation business as well as heading up “Specialty” which included Marine insurance, Trade Credit , Political Risk, Surety, Environmental and MGA portfolios.

Mark then took a global role for AIG’s MGA business worldwide.

35 years of Corporate “life” was enough. So, 3 years ago, Mark started up a technology, data & innovation focused Underwriting Agency which collaborates with companies outside the insurance industry and is about to launch their second company in January.



**Mr Tom Renshaw**

Tom is a 26-year-old London based entrepreneur from Ipswich, who Co-Founded the craft beer and snacks online retailer Bier Company with fellow business partner Stefan White.

His entrepreneurial journey started in April 2019 going full time into his business and building it from the ground up as a 2-man band in 2019 to now an 18 employee company with annual revenues in excess of £5.5m, and 180,000 customers. His business operates UK wide and is expanding to the EU in 2023, with its growing workforce and demand for its craft beer and snack products.

Tom volunteers for local animal charities, and, some years ago was a member of the Ipswich Hospital Band playing for the patients in care.



**Ms Sydney Samuels**

Sydney is the Founder and CEO of Loop Not Luck - a diverse recruitment platform connecting underrepresented talent from across the UK to junior career opportunities. She started her entrepreneurial journey at 11, winning investment from Peter Jones on Dragon’s Den. With experience in the world of investment banking and at high-net worth wealth management fin-tech, she left to start Loop Not Luck. In 8 months, she has built the company to a team of 10, 5 figures in revenue and brought on an impressive list of clients - including The Economist Group alongside other companies committed to diversifying their workforce. Her interests are travel, family, social mobility and music. She holds a voluntary position as vice chair of the Career and Enterprise Company’s Youth Advisory Group - improving careers education across the UK. This week she was selected as one of NatWest and the Telegraph’s 100 brightest female entrepreneurs to watch.



**Mr Jon Spree**

Jon is the founder of Pingala Media Ltd, a software and web development agency based in Kent. Collaboration has been a cornerstone of Jons business for the last 13 years, working on developing relationships with a number of creative and digital partners, sharing knowledge, ideas and projects to ensure his Client service deliver is of the highest standards. Away from work Jons been involved with a number of Charitable projects, he’s

worked with RBLI on their befriending schemes for vulnerable individuals, has been a First Responder for SECAMB, and currently coaches at a local boxing gym, training and cornering individuals for White Collar Boxing events raising money for Cancer Research, plus he completed a very slow London Marathon for Macmillan a couple of years ago...



**Mr Kenneth Valledy (Ken)**

Ken was a Marketer, with over 15 years’ experience, and is a Fellow of The Chartered Institute of Marketing.

Since leaving the corporate world in 2014, he has immersed himself into the world of startups.

He is co-founder of Progressive Acceleration Limited. The company helps large corporate clients address their key business challenges through successful partnerships with start-ups – Progressive Acceleration provides the valuable ‘bridge’ between established firms and start-ups.

Ken has an ongoing passion for supporting new startup businesses and volunteers his time to mentor on numerous Accelerator Programmes. He also provides talks to students/potential founders on the benefits of starting their own business.

Ken is the host of ‘The Catalysts’ podcast, which interviews corporate leaders and founders on the key benefits of corporates and startups working together.

He is the co-author of ‘The Startup Lexicon’ book, which, since launching in June, has been warmly received – including by Accelerator Programmes and Universities teaching undergrad and post-grad Entrepreneurship courses. A US edition is planned for Jan 2023.





#### Mr Stefan White

Stefan, started his entrepreneurial journey at 11 years old, after his parents divorced he wanted to cheer up his father by buying him a £110 leather jacket, Stefan sold fizzy pop and chocolates at his school and purchased his Dad the jacket in three weeks, netting over £5,000 across the following 3 years. Jamie Oliver wouldn't have been impressed.

First in his family to go to University, studying Economics and Finance at Queen Mary London, where he met his best friend and business partner Tom. The two founded Bier Nuts bar snacks and went full-time in April 2019, they grew from 20 to 2000 pubs in just 9 months until the pandemic killed all of their sales channels. The pair pivoted into craft beer ecommerce where they've done over £10million in revenue in just over two years.

Stefan regularly does talks inspiring the next generation of entrepreneurs



#### Ms Caroline Sheridan

She is the founder of the eponymous Sheridan Resolutions, and through her company she has built up a faculty of skilled and diverse individuals, situated all around the world, committed to educating and developing their clients.

She is herself a leading executive coach, mediator and supervisor.

Caroline leads the Civil Mediation Council's Workplace and Employment Group. She has led its expansion across England and Wales and was a member of its Board from 2018 to 2020.

Today she is a member of a Projects Advisory Board. Caroline has built a strong committee of advisers and supporters including Acas and the CIPD. This work is very important to Caroline as she is passionate about creating inclusive workplace environments. Caroline has a strong commercial background having worked previously at Director and Board level and held Head of Compliance and HR roles for both UK and international corporates and finance institutions.



#### Mr Craig Kingaby

Craig Douglas Kingaby is the CEO of Meridian Group Holdings and the founder of a number of re/insurance broking consultancy and underwriting service businesses.

Having started his career in the City in 1985, Craig has always been UK based however spent considerable time operating in numerous global markets and financial centres.

The Meridian Group is a boutique insurance broking and underwriting services group and an accredited Lloyd's broker which commenced trading in 2002. The business has grown rapidly over recent years with ambitious future plans.

Craig is also an Advisory Board member of Whitepace, the leading London market digital trading platform.

Craig's principal interests outside of his enterprises is chasing round after his three children and supporting them in their various sporting endeavours.



#### Mr Trevor Worth

Trevor Winston Worth is the Founder and Managing Director of Portcullis Legals. Having started the firm as a 22 year old with no funding but plenty of drive, the firm celebrated its 35th anniversary last month. It specialises in providing bespoke estate planning advice to families and businesses. In January 2019 the firm achieved global publicity when it launched its 4-day week (long before hybrid working and the pandemic were ever a thing) and Portcullis and Trevor (gazetted in the press as the "best Boss Ever") are in high demand from businesses and academic institutions around the subject of flexible working. Trevor sits on the MBA Advisory Panel at the University of Essex and lectures at several Russell Group universities. He chairs The Best Foundation, a new membership organisation for the estate planning profession. Trevor has sat on the Legal Services Board Advisory Panel in London and is a Trustee on a number of charitable organisations. Portcullis Legals supports homeless charities with Plymouth Argyle FC and is the main sponsor of the Plymouth City Patriots basketball team.



#### Mr Khalid Talukder

Khalid studied at Imperial College, London, UK where he read Chemical Engineering from 1993-97 obtaining a Masters in Engineering Honours M.Eng (Hons), ACGI. He also obtained a Master's in Business Administration from Imperial College Business School, MBA DIC.

Professionally he has been FC30 regulated by the FCA of the United Kingdom and also by the DFSA, Dubai, UAE and is currently an Associate Member Chartered Institute for Securities and Investments, ACSI.

Khalid is a seasoned corporate and investment banking professional, spearheading the deployment of the Firm in reconnecting de-risked local corporates in emerging markets to global payment rails.

Khalid has held senior positions at UBS and Citi & Deutsche Bank for over a decade with responsibilities that included the management of Investment Banking, Transaction Banking, Credit & Risk, Corporate Banking and FX capital markets. He has spent most of his sales & product career developing innovative and successful value-added eFX solutions combining cash management with FX risk management.

He is the Founder and CEO of DKK Partners Ltd

He started his career at Unilever where he was part of the UCMDS graduate management programme. He is an Old Alleynian and Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Khalid and DKK Partners Ltd are 2023 Principal Benefactors of the Company of Entrepreneurs Trust



**Mr Kevin Cutler**

He started his career studying accounting and finance at university, and went on to work at Lloyds Bank as a multi-product advisor to high net worth individuals; he then moved into healthcare medical equipment sales which culminated in closing a £25m deal to supply Great Ormond Street Hospital with key medical supplies. Kevin is a serial entrepreneur always discussing new ventures or ways in which they could succeed.

Kevin set up his first business in commercial restructuring; he then left to set up his current stable of businesses under the ABC Umbrella which provides support services to over 800 independent consultants with a staff of over 60, a wealth optimisation business, a trust company based in Cyprus and a payment solutions business.

He is a keen golfer, and a supporter of the British Heart Foundation. I am delighted to report that he is already on track to become a Principal Benefactor of the Company of Entrepreneurs Trust.



**Mrs Sandra Roycroft-Davis**

Sandra Roycroft-Davis is a serial entrepreneur who started her career in the communications and PR industry and for many years ran her own PR and celebrity management agency. For 30 years Sandra has had a fascination with neuroscience and how the brain can help you succeed. In 2008 Sandra followed her heart and started the process of retraining. This led to her becoming a Behavioural Change specialist practising in Harley street. However, in 2011 her entrepreneurial tendencies and her desire to make a difference in the world, led her to the birth of an online health and wellbeing behavioural change business, the Slimpod Programme. This is now clinically proven, medically endorsed and has become an international success. Sandra is married with three children and enjoys playing tennis, swimming, skiing and walking her two dogs. She is also a keen traveller and loves running a health tech business because it means you can work from anywhere in the world!



**Mr Simon West**

Simon West has spent the last 30 years working with businesses around the globe to help them improve their sales performance. His work involves everything from business strategy to sales system implementation.

Simon's latest business, Sales Now Ltd designs and implements business systems that empower organisations to be more effective. Sales Now has made a name for itself building systems for smaller companies and organisations to help them effortlessly manage sales, service and membership.

Simon is also a professional sports photographer and can be found most weekends photographing Premier League Football or Premiership Rugby matches with his images appearing in the national press.



**Lt Col. Karl Eze**

Karl Eze is the co-founder and CEO of Point Zenith, a national security and defence Uncrewed Aerial Systems company founded in 2021.

He read Human Genetics at University College London before joining the British Army. Commissioning into the Royal Artillery, followed by a 12 year career that included service in 3 Commando Brigade, operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, a focus on defence technology and founding the Army's drone racing team. On leaving Regular service he had a



short stint at Goldman Sachs whilst also transferring to the Honourable Artillery Company, initially commanding the 1st City of London Battery. Karl subsequently served with London District, involved in Her Late Majesty's funeral. Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, he now serves with Regimental Headquarters Royal Artillery, still finding time to be on the HAC Court of Assistants as a trustee.

Karl enjoys family life with his wife, Kate and young daughter and son. He plays the violin with his children as a Suzuki parent and races drones now and then.



**Mr Kieron Garlic**

Kieron started working whilst still at school, volunteering his time to school drama and the theatre technology side of amateur dramatics. He found his passion and soon started a business. What started as freelance, then working from a garden shed developed into a business specialising in live and virtual events for corporate clients.

He enjoys managing and leading his teams, watching people develop both professionally and personally. His passion for entrepreneurship has led to his helping many friends to start their own businesses. He takes great pleasure in watching those around him succeed doing things they love. A trustee for a local sports charity for many years, he believes that a healthy and productive personal life promotes a successful business life. He loves riding motorbikes and enjoys street photography.



**Ms Charlotte Hunt (Charli)**

Charli is the Founder of "Proof Content" where her team creates Key Messaging and content for brands they love - providing their clients with high-quality human-touch marketing and website copy. Enterprise and literature runs in the family - her great, great grandfather was the founder of Foyles book shop

Charli is the Founder of Proof Content,

She comes from a long background of entrepreneurs in London – with her great-great-grandfather setting up. Several family members have been prominent entrepreneurs since. And with genes like this, she grew up knowing she wanted to combine her love of creativity with her down-to-earth business sensibility. And so Proof Content was born in 2012.

When she isn't working, Charli can be found reading excessive amounts of books and then filling her flat with them, walking her dog or wild swimming.



**Mrs Diane Rosewarne**

The CPD Standards Office was founded 10 years ago with 3 directors, my daughter Amanda Rosewarne, currently a Guild member, myself and a external Director. We have built up the business from sitting in the local coffee shop on a Friday morning to a full team of 15 colleagues which includes full time, part time and remote workers.

Our core business is to accredit training

providers to give a 'seal of competence' for their training activities in relation to the delegate training experience. We currently have 1150 providers and are currently expanding into other worldwide regions i.e. Middle East.

We are a very 'hands on' team and I currently work as Director of Membership (that's my formal title but I could be described as jack of all trades and master as none and there are always new daily challenges both with staffing and clients.

We aim to give the best customer service to our members and have ambitions to grow rapidly over the next couple of years adding more accreditation types to the existing Face to face activities, online activities, events, speakers and Coaches.

My charity interests have been varied having worked as a Mentor within Princes Trust and as a School Governor – my passion is to ensure that young people get every opportunity to succeed and to have similar opportunities as I did when I was leaving school.



**Mr Joshua Thomas (Josh)**

Josh Thomas is an award-winning innovation director with over 15 years of experience across various industries. He has a proven track record in building entrepreneurial ventures, products, and platforms by leveraging emerging technologies and addressing evolving consumer needs. Josh was recognised with the UN Development Program's 2020 Global Innovator award for his outstanding contribution to technology to combat COVID-19 in developing countries. Throughout his career, he has held leadership positions in renowned agencies and startups, successfully leading cross-disciplinary teams and driving innovative approaches to digital and physical product creation. With a global perspective and a passion for solving unique challenges, Josh is dedicated to embracing the unknown

and pioneering never-before-seen solutions.

Most recently, Josh's business "Pastoral" was the inaugural winner of the Entrepreneurs Award in Social Innovation



#### **Ms Glynis Wright MBE**

Glynis returned to University when she was 40 to study law. She excelled in her legal studies and then became a specialist divorce lawyer. Glynis set up her own law firm in 2010, retained 100% of the shareholding and then sold her shares to Nelsons LLP in 2020. On the same day, Glynis was notified that she had been awarded an MBE for her Services to Female Entrepreneurship in the New Years Honours List.

Glynis left Nelsons this year to run her own business again having successfully integrated her team of lawyers with Nelsons over the previous two years. As GW Growth Consultancy Ltd Glynis and her team specialise in business development for the legal sector. She is also Chair of the Advisory Board for Business and Law at De Montfort University and is a Board Director for the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership. Glynis was President of the Leicestershire Law Society 2019-20 and served on its Executive Committee for 7 years.

Her successes and accolades continue and Glynis will shortly receive an Honorary Doctorate in Law from the University of Leicester.



#### **Dr Hanafiah Armstrong (Hani)**

Hani's early career was spent in the publishing sector at Consumers' Association. Hani formed part of the Which? Online launch team in 1996, an early entrant into the paid-content market and the UK's largest subscription site at the time. Later followed marketing and commercial roles within the digital advertising industry. In 2021 Hani founded online advertising company Dengi Media. In 2022 she became CEO of the RSA Trust which funds charitable activities in Enfield.

Hani holds a PhD titled Commerce and Altruism in UK Charities, researching management decision making behaviour in not-for-profit organisations. In the warmer months Hani enjoys wild swimming at Kenwood Ladies' Pond.



#### **Mr Mohit Bajaj**

Mohit is the co-founder of Simplex Services. He is a technology leader, with expertise in strategy, solutioning and managing teams to enhance customer experience. Simplex's speciality is Value Creation and Optimisation of Client IT Budgets.

He is a Governor at St. John's School and College, Brighton, a Co-Founder of the Brighton & Hove cultural platform "Indian Colours", sits on the Members' Advisory Panel for Sussex Innovation, and is a Strategic Advisor at the picture story publisher Beyond Words.

His entrepreneurial ambition took shape with Simplex Services, where they are working towards making their clients future ready and using technology and innovation for social good.

Away from the office he enjoys Reading, Biking, Racquet sports, Cricket, and Music. Although, being an entrepreneur, most of them are becoming spectator interests rather than actively involved!



#### **Mr Chaun Hong Khaw (Eric)**

Eric Khaw is a Malaysian-born engineer and innovative entrepreneur who embodies a unique fusion of Eastern heritage and a Western mindset. With Computer Science, Eric built a successful career as an IT consultant, earning a stellar reputation for streamlining major corporations' operations through strategic enterprise application implementation.

Eric's entrepreneurial spirit led to the establishment of MooBoo - a thriving bubble tea franchise business with over 100 locations creating more than 600 job opportunities, even amidst global challenges.

Eric envisions expanding his community-focused business model to other countries, inspiring young individuals to engage in both business and community service.

Beyond his professional endeavours, Eric is deeply committed to philanthropy, actively engaging in various charitable initiatives, driven by a strong desire to create a positive societal impact.

His personal philosophy, "do what you can, with what you have, where you are," continues to drive his mission of making a meaningful difference, one step at a time.





**Mrs Tee Dobinson**

Tee Dobinson is the founder of Baizdon, a Creative Agency which makes publications for exceptional places helping them celebrate and monetise their brand. With a passion for making things easy for people, Tee is also a speaker, an award-winning author, and executive mentor.

Tee has trained over 100,000 people, sold over 100,000 books in the UK and Baizdon has produced publications for exceptional companies worldwide. Tee created The Tower Bridge Cat to increase the family offering at 'London's Defining Landmark'. Bella the Tower Bridge Cat is now much loved by children worldwide and the brand currently has four books, extensive merchandise and a Family Trail running throughout the attraction.

Telling stories is an important part of who Tee is – connecting with audiences, making them smile, making them think and inspiring them to take action. She hopes her stories, along with her expertise and chutzpah, can both give back and add value to the work of the Company of Entrepreneurs.



# *Election Court Results*



**A**t the Election Court, held at Guildhall on Thursday 29th June 2023, the following were elected to serve as Officers of the Company of Entrepreneurs from 14th November 2023:

**As Master : Mark Norman Huxley**

**As Senior Warden : Alastair John Naisbitt King DL**

**As Middle Warden : James John Sherrington Talbot**

**As Junior Warden : Jatinder Singh Wasu**

The Master, Mr Gary Dixon, earnestly congratulated the Master and Wardens Elect, and looked ahead with anticipation to the continued good stewardship of the Company of Entrepreneurs.

The Election Court is one of Company's statutory meetings, at which the Court elects those members of the Court who will serve as Master and Wardens from the following November.

Although it is customary that each of the serving Wardens is promoted to the next most senior office, any full member of the Court may be elected as Junior Warden. A Nominations Committee (the five most recent Past Masters) sits two weeks before Court to review candidates for the role of Junior Warden, and it makes a recommendation to the Court as to who to elect.

The Court consists of the Master, three Wardens, the five most recent Past Masters, and between six and twenty Freeman Entrepreneurs who sit as Assistants. Assistants are elected to serve for a term of five years each. The Treasurer is a voting member of Court, and is appointed for a two-year term.

A formal announcement of those elected is made at the Election Court Banquet, which takes place later in the Summer.





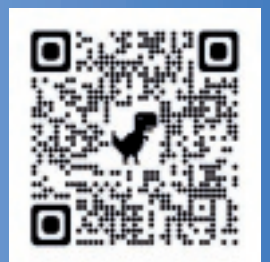
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# The Spring Lunch

The Spring lunch is nearly here, Tuesday 14th March 12.30pm at One Moorgate Place. Tickets are selling fast...Did you know that our guest speaker this year is the wonderful Glynis Wright MBE. Awarded an MBE in 2020 for her services to female entrepreneurship, Glynis is passionate about ensuring more women can start up businesses and achieve their dreams.

Why not join us to learn more about her inspirational journey... This is truly one event not to be missed.

Here is just a little bit about Glynis but to hear more please do book your place as soon as possible.

## Glynis Wright MBE



At the tender age of 40, Glynis walked away from secure employment and went back to University to study law. Within five years, she had become a Partner in a law firm but this still didn't satisfy her entrepreneurial desire. As a try Entrepreneur does she founded Glynis Wright & Co and has never looked back. Glynis grew her business through her own personal brand, establishing it as one of the premier family law, divorce and mediation firms in the Midlands. Having exited in 2020 to a national law firm, Glynis is now setting up new ventures which build upon her reputation and sales skills.

As a Past President of the Leicestershire Law Society, Glynis and her firm have been recognised in the Women Solicitors awards alongside the National Law Society Excellence Awards as leaders in their fields.





# Sheriff's Ball

When I was invited to join freemen of the Company of Entrepreneurs at The Sheriff's Ball, I wasn't quite sure what to expect. I had visited the prestigious Guildhall on a number of occasions in the past, both in my capacity leading a national business support/executive development programme, and supporting others in various civic events, but on none of my previous visits was I invited to wear a sequined mask for a 'night at the grand opera'!

As we walked down to the guildhall crypt, we were welcomed by figures in corsets and elaborate venetian masks. This set the tone for the evening; extravagant beauty, intriguing mystery and echoes of the past.

After descending the stone staircase, we were warmly greeted by Sheriff Alastair King, the host of the evening, and Middle Warden of the Company of Entrepreneurs. As someone relatively new to London's Livery companies, I was heartened by how welcome I was made to feel by all those in attendance. Indeed, any nervousness I did feel was brushed aside by the kindness and openness of those in attendance from the Company.

I felt somewhat uncomfortable walking through my modern hotel lobby wearing both white tie and a mask and so was relieved that other guests wore masquerade masks and white/black tie and ball gowns. The soft up lighting of the undercroft reflected in champagne glasses, jewellery and ornate dresses. I was also surprised by the number and variety of livery companies in attendance; I spoke to freemen of the woolmen, carpenters and technologists and admired many masters/warden medals from afar, quietly guessing which company they represented!

We were then led upstairs and to the great hall. It's natural gothic splendor had been further enhanced by architectural lighting, theatrical decoration and a large dance floor. The 'mask' outline, made famous by the Phantom of the Opera was projected brightly onto the walls and dance floor. Flanking the room on



both sides were a row of large screen displays. These displayed details of the charity auction and other event information.

The evening itself, the Phantom at the Sheriffs' Ball, was a charity event in aid of the Lord Mayor's charity appeal, with proceeds going to National Numeracy and MQ Mental Health.

We were seated around large tables and were treated to a sumptuous three course meal. Guests were also given a chocolate brownie cookie to take away with them. My particular highlight was the dessert which was a selection of fruit and pastry adorned with a large 'phantom mask' and chocolate straw.

The evening reached its crescendo with a captivating medley inspired by the Phantom of the Opera, where live performers roamed the venue, casting an enchanting spell upon attendees. Adding an extra touch of grandeur, a giant Phantom mask was projected onto the walls of the magnificent Great Hall.

Fundraising activities were undertaken with elegance, including a silent auction offering an impressive selection of 52 prize lots. Among the dazzling treasures, a breathtaking pair of Odendaal diamond earrings stole the spotlight. To inject some lighthearted fun, a True or False fundraiser delighted guests. All 440 guests were slowly whittled down to a final few – with both Rita Bologna and Mark Huxley progressing to the final stages at the front of the room, before Mark won it.

We danced to a blended group (saxophone and violin accompanying a DJ) playing popular classics. The dance floor was still full when the event came to a formal end. It was not like any previous visit to the guildhall, but an excellent evening which will stay with me for many years. I thank the Company of Entrepreneurs for making me feel so welcome.

**Ben Jacobs**



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# Inter Livery Sailing Regatta

At 6am on Saturday 20th May, the sailing vessel 'Mercurian' slipped out of her berth and began the 12mile trip to Island Sailing Club start line off Cowes. The crew, consisting of; Talan, Paddy, Chris (three Freeman of the Company of Entrepreneurs), Bertie (son of Chris) and Neil (friend of Talan), were representing the CoE at the annual Inter Livery Yacht Regatta for the Lord Mayors Trophy.

Mercurian, a Colvic UFO 27, is berthed at the top of Portsmouth harbour in the family run Wicormarine Yacht Haven and owned by Talan Skeels-Piggins. She had just been fitted out with a brand new set of Solo Sails race sails, and it would be their first time driving the boat forwards (the skipper did have a small concern that they might not fit). There was a clear sky, a very gentle breeze from the North and five excited sailors ready to take part in their first sail and race together.

Once clear of the other boats on the pontoons, the sails were hoisted and the boat was sailed down the harbour against the flooding tide. In a matter of minutes the wind had picked up and Mercurian was able to put on about 5kts under sail, which all fitted and look amazing, much to the relief of the skipper!

Out of the harbour the wind continued to increase and the 12 mile trip only took 2.5hrs, arriving well ahead of the planned race start at 10.15am. A phone-call from race control informed us that a few changes had been made to the instructions. There were now two racing classes, we were placed in Class Two with the smaller boats (36ft and under) due to our ISC Rating, and we would be starting at 10.45am. So, lots of time to enjoy being out on the boat, getting ourselves ready and planning the course. As owner/skipper, Talan would helming for the actual races, Paddy was on Mainsheet, Chris and Bertie on the Headsail sheets and Neil was the race tactician. Outside of racing, the various crew members took turns in helming.

Race One and a very poor start being some 30seconds off the line when the gun went. The skipper had been overly cautious, as although it was a close hauled start there was a fast flowing tide pushing boats over the start line. It would be easy to go over the line before the starting signal, and then have to work really hard to get back across the start line to re-start the race. However, the high position on the outer distance mark of the startline did count in the favour of the crew. Our first leg was beat up to windward for a starboard (right side) rounding, then cutting back across the others to the next mark. As the second shortest boat in the fleet Mercurian was expected to be left quickly behind the other yachts. However, with the winds now gusting to Force 4, the boats heeled right over, the new sails did their job and we managed to keep ahead of a few of the opposition. Carefully navigating the tide and marks in the Solent kept the boat in contention until the final reaching leg back to the start line. With smaller sails than the others, we were caught

and overtaken but one of the yachts and others got further away. We ended up fifth.

There was a 60minute break for lunch whilst a new course was issued and timings promulgated for the afternoons race. During that time the team dropped the headsail and kept close to the shore just on the outskirts of Cowes. Everyone felt they were getting used to their specific roles and all manoeuvres were becoming more professional.

Race Two and far better start position. However, the tide had changed and all the yachts struggled to make decent headway against the outgoing tidal stream. Those who got to the windward mark and then had the tide helping them quickly gapped those of us struggling against the tide. The wind was very inconsistent and would drop to a calm Force 2 before powering back up to a stronger Force 4. The boat seemed to go well in the stronger breeze and was able to stay with some of the other, larger, competitors during those moments. The tacks and gybes were better, boat speed was kept up and the final result was a third.

After the two races the rest of the competitors headed back to Cowes for afternoon tea and preparations for the evening meal. We, on the other hand, turned around, headed back into the oncoming tide and sailed back for Portsmouth Harbour. A celebratory non-alcoholic beer was cracked open by the entire crew to toast our first set of races. We eventually berthed alongside at 7pm. A very long day, but one that everyone enjoyed. The sun had been shining for the majority of the day, the breeze had kept the sailing lively, and a few took the opportunity for a quick nap on the way back across the Solent waters.

Combining the times with the ISC Rating meant we had to wait for the results to be published online. When finally published we had come Third in our class of boat and also won the Craig Cup. A great result for a newly formed crew and I hope we did the Company proud.

The 2024 Inter Livery Sailing Regatta will be over the 17th and 18th May. In a post race review, crew mentioned they would like a bigger boat, plus the chance to go over to Cowes for the Friday and Saturday evening events. So plans are in place to sell the UFO27 and buy a UFO34, an increase of 7ft giving a bigger cockpit area and therefore the option to have more CoFE Freeman join in, should they like to. Plus, have the opportunity to sail over on Friday, practice some manoeuvres, then take part in the meals and shore side events over the weekend. The 2023 crew are already expressing a desire to compete again....get in early! We also want to get some CoFE team-wear together, so any thoughts are greatly welcomed. Thank you.







# *Award winning Indian Restaurant Spice Bazaar hosts the Company of Entrepreneurs -Masters Weekend*

No more than a 10-minute walk from our Campus hotel, on a warm May evening, the Master and consort led their flock to a delightful cosy restaurant where a warm welcome was offered by the front of house team.

Shown to our table, seats were offered and quickly taken, we then all eagerly reviewed the menu and ordered Cobra's and wine (Lord Bilimoria would be proud!). The menu presented a host of delicious sounding offers to select from. As with all extensive menus, it was challenging to find what to select, but the Master came to the rescue of this group of ten intrepid entrepreneurs by taking charge and ordering delights for all. A swift entrance of the drinks was a welcome sight, as we all greeted the Master with a resounding 'cheers!' followed by our first sip of cold amber nectar or hearty wine.

As easy conversation started to flow (it never seems challenging for that to happen at a table of entrepreneurs) we were served the delights of poppadom, sweet yogurt, pickles, chutneys and yes, the hot one, there's always a 'hot' one. While some pronounced the 'hot' one delicious and mild, others, me included, took a generous spoonful, spreading it on a slice of poppadom; eagerly taking my first bite and soon realising my mistake, trusting my fellow entrepreneur's taste! Cobra to the rescue!

With conversation about books, culture and food there was lots to chat about, including the days events at the University Business School and the Leicester Space Park. With great conversation, it seemed, in no time at all, we heard sizzling plates of food approaching, as plate after plate were delivered along the table of ten. When any great meal is delivered conversation often pauses and this occasion was no exception, as each of us surveyed the food in front of us, aromas teasing our host of senses causing our expectant stomachs to eagerly anticipate the upcoming feast we were to enjoy. Following the initial drama of food service, more drinks were welcomed, and conversation again commenced as we all tucked into exceptionally fine dining delivered by this award-winning restaurant and its attentive team.

Our stomachs full, the first night together a success, we wished our restaurant team a good night and walked off through the Leicester suburb heading towards what was to be our home for the two nights we were there.

Now about that bill!









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*Amy Hopper Founder of TOA Group*

In my decade of entrepreneurship I have fought a pesky inner critic on numerous occasions. The little voice who helpfully tells you you're not good enough, asks why you're wasting your time on your business and tells you to get a "proper job." Simply put, there is a disparity between how good you are and how good you think you are. Sound familiar?

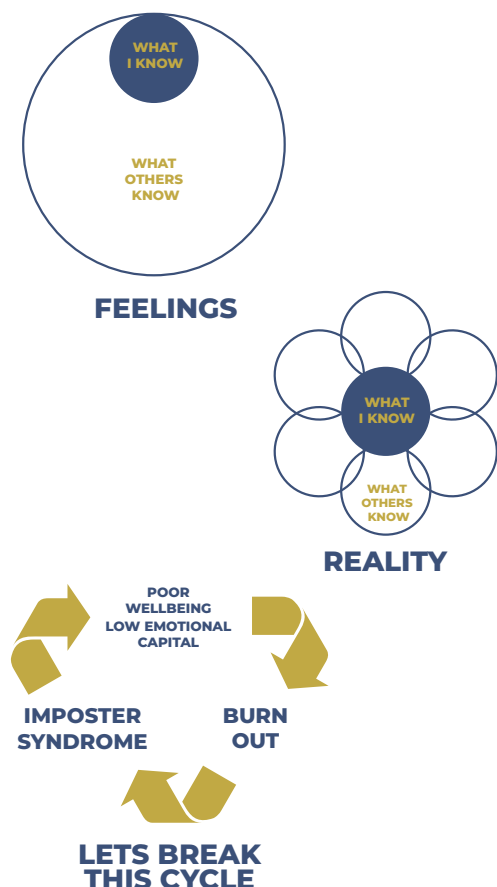
Low morale, poor performance, lack of enthusiasm, withdrawal from collaboration, not speaking up with great ideas, stagnant progress, low confidence, and lacking in self-esteem. These are some of the issues my clients have discovered in their teams, and in themselves.

When challenged with an inner critic bringing us down how can we perform at our best? How can we remove this wellbeing barrier to produce high-performing, collaborative, confident teams?

It starts with a conversation, tackling the inner critic, and realising the person sat next to you is probably experiencing similar challenges, no matter what their level or role. Empathy is the most important business skill you will ever use, and one which is regularly overlooked across all industries and companies. This is understandable; so much of business and how we measure performance is dependent on facts and figures, not emotions. However, the two are very much intertwined.

While you can set targets for growth and profits, the most successful business owners realise that Sharon in Sales is never going to care about the P&L as much as you do. She has her own goals, aspirations, challenges, and insecurities. She sometimes comes into work thinking she's not good enough and starts her day with an inner voice telling her she's going to fail. Imagine if that wasn't the case? Imagine the impact on your bottom line if your team came into work feeling good about themselves. That's the change I help companies achieve.

If you'd like to learn more about Imposter Syndrome, TOA Group, and Amy's work please get in touch on LinkedIn.





# *The art of the personal sale – converting the digital nomads*



February 28th saw the first Ask an Entrepreneur event of 2023 at London Business School. Once again a well-attended event saw Founder Freeman Shernaz Engineer make the case for the personal sale in a world dominated by online engagement. In the face of bots and ChatGPT AI, the session opened with a clear divide of opinion with the attending Freeman voting for Personal Selling as an important part of their business and the attending LBS community sitting firmly on their hands.

Over the next 20 minutes, Shernaz outlined a process for personal selling that had underpinned her success as an entrepreneur. Whilst guiding the audience through a step-by-step process, the cross-over to all selling approaches was soon realised by the audience as questions sought to adapt Shernaz's wisdom to their own business models.

Shernaz was able to repurpose her approach to a modern context with ease ably assisted by resident MC and Founder Freeman Barnaby Wynter.

Although questions came thick and fast, three LBS businesses were waiting in the wings. As each came to the stage they outlined their businesses and then posed a question for Shernaz on the impact of Personal Selling on gaining retail distribution, scalability and new B2B channels.

Adeptly answered with input from the floor, each business owner left the stage with real value from the insights. Thank you to Adity, Tomy and Sarthok for participating so willingly.

Summarised by Barnaby, the session ended with rapturous applause for Shernaz after a second vote on the importance of personal selling in business was characterised by a significant increase of hands on its merit among the young entrepreneurs.

That enthusiasm was taken to the Garden Room for drinks and nibbles provided by LBS and some serious networking.

Thank you, Osman, Rubin and the whole LBS team and look forward to the next Ask an Entrepreneur at LBS in both October and November.

# *Five Talents 25th Anniversary:*

## *Celebrating Women, Empowerment and Entrepreneurship*



The theme of women in Africa transforming their own lives, and the lives of their families and communities through entrepreneurship was at the heart of an inspiring networking event at the Reform Club earlier this month. This year the Company of Entrepreneurs has supported the charity Five Talents, which works in central and eastern Africa in some of the most economically disadvantaged communities, providing primarily women with the opportunity to learn, earn, save and invest - many starting businesses and employing others from within their community. In the most challenging of circumstances - where food shortages, drought and conflict often combine to undermine opportunity - women are overcoming these challenges through their own skills, determination, and entrepreneurial spirit. This year Five Talents marked its 25th anniversary, and as part of the celebration was delighted to be part of this special event hosted by Judith Donovan CBE alongside members of the Company of Entrepreneurs, the Reform Club and other invited guests.

The focus of the event centered around entrepreneurship and celebrated both the sustainable impacts of Five Talents through its Savings Group programmes, but also enjoyed an inspiring contribution from The Company of Entrepreneurs Patron Rita W Bologna. Rita spoke passionately about her own personal journey from her early life in Tanzania, to becoming an award winning Business Woman in the City of London.

Reflecting on the evening Rita said:

'It was an absolute honour to have been the guest speaker at the Five Talents event at the wonderful Reform Club. Being able to share the challenges and successes of my own personal entrepreneurial journey was a real pleasure. As a Patron of The Company of Entrepreneurs I am delighted that our Trust supports Five Talents UK.'

Rachel Lindley, Co-CEO of Five Talents UK, said:

'We are so grateful for the support and encouragement from the Company of Entrepreneurs. In this our 25th anniversary year, it is a real privilege to have opportunities like this to share about the sustainable impacts of our programmes. But our celebration is not of what we are doing, but of what happens when women and men come together to use their own talents and resources to shape their own futures, using their skills and determination to build businesses and bring hope to their communities. It is truly transformational entrepreneurship.'

**If you would like to find out more about the work of Five Talents UK please visit the Five Talents website or email [rachel.lindley@fivetalents.org.uk](mailto:rachel.lindley@fivetalents.org.uk)**



# *EASI* The Entrepreneurs Award In Social Innovation 2023

In its second year and already feeling like an established part of our programme, EASI, through which the Company of Entrepreneurs and our Trust provides support to early-stage entrepreneurs developing innovative solutions to big social & environmental problems, continues to go from strength to strength.

We are delighted that the University of Leicester School of Business recognising the importance of the issue being addressed, became our EASI '23 Partner and main sponsors. It is a great honour to have such eminent partners, their input has been so helpful to the development of EASI and we are very grateful to them for their support.

Applications for EASI '23 opened in February and as last year, we had an incredible response receiving almost a hundred eligible applications in just three months, from which to select this year's finalists.

Once again freeman Tony Matharu, Founder and CEO of Integrity International Group, provided his valuable input by joining our judging panel and generously hosting the EASI '23 Final and reception. This year our finalists and guests joined us in his newly opened Tower Suites rooftop Skyline event space with breath-taking views of the surrounding area. A most fitting venue for a very special evening.

At the final, the founders from our five finalists outlined their business ideas and plans to an engaged and interested audience and answered questions from the judging panel. The audience had the opportunity to cast their individual votes with the judging panel making the final selection. From conversations had with our guests and by sitting with the deliberating judging panel, it was apparent that the selection of a winner would not be easy from such a talented selection of finalists. After much consideration, DiRibona - addressing the issue of soil health, was chosen and Co-Founders Beenish Luqman & Syd Zahid were invited to the stage to be congratulated by The Master Entrepreneur Gary Dixon.



The formal EASI '23 award presentation was subsequently held, in the beautiful Courtyard at Merchant Taylors' Hall before our Election Court Banquet. It was a lovely Summers' evening and a perfect setting for such a happy occasion.

Although there is currently only one EASI Winner each year, all our EASI Finalists are gifted a valuable package of support from the Company of Entrepreneurs including a nominated mentor, access to EASI Experts, Drawing Room membership at the Trampery Old Street, and invitations to EASI Masterclasses. Special mention goes to Kate Jolly for her assistance in delivering this support.

Our first EASI '23 Masterclass was hosted at the Trampery Fish Island in September. Freeman Stephen Page, Founder and CEO of SFC Capital provided an invaluable and detailed talk on funding strategy with many valuable tips and was very well received. Further Masterclasses will be held on important and relevant topics such as Intellectual Property, Brand and Finance, With a keenness to give back & make a difference, freemen Nick Stretton and Patrick Smith established their annual Tribe Charity Golf Day and have raised many thousands of pounds for charitable causes. The proceeds from the last two Tribe Golf Days, totalling in excess of £16,000, have most generously been donated to The Company of Entrepreneurs' Trust to support our EASI programme, a most incredible achievement for which we are most grateful.

Arrangements are well underway for our EASI '23 Showcase event, which is most generously being hosted by our good friends The Drapers' Company at their beautiful and historic Hall on the 17th January 2024. We hope that you will join us and discover more about our EASI '23 cohort, the progress they are making and how you can support.

The feedback that we receive about our EASI programme and its impact is truly heart-warming and would not be possible without the generosity and expertise of our freemen, and also our EASI Supporters, Champions, and Partners. Thank you, we are most grateful to you all.

**Judy Hadden**  
Immediate Past Master & EASI Programme Lead



# *The 6th Tribe Charity Golf Day...*

## *In aid of EASI*

On a beautiful sunny September day just outside of Croydon, the Company of Entrepreneurs were delighted to participate for the second year running in the Tribe Charity Golf Day at the incredible Addington Golf Course.



This year the Entrepreneurs upped the stakes proudly to entering not one but 3 teams reflecting our keen and growing golf society.

For the second year the team at Tribe chose the Company of Entrepreneurs EASI award as the benefacting charity and through a combination of fees, raffle prizes and auction proceeds a fantastic £7,150 was raised for our very worthy initiative.

The day kicked off with a shot gun start and culminated in a slap-up dinner, with an address from our Master Gary Dixon and thrilling charity auction, with exciting prizes generously donated from a number of our members including golf days, holidays and a box for the NFL in London, all presided over by our very own consummate auctioneer David Selves.



In true Entrepreneur style not only did we play to win but we set new event records. Our 3rd team put in an outstanding card placing them in 5th place.

But the real hero of the day with a very solid and energetic performance was our very own freeman Robin Baker scoring 40 points and taking home the first-place trophy and a brand-new golf bag to boot.



However, a very special mention must go out to Sarah Jewell another fellow Entrepreneur who broke records by being the first lady golfer to compete in the Tribe annual event, may this be the first of many future female contenders.

A fantastic day was had by all thanks to the great weather, amazing company and incredible hospitality of the Addington Team.

A huge thank you to all who donated prizes, placed bids, sponsored and competed, to David Selves for his voluntary vocal skills, but most of all thank you to both Patrick Smith and Nick Stretton of Tribe Advisory for their continued support of EASI and putting on a jolly good day.

An amazing day was had by all.

Tribe have created the Tribe Charity & Community page on their website [www.tribe-advisory.com](http://www.tribe-advisory.com), so you can read the post event thoughts and shout outs from the day, as well as view the event gallery.

Want to join the Company of Entrepreneurs Golf society and hear about future events? Simply drop Fellow Freeman Chiles an email [Chiles@ecoproof.com](mailto:Chiles@ecoproof.com)

That's all "Fore" now !



# *The Inaugural Cartwright Cup: The Marketors vs. The Entrepreneurs*

On a drizzly Thursday evening in late October, right in the heart of the City, two spirited teams, The Marketors and The Entrepreneurs, gathered for a memorable evening of crazy golfing, drinks and great camaraderie.

Master Entrepreneur Gary Dixon captained a team of 6 entrepreneurs including the Senior Warden and Junior Warden. Master Marketor Glyn Cartwright Captained the Marketors, a team which included their Senior warden and a past master. Swingers Crazy Golf was the chic setting for this battle of the titans.

Renowned for its imaginative and wacky course design, the 9-hole course features an array of challenging greens, giant windmills, and of course free flowing drinks.

## **The Epic Showdown**

Both teams teed off, brimming with enthusiasm and competitive spirit. In a gripping contest of skill and precision, both teams were neck and neck right through the course.

As the competition reached its climax the final hole was a true test of metal, featuring a daunting watermill that players had to navigate their balls through to reach the hole.

With just 1 point in it the final score had to be recounted several times with official adjudicators from both sides.

## **Team Cup Victors**

But with a score of 179 points The Entrepreneurs' snatched victory from the Marketors 180 points.

## **Individual Cup Winner**

Whilst the Entrepreneur's may have won the First "Team" Cartwright Cup, in true sportsmanship the individual cup was a draw between Marketor Fergus Naughton and our very own Entrepreneur Barnaby Wyntner with an astonishing 26 points.

Of special note was a hole in one scored by the Master Entrepreneur on the 8th hole and a hole in one scored by Marketor Fergus and the first.

Most importantly of all this was a great social event bringing together two great Companies from our wonderful City and a great night was had by all.

The Cartwright Cup has been launched to create an inclusive annual event bringing more companies together for a fun and social evening with the backdrop of a small competition. If you have any suggestions for future activities for the 2024 Cartwright Cup, would like to invite another Worshipful Company, or would like to be involved please contact Chiles Cartwright of the Entrepreneurs: [chiles@ecoproof.com](mailto:chiles@ecoproof.com)





**Lysis Group** is an international compliance advisory and business services group focused on the financial markets and other regulated sectors such as digital assets, gaming and real estate. We service a global client list from offices in London, New York, Singapore, Dublin, Frankfurt and Paris.

Lysis assists firms with regulatory interaction including obtaining licenses and permissions, on-going supervisory liaison and intrusive regulatory intervention (e.g. UK Section 166 remediation). We design, implement, review and enhance governance and compliance frameworks and policies and work with customers to embed them in their business operations.

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# Raleigh Lecture 2023

## Is Enterprise Sustainable?

The Raleigh Lecture 2023, organised by the Company of Entrepreneurs with the support of the Worshipful Company of Drapers, addressed one of the most challenging subjects faced by society globally – can the commercial objectives of entrepreneurship and the growth of business be aligned with the increasingly imperative need to manage human activity sustainably?

In the splendid setting of Drapers' Hall in the City of London on 22 May 2023, a gathering of representatives from 8 schools and other educational organisations brought 105 students, plus a number of staff members, to participate in the activities associated with the Lecture. Named after the explorer Sir Walter Raleigh, an ancestor of Entrepreneurs Past Master Peter Hewitt, the Lecture has in previous years addressed a series of subjects associated with the development of business and trade.

The day's events began with an address by Master Entrepreneur Gary Dixon, who welcomed the students to Drapers' Hall and stressed the importance of keeping a clear focus on the environmental impact of business activity. The Entrepreneurs' Clerk, Duncan Simms, then outlined the programme for the day, before 12 groups of students were assembled in different parts of Drapers' Hall to discuss their views on the question of sustainability in society today. Each group discussion was led by a member of the Company of Entrepreneurs Education Committee – the students were clearly inspired by the key topic of the lecture and expressed a wide range of views reflecting the importance of a sustainable approach to business activity. There was a definite understanding of the need to conduct human activities in such a way that the legacy left for future generations shows respect for the environment and its resources. A brief summary of the main points raised in each of the discussion groups was then presented by Ben Martin, chair of the Entrepreneurs' Education Committee.

Following this briefing, the main business of the day commenced. Richard Winstanley, Clerk of the Drapers' Company, formally welcomed the assembled group to the historic Hall. The Raleigh Lecture 2023 was delivered by Timothy Bovy, co-founder and CEO of Six Sentinels, a company established with the clear objective of promoting the importance of ESG (Environmental, Social, and corporate Governance) among business leaders and policy-makers. Tim's long background in legal and business consulting has led to deep insights in the field of ESG, and his series of published articles has addressed the responsibilities of business leaders on this subject.

The critical questions faced by entrepreneurs today include whether it is possible to put people and the planet before profit, and whether sustainable business activity is indeed possible – and if it is, how can this be measured and reported upon?

Tim covered a range of different aspects of the ESG agenda, with a clear focus on the legal and regulatory frameworks that are becoming established. The issues associated with the concept of "Double Materiality" were explored – reporting on both financial and non-financial performance. The regulatory externality

introduced by the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive places a requirement on businesses to measure and report on the way that their activities impact on the environment. Non-financial reporting represents a significant challenge for virtually all major business organisations today, and extends to their partners and supply chains.

As well as addressing the regulatory challenges, Tim went on to cover some of the historical and philosophical influences behind Double Materiality. These include the Japanese business concept of Sanpo Yoshi, a three-way representation of business value: good for the seller, good for the buyer, and good for society. Can the economy we create serve the needs of our whole population?

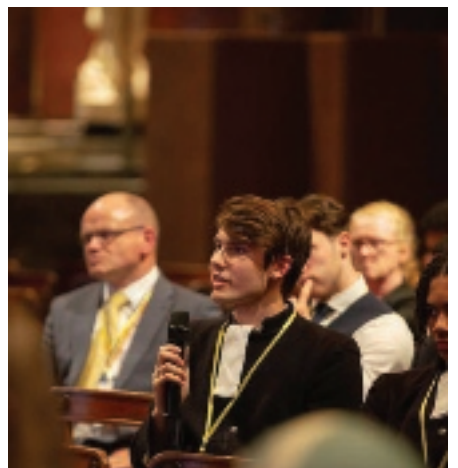
As well as obligations and regulations, the challenges presented by ESG also create opportunities, and it is with this perspective that entrepreneurs can express their innovative instincts by creating and developing solutions to these emerging requirements.

At the conclusion of the lecture, a panel discussion was led by Mark Huxley, Senior Warden of the Company of Entrepreneurs. The panel included Tim Bovy, Past Master Peter Hewitt, Veronica Heaven, Leader of the Company's Task Force for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and Alastair Owens, Professor of Historical Geography at Queen Mary University of London and President of the Geographical Association (2022–23). Questions from the audience were addressed by the members of the panel. The responses from the panel reflected a range of different perspectives on the motivation of business leaders – after all, any business has to meet the needs of its shareholders as well as the obligations that we have to the environment.

All of the students were presented with a Raleigh Lecture Resource Pack, a document detailing the activities of the day. This featured a fascinating paper by Alastair Owens entitled "Sustainable Cities", exploring how the urban concentrations of today and tomorrow can deal with the management of fundamental requirements, such as food production and supply, transportation and housing. The need for effective solutions is growing at a pace.

The Resource Pack included contributions by Jeff Skinner, Chris Moss and Morgan Taylor, and Tari Dadiowei, each of whom offered perspectives on aspects of sustainability in different sections of society, and different regions of the world.

The event concluded with a general consensus that the day had been both informative and inspirational for those who had attended - and with a determination to make the Raleigh Lecture 2024 equally impactful.





# Sheep Drive

If you ask a member of the public what the benefits are of having the Freedom of the City of London, chances are that the most likely answer you will hear is that it affords you the right to take your sheep (or “drive” them) over one of the bridges into the City of London. Similar privileges historically formed the central benefit of being a member of an ancient trade guild (or Livery). It allows you to ply your trade in the City without additional taxes and, in many historic situations, you would not be permitted to trade at all without that membership.

So, is this ancient rite to drive sheep into London still relevant in today’s day and age?

Yes! Yes it is.

On the morning of Sunday September 24th, ten Freemen of the Company of Entrepreneurs, who also held the Freedom of the City of London descended upon the City to exercise that ancient rite. Most of us nowadays don’t have our own sheep (more’s the shame) but thankfully they were provided to us, all in their own pens and with a wily farmhand to add a more expert touch in case any of the sheep had any thoughts of escaping (and believe it or not, during our drive, one made an attempt to sneak out of

the pen and dash towards Southwark!).

As a group of ten determined sheep herders, we carefully marshalled our sheep in a (roughly) straight line, in a southerly direction while dealing with the most important aspect - the photo opportunity. As you can see, we took some great photos and captured the moment perfectly.

Thanks to some excellent organisation from the Worshipful Company of Woolmen (the Woolies as they are affectionately known), almost 1,000 Freemen in total exercised their entitlement on the day to this quirky, ancient rite. The day also raised funds for the Woolies’ charitable fund. There was also a wonderful Livery fair where some of the ancient Liveries associated with livestock and textiles businesses demonstrated their trades and showcased their artisan products.

This is now an annual event and sells out early each year. All Freemen of the Company of Entrepreneurs are actively encouraged to obtain their Freedom of the City of London, and this will be needed in order to become a Liveryman once we achieve full Livery status. It would also allow you to take part in the sheep drive which is highly recommended as a day out!









# The Company of Entrepreneurs' Trust - Chief Executive's Report

Most readers will already know that the Company of Entrepreneurs Trust is an independent registered charity (1166513). The Trust makes grants every year to people, organisations, and projects in support of entrepreneurship, business education, and enterprise skills. The Trust also manages and part-finances the Entrepreneurs Award in Social Innovation in support of entrepreneurship and wider charitable purposes. Last year, I published a matrix of our activities since the Trust's foundation, and I'm delighted to add some further details to that ever-growing list.

The Trust supported two charities with grants this year. Both charities are doing excellent work already, and were able to demonstrate clearly the ways in which they could maximise the impact of the Trust's small grants. This was vitally important: the Trust is still at a relatively early stage, and, through clever partnerships, is looking to make important differences to the access to (and the provision of) business education and enterprise skills.

**Hatch Enterprise** was doing fantastic work to reach and equip aspirant entrepreneurs from under-represented backgrounds, and was ready to expand its work. It was delivering a successful 121 Consultations Programme, giving founders the opportunity to address their current business challenges in a live, one-on-one, setting with an experienced professional. With our grant, Hatch has improved the effectiveness and efficiency of this popular programme and scaled up its delivery. Hatch upgrading its automation processes, and carried out dedicated marketing activities to better promote its activities. It attracted more founders and high-quality volunteers, and facilitated 158 matches (at the time of writing) in 2023 - **a 33% increase from the previous year.**

Hatch's Programme Coordinator is now able to complete a more personalised and detailed onboarding process with the Volunteers - getting to know their skills and interests better, resulting in more impactful relationships. Hatch is seeing better matches, a stronger pipeline of volunteers for other programmes, and is identifying trends in founders' needs (which has enabled it to strengthen its wider Community Programme offering). It is

a brilliant result, and the Trust is leveraging the human gifts of Freeman Entrepreneurs too, to help deliver Clinics, Demo Days, and Consultations through Hatch.

Likewise, **Five Talents UK** was already doing quite amazing grassroots work delivering programmes of financial literacy, business education, and enterprise skills to women's savings groups in Eastern Africa. These rural locations often have poor infrastructure, and Five Talents made a compelling case for a motorcycle to access their groups more speedily and safely.

Our grant was used to purchase a motorbike and also pay for safety gear, fuel and maintenance costs. I'm delighted to report that our grant was also match-funded by another Trust which meant that the DRC team was able to purchase a second bike at the same time.

The new motorbikes are in use every single day and are mainly used by Roseline and Nzua who visit around 40 groups every month to form, support, train and monitor groups and facilitators across the region. The longest journey they make is around 230 km which takes at least 4 hours on the bike. There is no tarmac so the roads are rough and in the rainy season, it can take a very long time. To add to their challenges some regions are still under militia control so insecurity is a risk, but they still are able to provide support and travel for training, thanks to the bikes.

The DRC team has recently undertaken an impact survey including participants from the last three years. The results are very encouraging, with **72%** of members say they currently **have a small business** (compared to 43% at the start of the programme), and **74%** of members say they have **purchased an asset they will use to help generate more income over the last 12 months** (compared to 47% at the start of the programme).

This year the programme started a brand new cycle and now has 50 new Groups with 953 members. The motorbikes have been used to help train 18 new facilitators and provide refresher training for the existing 32 facilitators in the programme.

2023	£2,500	Hatch Enterprise	A charity supporting underrepresented entrepreneurs from across the UK, the grant supports the delivery of its mentoring programme, and covers a range of administration, infrastructure, and marketing needs to increase the reach and impact of this excellent work.
	£2,500	Five Talents UK	This UK-based charity's mission is to combat poverty in Eastern Africa through practical programmes of financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and business skills. The grant was match-funded and was used to purchase, run, and maintain two motorcycles, which the charity uses to reach rural communities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Entrepreneurs' Award in Social Innovation (EASI) was run this year for the second time. Not only does the Trust part-finance the Award itself, but the Trustee Board and I also assist with the shortlisting and selection of the finalists. It is a humbling experience. Improvements to the marketing and application process mean that every applicant for the Award is clearly demonstrating the Innovative, Ethical, Impactful qualities for which the judges are looking. It underlines the terrific work that is being done by early-stage businesses to tackle social and environmental challenges, and the Trust is enormously proud of the continuing success of the Award and the talented winners and finalists.

You can read more about the work of DiRibona (winner), and Bendi, Iona, Selfily, and ZoriTex (finalists) elsewhere in this magazine, and please do diarise 17th January 2024 to meet them in person at a showcase of this year's Award and the launch of EASI 2024.

As I reported last year, the Trustee Board set itself an ambitious target to grow the charity's funds to over £300,000 – a target that was reached (and quickly surpassed!) in July of this year. The majority of this forms the Entrepreneurs' Perpetual Fund – a permanent endowment, intended to underpin grantmaking and charitable activities long into the future. The Trust's Patrons and Principal Benefactors have generously supported this fund, alongside a portion of money received from regular giving. I make no apology for repeating my thanks from last year – all the Trust's donors can take great pride in securing the long-term prosperity and effectiveness of this charity through their regular giving. Both the number of monthly donations and the average value of them has again increased, and I am truly grateful for the continued support of all Freeman Entrepreneurs and other donors. Please don't forget to sign up to GiftAid if you are eligible (please contact me for a form).

## More Support for Good Causes in 2024

With this initial goal achieved, the Trustee Board met in October 2023 and immediately agreed to double the Trust's grants budget for 2024. There is now up to **£10,000** available for beneficiaries in the current grants cycle, in addition to the Trust's pledge to support EASI 2024.

I'm also delighted to write that, from next year, the Trust will also jointly (with the Drapers' Company) fund the Raleigh Lecture, which delivers business education and enrichment to hundreds of young people every year. This has become a flagship for education in entrepreneurship and the wider humanities, and the Trustee Board is delighted to pledge its financial support to this event.

There have been some administrative changes, too. The Trustee Board is continuing to develop its governance structure independently of the Company of Entrepreneurs, and the convention of automatically appointing the Master, and Wardens to the Trustee Board was discontinued last year. The Board has begun selecting from amongst all Freeman Entrepreneurs (of which there are presently over 200 successful business founders). Past Master Kate Jolly (who has enormous charity, regulatory, and administrative experience) was appointed in April, and, in October, Freeman Stephen Roach (with his significant experience in finance and trusteeship) joined the Board to serve a three-year term.

A formal audit of skills and experience will be conducted in the near future, as the Trustee Board continues to identify potential Directors with relevant skills and experience. If you are a Freeman Entrepreneur with an interest in the formal charitable work of the Trust, please do get in touch to find out more.





# Summer Banquet



The June banquet is one of the highlights of the Company of Entrepreneurs' social calendar. It has a quite relaxed feel to the evening while still allowing Freeman and their guests to dress in all their finery.

July 7th, 2023 saw us attend Merchant Taylor's Hall in Threadneedle Street. It was, a little unusually for the Entrepreneurs Company, a Friday evening which saw us all come together. The banquet was originally intended to be held elsewhere, earlier in the week but a problem with that venue saw us need to rearrange to Merchant Taylor's Hall in a somewhat serendipitous fashion. Somewhat erratic weather for July saw torrential rain earlier in the week while we met in beautiful sunshine on a hot, balmy July evening accompanied by a jazz trio serenading us with mellow tunes. This allowed us to make full use of the lovely courtyard with the Hall for our reception drinks.

Merchant Taylor's Hall is a stunning example of Georgian architecture, right in the heart of the City on Threadneedle Street, where it has occupied the site through four re-buildings, over a period of more than 500 years. The main dining room is one of the largest and is dominated by a magnificent organ, which is frequently put to good use.

We were joined by many guests on the evening, including Aldermen Ian Luder and Gregory Wright. Alderman Luder himself being the most senior Alderman above the Chair, meaning that he was the longest serving Alderman who had already served as Lord Mayor. In fact our dinner was one of the last ones attended by Alderman Luder before his retirement from the Court of Aldermen shortly after.

Our senior Livery Master in attendance was Brigadier John Mearden DL, the Master Carpenter, who replied on behalf of the guests. The Worshipful Company of Carpenters have long offered hospitality to the Entrepreneurs and we very much value our history with them.

A fine meal was enjoyed by all in attendance, and the weather was so convivial that it encouraged most to stop longer to enjoy a stirrup cup. It was a fortuitous twist of fate that caused us to rearrange to Merchant Taylor's Hall but a most welcome one, as the dinner proved to be a most memorable evening.

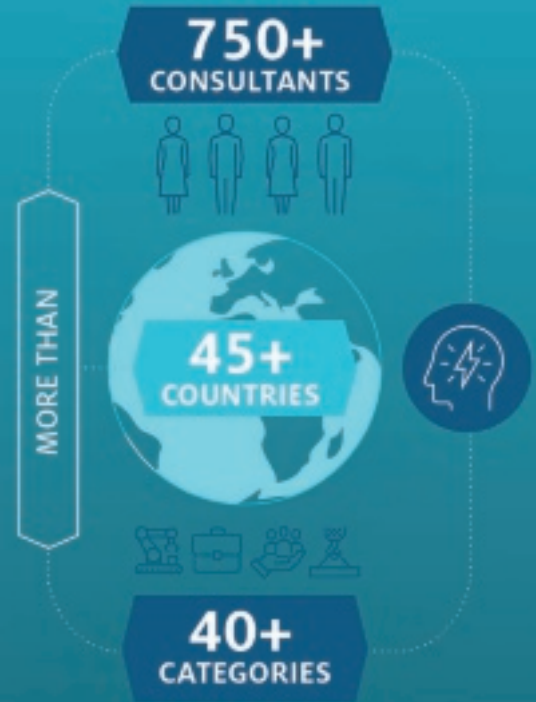
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# Making the Cutlers

On Thursday the 21st of September 2023, we will once again be treated to an exemplary event for the Company of Entrepreneurs - The September Court Dinner at the home where Freeman of the City of London may be unsheathed.

The Cutler's Hall is one of the hidden gems among livery halls proving hard to find according to our Master, Gary Dixon, who in his final speech of his excellent year in office, told of the Cutler's Hall being his first livery hall occasion after being made a Freeman of the then Guild of Entrepreneurs having become entirely lost on the way there on that occasion.

No such concern this time as he presided over another evening of fine dining (provided by Freeman Nick Levens of Life's Kitchen) and complemented by fine wines.

Following the admission of four new Freeman, we were called to order and clapped in the Master, Wardens and guests. Grace was delivered by the Rev Sophia Acland as a poem of note which set the tone for this more relaxed of formal evenings in The Entrepreneurs calendar.

The newly admitted freemen were welcomed by a toast with more toasts to follow in support of the King, Royal family and Lord Mayor. Betwixt and between much conversation and joviality as people enjoyed the excellent choice of dishes from Life's Kitchen.

As the elephants looked down from the roof of this hall dating back to 1884, we were graced with a speech from the master thanking all for continuing the great work of The Entrepreneurs whilst continuing the process of attaining Worshipful Company status.

There followed a talk from the principal speaker, Alderman Vincent Keaveny CBE, the Master Woolman, who whilst encouraging our progression as the newest of liveries also drew swords on our snaffling key resources from the leadership team of the Woolmen, in the form of the Master Elect's wife, who as consort during our year of progression may be distracted from her valuable role as Court Assistant for the Woolmen.

Alderman Keaveny reflected on the Entrepreneurs' formation as a Guild nearly nine years ago – noting that our growing Company was already demonstrating some of the best traditions and values of the Livery movement. He mused that those who had supported a Livery Company for Entrepreneurs all those years ago were right to have done so!

He acknowledged that Dan Doherty's vision to build a community that embraced the traditions of the City and the Livery movement, and inspired fellowship alongside a shared mission to make the world a better place, was being delivered every day by the Company of Entrepreneurs.

A musical intervention by students of the Guildhall music and drama, featuring Goncalo Leah Charneca on guitar and Harrison Perkins on saxophone, added to the event and a glance across the room with everyone in their finery demonstrated once again Dan's vision at work.

Retiring for a stirrup cup afterwards brought to an end another thoroughly enjoyable evening, a cut above the rest for Freeman and guests alike.

Our outgoing Master could sleep well that night.

**Barnaby Wynter, Founder Freeman**



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All enquiries to the Clerk, Mr Duncan Simms

The Company of Entrepreneurs and The Company  
of Entrepreneurs Trust, Drapers' Hall, Throgmorton  
Avenue, London, EC2N 2DQ

Tel: 020 3126 4924

Email: [clerk@guildofentrepreneurs.org](mailto:clerk@guildofentrepreneurs.org)

Web: [www.entrepreneurscompany.org](http://www.entrepreneurscompany.org)

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