

Chairman's Report to the Livery Committee
Wednesday 10th June 2015

I have continued to represent the Committee at many events, and am invited to speak at some of them. Recent invitations have included occasions to mark the important anniversaries of Magna Carta and Agincourt, and less well publicised, the 150th anniversary of the London Mathematical Society. I am grateful to my various hosts for these opportunities for me to learn more of what is going on in the livery and elsewhere, and for the chance to explain what our Committee seeks to achieve.

In summary I say that our mission remains to aid communication and cooperation between the City of London Corporation and Mayoralty, and the livery companies, and to disseminate relevant information and best practice. We now do this in five distinct but complementary ways:

With our programme of Briefings and Courses.

With the publication by email of the bi-monthly newsletter *Livery Briefing*.

Through the Livery Committee website, www.liverycompanies.info
Overseeing a number of print publications, such as the *Livery Profile* (about which I shall be reporting on 10th June) and the PRO's "orange booklet" on the Livery Companies; and similarly the various other "livery" websites (eg Fishmongers and Liverycompanies.com)

And importantly, through the work of all members of the Committee in their liaison role with individual companies.

Whilst I believe this to be a coherent "package" to achieve our purpose (within limited resources), I am not confident that it is working very well. Whilst the website appears to be a growing success, and the print items are well used, as I say in my Communications Group Report, the attendance at City Briefings continues to cause concern, and I am not at all sure that many clerks are distributing the *Livery Briefing*. Certainly I meet few liverymen (or even masters) who appear to be aware of it.

Both the City Briefings and the *Livery Briefing* incur significant time and expense in their delivery, and it is worth asking the questions, are we getting it right? And is it worth the effort? I would welcome your feedback and views. Do the clerks on the Committee distribute the *Livery Briefing*? Half of them (3) have not had one of their liverymen attend a City Briefing in the past 18 months.

I remain concerned about the future of the Blue Book. Whilst the overwhelming majority view of the Committee in recent times has been to support this commercial venture, increasingly individual livery companies are choosing not to supply members' address information to the publisher. Of course this is their right. But in a world where printed directories such as this one are increasingly difficult to make financially viable, the diminishing usefulness of the Blue Book (now no longer a comprehensive directory of liverymen) brings its future (incidentally under new ownership) into doubt. As an aside, the data protection issues have been fully checked out by the publisher, but producing it on line is not an option.

Apart from our Committee Dinner at Trinity House next week, our next important date is Common Hall on 24th June. The arrangements for the elections of Sheriffs and the Lord Mayor were the original reasons for creating the Livery Committee 151 years ago. Midsummer Day is also when members of our Committee are elected by the Livery. We are due for little change this year, but that which there is I shall report after the event in my next report. In the meantime, I thank you for your support and encouragement.

Nigel R Pullman
Chairman

1st June 2015