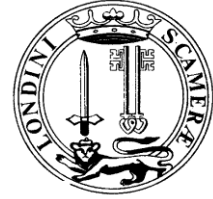


Chamberlain's Court update

April 2023



Dear all,

Spring has finally sprung, which means it's time for another newsletter from the Chamberlain's Court team. Since the beginning of the year, we have processed more than 600 Freedom applications and admitted about 500 new Freeman – of whom more than 300 have been members of your Livery Companies.

These impressive statistics – and a whole lot more besides – have been compiled by our apprentice, Lewis Dance (*pictured right*), whom many of you have met online or in person. We were delighted when Lewis was named Apprentice of the Year at the City Corporation's Celebrating Our People Awards in January.

The Court team is also looking forward to his Freedom Ceremony next week – another cause for celebration!



What's new: Freedom Fine increase and Privacy Statement

As you will be aware, on 1st April the Freedom Fine increased to £170 in line with inflation, but we will honour the former fee (£150) for any application received by the Court before this date.

The updated version of the application form is attached to this email, as well as a revised factsheet for anyone applying via a Livery Company. Both include our recently implemented Privacy Statement, which details how and why the Chamberlain's Court processes personal data. Given the sensitive nature of data handled by our team, please remember that hard copies of applications (and accompanying official documents) are no longer accepted, and applications should be sent by email.

Of course, these forms are set to become a thing of the past when they are replaced by our online application system, Agenda. Pending final development by Stopford Information Systems, this will offer a similar online interface to that used by Register Offices across the country – but help will be available for those with limited access to the internet. Testing has yet to take place, so we can't give you a rollout date now, but we are hoping for as smooth a rollout as possible later in the year.

Shop 'til you drop: Chamberlain's Court merchandise

Since mid-March, we have been using a new tablet-based till, integrating our online and in-person sales via Shopify. This not only enables quicker purchases in the Waiting Room before ceremonies, but also allows our team to organise advance payment via invoice – such as for certificate frames. This facility could be particularly useful for group Freedom Ceremonies taking place outside Guildhall, so do let us know if you would like to know more. There are no proposals to change the range of items offered for sale just yet, but we'll gladly consider suggestions from you and your members!

Keeping in touch: Court dates and booking ahead

As there is a three-month wait for individuals to book their Freedom Ceremony, we are mindful of Livery Companies' need to coordinate admissions to the Freedom of the City with clothing ceremonies and other events. We allow companies to reserve appointments up to a year in advance, so do get in touch if this is something you would be interested in – while every company operates in its own way, we are keen to enable your members to become Free of the City as quickly and painlessly as possible.

On a related matter, please see below a reminder of the remaining Court of Aldermen dates this year. Anyone whose application is approved and processed by the deadline can be admitted to the Freedom of the City as soon as the subsequent Court date has passed.

Deadline	Court of Aldermen
18-Apr-23	2-May-23
27-Jun-23	11-Jul-23
29-Aug-23	12-Sep-23
26-Sep-23	10-Oct-23
21-Nov-23	5-Dec-23

And finally... some familiar faces

In the past few months, The Clerk has been delighted to admit several high-profile figures to the Freedom of the City by nomination: below left, poet Lemn Sissay with his guests and nominators, Common Councillors Catherine McGuinness and Wendy Hyde; below right, the Chamberlain, Caroline Al-Beyerty, with broadcaster and Times columnist Matthew Parris.



On behalf of the Chamberlain's Court team, I'd like to wish you a very happy Easter. I look forward to hearing from you – and meeting more of you in person – after the break.



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