



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A  
FISHMONGER



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## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A FISHMONGER

The Fishmongers' Company is one of the most ancient and respected Livery Companies in the City of London.

For over 750 years, its home has been on the banks of the River Thames. The Company has a proud history founded on the trade of fishmongering. Nowadays, its members are bound by a sense of contribution and fellowship across many endeavors. Your talents, experience and interests can help determine our vision and purpose into the future. Underpinning this is a sense of 'What it means to be a Fishmonger'.

This book serves as an introduction and reminder of the Fishmongers' Company, its provenance, what it stands for today and how you can join and participate. It is our pleasure to have a sense of belonging.



## WHAT WAS A FISHMONGER

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Our culture owes a great deal to our history. Here we trace our Company connections to the trade, the marketplace, the River, the City and to power and to welfare.

## BECOMING A GUILD OF FISHMONGERS

In medieval times, fishmongers trading in close vicinity to each other gradually began to cooperate for mutual benefit. Religious fraternities linked with local parish churches bolstered their sense of identity. These connections grew into a guild (later called a Livery Company) whereby the trade was controlled centrally under a set of defined rules.

The earliest evidence of such a group of fishmongers is circumstantial, but some London fishmongers were fined in 1154 for trading without a Royal Warrant. In 1272, during the reign Edward I, the 'Mistry' (or Craft) of Fishmongers received their first Royal Charter, granting them powers and responsibilities over the fish trade.

## BECOMING A LIVERY COMPANY

Originally, all members were known as Freemen, but only those with status of 'shopkeeper' could wear the livery (or clothing) of the Company. To be classed as a shopkeeper, a fishmonger would generally have three apprentices and two servants — who were usually past apprentices themselves — working for them, a mark of their success. Wearing a special costume for great occasions had long been a custom for the wealthy, and the livery was changed at least once a year.

**Right**  
St Peter, the patron saint of fishermen, is heavily represented in Company iconography through the centuries.

During the 15th century the Fishmongers, like other wealthy guilds, became a 'Livery Company', which made the distinction between general Freemen and the members who, in return for paying higher dues, were entitled to wear the livery of the Company. This divided the Company's membership into two clear categories; Freemen (the more junior) and Liverymen (the more senior).



THIS CARVED STATUE OF SAINT PETER THE PATRON SAINT OF FISHERMEN FORMERLY STOOD, SUPPORTED BY A MERMAN AND A MERMAID, ON THE FISHMONGERS' COMPANY'S LAST STATE BARQUE, WHICH WAS BUILT IN 1773 AND BROKEN UP IN 1850.



## OUR EVOLUTION THROUGH THE AGES

**Left**  
The Company's most recent Charter, granted by HM Queen Elizabeth II in 2012.

**Below**  
A 'licence to operate' dating from 1382 and issued by the Company, formally permitting two members to open a fishmonger stall near what is now The Monument.

The Fishmongers were one of the most prominent of the early guilds, not least because fish was a necessity of life, especially during religious fasting when no meat could be eaten. Only members of the Fishmongers' Company could keep shops to sell fish, giving them a monopoly over the trade.

While no copy of the Company's original charter exists, in 1280 the Company secured approval of their ordinances - full and detailed provisions for the regulation of the London fish trade - which suggests that they had been effectively acting as a guild long before the Royal Charter was confirmed.

In the mid-14th century, the Fishmongers appealed to King Edward III for a new Royal Charter. This was granted in 1364 and meant

that 'anyone wishing to sell fish were required to lodge with a Fishmonger during their stay in the City.'

From the outset, Livery Companies also cared for their members in sickness and old age and gave assistance to the poor through their involvement with nearby religious fraternities (which led to each Company having a 'Guild Church' within the environs of the City). As the centuries progressed, these 'acts of giving' extended to the provision of education for those in need, which in turn broadened to include supporting technical education, emerging industries and the wider charitable sector from the 19th century onwards.



## THE COMPANY AND BILLINGSGATE MARKET

Fish arrived in London primarily at Queenhithe (upstream of today's Southwark Bridge) and Billingsgate fish markets, both of which offered relatively large harbours for the Thames. Throughout the 15th century, the Company expanded and renovated Queenhithe and Billingsgate, as well as many other small private wharves, especially as Billingsgate rapidly grew in importance as merchant ships increased in capacity.

For centuries the inspection of the main fish markets in the City was part of the duties of the Company's two beadles, but later specialist Fishmeters were appointed. After a brief hiatus in the 1830s, when the Fishmeters were conspicuously absent, the Company's fish inspection work resumed at Billingsgate, including after the Market moved to West India Dock in 1982.

Below  
Billingsgate Market as it was from 1850–1875.



## COMPANY COAT OF ARMS

The Fishmongers' Company coat of arms was granted in 1512 to celebrate the formal union with the Stockfishmongers' Company — prior to this, there was a distinction between the trade of fresh (or salted) fish and that of dried fish (usually cod), the latter referred to as stockfish.

The crossed keys are a reference to St Peter, the patron saint of fishermen, with the three central dolphins taken from the original Fishmongers' Company arms, with the fish flanking them in saltire a reference to the recently formalised connection to the stockfish trade.



# 750

The  
**FISHMONGERS'**  
Company

INCORPORATED 1272

## ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

The Fishmongers' Company ranks fourth in the ceremonial precedence of the 110 Livery Companies (existing in 2022).

The Order of Precedence was established by the Court of Alderman in 1515, following years of disagreements and conflict between companies.



## WHAT DOES BEING A FISHMONGER MEAN TODAY?

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Our central tenet is one of contribution, to fish & fisheries, and to good causes. Backed by rich history and bound in fellowship, we value sociability, and we pursue a path of excellence attuned to the ever-changing world, confident with our role.

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## OUR PURPOSE

*To promote a flourishing fishing industry and healthy fulfilled lives for people and initiatives in need of support, by the best use of the broad range of resources at our disposal.*

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## OUR BELIEFS

- Life opportunity, given and supported over the long-term, is the most powerful way of enabling people to live their lives to the full.

- The sustainable management and use of the marine environment is vital for the prosperity and well-being of our fishing industry and our island nation.

- Gifts and good intentions are not enough, we must give of ourselves, our energy and time, experience and skills, influence and intelligence.

- Sociability is a talent and we hold it dear; it is a joy to experience and a powerful tool to be used for good.

- We have a duty to manage and harness all our assets judiciously so that we optimise the scale of resources at our disposal.

- We hold our traditions, hall and treasures in trust: to support our current work and to benefit future generations.





## THE FOUNDATION OF THE MODERN COMPANY

Admission to the Fishmongers' Company starts a lifelong connection to an enterprise that highly values the contribution of its members, not least in their giving of time and experience. Our namesake trade continues to feature strongly as we seek to support the interests of fish and fisheries, which now embrace the demands of sustainability both inshore and offshore. With equal verve, we champion contemporary causes of high relevance to society, whether through our support of mental health initiatives, our advocacy for a healthy approach to food and nutrition, our belief in offering learning

opportunities to those in prison, or our continued pursuit of excellence in education and the Arts.

As a Freeman, we hope you can associate with this legacy, joining in from time to time with Company events, being part of a reputation derived from merit, born from family history or long service to what we stand for. As a Liveryman, there is a more regular cycle of engagement, with occasional representative duties, participation with charitable partners, and with fellowship at the heart of dinners that forge connections and bring conviviality to the fore.



## WHAT MAKES UP THE COMPANY TODAY

### PHILANTHROPY

- Fishmongers' Company's Charitable Trust (Charity No. 263690)
- Fishmongers' Company's Fisheries Charitable Trust (Charity No. 284888)

### FELLOWSHIP

- The Freedom
- The Livery
- The Wardens & Court of Assistants



### PARTNERSHIP

- Billingsgate Market & the Seafood Training School
- The National Federation of Fishmongers
- Gresham's School
- City & Guilds of London Art School
- The Lord Mayor & the City
- The Military & Cadets

### STEWARDSHIP

- Fishmongers' Hall and its historic Collection
- The Company's Property & Investment portfolio

## FISH & FISHERIES

Throughout its history, the Company has been closely linked to the UK's seafood trade. From our earliest role in regulating London's fish trade under our first Royal Charter, our involvement across a wide spectrum of UK fish and fisheries issues has grown and evolved over the centuries. A reflection of the Company's responsiveness to contemporary challenges can be seen in the rising importance of sustainability as a guiding principle. It is no coincidence that increasingly our focus is on the many environmental challenges facing our marine and freshwater resources. Our engagement with these issues principally takes place through our Fisheries Charitable Trust.

*The Fishmongers' Company's Fisheries Charitable Trust (FCFCT)* The Fisheries Charitable Trust works to build and safeguard a prosperous and sustainable fishing industry, for the benefit of those engaged in it, the environment and our island nation.

On behalf of the Company and its Fisheries Charitable Trust, the team engages across the breadth of UK fisheries issues, facilitating funding for projects, grants, early-career sponsorship and research. They work in collaboration with industry, government, academia, non-governmental and third sector organisations to develop projects that ensure a profitable and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture industry, thriving coastal communities and healthy marine and freshwater environments.

As well as deploying the Fisheries Charitable Trust's funds, the team also offers specialist knowledge and executive support to our various partners through project development, helping to leverage additional funding and communications support.

The Company prides itself on using its reputation and assets to convene industry participants and interested parties around issues of relevance in the areas in which it seeks to contribute. We also utilise our greatest asset, Fishmongers' Hall, to host high-profile seafood and fisheries events, ranging

from large conferences sharing vital new research and best practice in the fisheries world, to smaller high-level meetings between leading figures in the sector, with a focus on partnership building, innovation and collaboration.



## PHILANTHROPY & GRANTS

Philanthropy has been a fundamental tenet of the Fishmongers' Company throughout the centuries. The earliest Fishmongers came together for shared commercial benefit, but also for mutual aid. Support for apprenticeships and the provision of financial assistance for members and their families in sickness and in old age were central functions. Giving to the wider world was also fundamental to the Fishmongers' ethos in the religious society in which the Company was formed. As Fishmongers prospered and as members left bequests for the benefit

of their fellow members and the people of the City, the Company gained expertise in administering estates and its charitable function grew. Much of the Company's giving today is built upon the generosity of its past members and the careful stewardship of its assets over many centuries. Many of the valuable connections which the Company enjoys with various organisations are living legacies, such as with Gresham's School in Norfolk (founded in 1555) and the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson scholarships for medical students (first awarded in 1951).



## GRESHAM'S SCHOOL

Gresham's School was founded in 1555, with a bequest from Sir John Gresham endowing the school to the Fishmongers on his death the following year; the Company has been closely involved with the running of the school ever since. Situated in rural Norfolk, Gresham's is now a thriving and vibrant

co-educational institution, taking boys and girls from across the UK and internationally and providing a fully rounded education from the age of two through to 18. The Company is proud to have retained such an important and enduring relationship over the centuries.

## *The Fishmongers' Company's Charitable Trust (FCCT)*

By the 1880s Fishmongers managed over ninety separate charities or gifts. Many of these were amalgamated over time and in 1972 the Company established a dedicated charity, The Fishmongers' Company's Charitable Trust as a vehicle for much of its giving. A separate entity specifically to fund work relating to the namesake trade, The Fishmongers' Company's Fisheries Charitable Trust, was set up a decade later.

While the relief of poverty and the advancement of education remain the main objectives of the Charitable Trust, recent years have seen significant developments; the Trust's remit has broadened to include three focus areas: mental health, food and nutrition and education in prisons. The significant increase in resource has supported the establishment of a multi-year, major grants programme, supporting charitable organisations over a sustained period with a level of funding that makes a material difference towards their objectives.

As an organisation that has enjoyed an unbroken existence for over 750 years, we have the rare and valuable advantage of being able to take the long-term view, to both have and act with conviction and to stand by our beliefs with the aim of delivering on our purpose. Whether through direct support of our charitable partners via funding and expertise, or by using Fishmongers' Hall to proactively create, promote and cement alliances and partnerships, our potential impact is only increased through the giving of our members.



## OUR HOME — FISHMONGERS’ HALL

### Right

The current Hall, designed by Henry Roberts and built by William Cubitt & Company.

### Below

A stained glass pane showing the pre-1512 arms of the Fishmongers’ Company — the only surviving relic of the Company’s first Hall.

A Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade II\* Listed Building, Fishmongers’ Hall is the focal point of all Company business, the heart of our fellowship activities, and is transforming into a sustainable home for future generations of our Membership.

The Company has always occupied a prominent position on the river, close to London Bridge, Old Billingsgate Market and the Pool of London. In medieval times, the area around the modern-day Hall thronged with the hustle and bustle of fishmonger merchants, as the Company exercised its ancient right to ensure all fish sold within the City were fit for human consumption.

### *The Medieval Hall (1434-1666)*

The Company acquired our first hall — christened ‘The Great Tenement of Thames Street’ — from a group of prominent Fishmongers in 1434. Located close to what is now The Monument, this original Fishmongers’ Hall was the first of 54 Livery Halls lost to the flames of the Great Fire of London in 1666.

### *The Post-Fire Hall (1667-1827)*

The Company took this unforeseen turn of events to rebuild and expand, with the new Hall — of red brick with white stone dressings — very much a working building; a series of fishmonger shops were attached to the beautiful river-facing façade, and others opened onto Thames Street for trade. This Fishmongers’ Hall stood undisturbed until the 1820s, when plans to replace the original London Bridge came to fruition.

### *The Current Hall (1835-present)*

Once it had been decided that London Bridge was no longer fit for ‘modern’ requirements, it became apparent the Hall would need to be sacrificed to accommodate a new bridge being built. Demolition began in 1827 and, following an anonymous competition to design the new Hall, the current Hall opened for the first time in 1835.



## STEWARDSHIP – PROPERTY & INVESTMENT

Until the 20th century, the Company's wealth consisted almost entirely of land and buildings given or bequeathed by its members. More recently, it has divested fringe holdings and diversified its asset base, so it now holds a diverse portfolio of global equities as a counterweight to its remaining property, which is concentrated in and around the City of London. The Company adopts a very long-term approach to managing its wealth, aiming to maintain and ideally grow its assets in real terms from generation to generation, while spending at a sustainable level.

Over the centuries members have left the Company a number of bequests which would now be recognised as being held in trust for charitable purposes. In the late 20th century, in response to the evolving legislative landscape, the Company established formally two charitable Trusts to be the vehicles through which it would direct most of its own charitable efforts. Subsequently, the multitude of historic bequests were merged into these new trusts, whose assets today underpin much of our charitable activity.



## THE COMPANY AND THE CITY OF LONDON

Over the centuries, the City of London and the Livery Companies have developed many common interests. Alongside fellowship and philanthropy, each has a role in supporting civic administration of the City. Our proximity within the Square Mile has attracted overlapping goals for the prosperity of the City, with property and investments benefitting from its know-how as a global financial hub.

As a Member of the Company, you are encouraged to foster this partnership by becoming a representative of the Fishmongers, and the wider Livery movement, in this

longstanding partnership with the City Corporation. There are many different ways to get involved in wider Civic activities and initiatives, with the primary route being by standing for election as a Common Councillor. Furthermore, if you were to stand for election as an Alderman of one of the ancient City Wards, you would have the opportunities to then become a Sheriff and, ultimately, Lord Mayor of the City of London.



**Left**  
Alderman Sir Alan Yarrow,  
Lord Mayor 2014–15  
— the most recent of the  
39 Fishmongers to hold  
the office.



## HOW WE ORGANISE THE FISHMONGERS' COMPANY

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Our charter lays down a framework for how *'the Wardens and Commonalty of the Mystery of Fishmongers of the City of London'* should be organized. Fundamentally the structure is unchanged, with a governing Court underpinned by members of the Livery and Freedom. A series of committees are used to formulate plans and conduct oversight, employing an effective spread of skills and experience from our members, the whole being supported by an executive staff.



### THE FREEDOM

Junior level of Membership

- The medieval term 'freeman' originally meant someone who was not the property of a feudal lord but enjoyed certain privileges. In the context of guilds and Livery Companies, from the Middle Ages to the Victorian era, joining a Company's Freedom granted an individual the right to trade, enabling members to carry out their specific craft within the Square Mile. Today, while most of the practical reasons for obtaining the Freedom of the Company have disappeared, it remains a unique way to join our membership.



### THE LIVERY

Senior level of Membership

- A Company's 'livery' originally referred to the specific form of dress worn by members of a guild to denote their status of belonging to a specific trade. Thus, a Liveryman was a senior member of their respective Company, and enjoyed the exclusive right of voting in the election of the Lord Mayor of the City of London and their Sheriffs, which endures to this day. In the modern sense, the wearing of robes and gowns is now only done by the Wardens at certain Company functions, and Members of the Livery are strongly encouraged to support the Company with their attendance, participation and charitable endeavour. In return, they will enjoy fellowship with other members, an opportunity to support the fish trade and our charitable aims, and be part of the heritage of the City of London.



### THE WARDENS

The Main Operating Board

- The six Wardens derive their number and authority directly from our Royal Charter. They are members of the Court and serve a six year term, and must serve a year as Renter Warden before they can become Prime Warden.



### THE COURT

The Governing Body

- The Court of Assistants consists of six Wardens and up to 28 other members. Each is elected from the Livery and serves for life, or as long as able.

### HONORARY FREEMEN

- Awarded by the Court to up to five individuals in recognition of outstanding achievement in their field, often military, political or fishery related.

### HONORARY COURT MEMBERS

- A senior Court Member who, after distinguished service, chooses to relinquish their commitment to the liabilities of the Company, although may attend occasional Court Meetings in a non-voting capacity.

## THE WARDENS & THE COURT OF ASSISTANTS

### Below

A long-held Company tradition is for the Prime Warden's coat of arms to be carved and displayed in the Hall on the completion of their year of office.

The Court of Assistants is the governing body for the Company, consisting of the six Wardens and up to 28 other members elected from the Livery. The Court is responsible for protecting and promoting the Company's achievements, assets and reputation, ensuring its independence in perpetuity and sustaining its growth.

The Prime Warden, who is Chair of both the Wardens and the Court, is elected to serve a twelve-month

period of office each year, starting every June. The decisions of the Court are recorded in the Court Orders, and the Company archive holds an unbroken sequence of the Acts of Court from 1590 to the present day. Unfortunately, the records prior to these were lost during the destruction of the first hall during the Great Fire of London.



## THE PRIME WARDEN

The Prime Warden acts as the figurehead for the Company for one year and is the most senior member of the Company at that time. The Prime Warden is the primary representative of the Company in all matters, both within the Company

but also in relation to the City of London, the wider fraternity of Livery Companies, our charitable partners and affiliates, and in the public eye.

## THE WARDENS

The purpose of the Wardens Committee is to provide oversight and coordination of business to be transacted by the Court. Supported by the Clerk and the Executive Directors, the Wardens' Committee has responsibility for consistency across the Company's organisation, resources, plans, and communications.

### Below

The Company's 18th century strongbox, which held rent monies securely after collection. The strongbox could only be opened if all three locks were released simultaneously; the keys were held by the Prime Warden, the Renter Warden and the Clerk.

## WHAT IS A RENTER WARDEN?

Historically the Renter Warden actively collected rents due. Today, they effectively understudy the other Wardens and deputise for them on occasion.

Today, the Renter Warden works with the Executive Head Chef on preparing a selection of annual menus that provide exceptional, nutritious and sustainable cuisine.





## COMMITTEES

In 2022, the Fishmongers' Company had eight Committees, which meet termly:

- **Fish & Fisheries** to promote, develop and deliver the Company's historic duty to support the fish and fisheries sector in the UK.
- **Hall** to preserve, maintain and enhance the fabric of Fishmongers' Hall and the Company Collection for the benefit of members, charitable partners, guests and clients, following the formal requirements associated with the guardianship of a significant heritage asset.
- **Health, Safety and Security** to set the conditions for the health & safety and security of all employees, and by extension that of all visitors to the Hall.
- **Membership** to recommend policy governing Membership of the Company, and to confirm eligibility and fitness of those seeking admission or election to the Freedom, Livery and Court.
- **Philanthropy & Grants** to promote, develop and deliver the Company's non-fisheries charitable and philanthropic work, particularly in the field of education.

- **Property & Investment** to maintain and grow the long-term value of the investment assets of the Company, the Fishmongers' Company's Charitable Trust (FCCT) and the Fishmongers' Company's Fisheries Charitable Trust (FCFCT).
- **Risk & Audit** to monitor and review the integrity of the Company's financial statements and challenge the governance, risk management and internal controls system of the Company and review their effectiveness.
- **Wine** to oversee the quality, variety, and quantity, of the Company's wines for the benefit of consumption by Members.

The Chair for each Committee is a member of the Court of Assistants and they remain in post for a four-year term. Other members may be from the Court or Livery, supported by the Executive and professional advisors.

## THE EXECUTIVE STAFF

Taking their direction from the Wardens & Court of Assistants, the Executive Staff manage and administrate the Company on a day-to-day basis. Led by the Clerk (equivalent to a Chief Executive Officer), the team is organised to support a system of committees. Firstly, the two principal outputs (Fish & Fisheries, Philanthropy & Grants).

Secondly, the principal input (Property & Investments). Thirdly, our present and future members (Membership, supported by communications). Fourthly, our activity (Events, Safety & Security). Fifthly, our greatest physical assets (the Hall & the Collection, and separately our Wine). Lastly, an independent check on the whole (Risk & Audit).





## OUR MEMBERS – HOW TO JOIN, ENGAGE & PROGRESS

Becoming a Fishmonger is a lifetime commitment. Progressing between membership levels is neither a requirement nor a barrier to continued, meaningful involvement with the Company's objectives and primary purpose. Advancement is based on merit and potential, with progression offering increased opportunities for individuals to engage with the Company and our charities.

## THE FREEDOM

Today, the Freedom forms the bulk of the Company's membership. It is the entry level for the Company and provides a potential stepping stone to joining the Livery in the future. While there is no formal number of Freemen, the Company prefers to admit a limited number each year.

There are two ways to enter the Company: by Redemption or by Patrimony:

- **Redemption** is available for those individuals who can contribute to either the Company or its activities (for example, through work in the fish & fisheries or charitable sectors).
- **Patrimony** is claimed as a birth right for individuals with a parent who was a Freeman of the Company at the time of their birth or adoption.



## THE LIVERY

The Livery sits at the heart of the Company, and each member has the opportunity to assist in shaping the future direction of the Company. This may be through being co-opted onto one of the Company's committees, participating with the Company's charitable partners (whether through activity or contribution), or by engaging with the wider fellowship and affiliated partners. There is also the opportunity to attend Livery dinners.

The Company imposes a maximum number of Liverymen at any one time, and thus a space on the Livery only becomes available in the event of death, retirement or selection to join the Court of Assistants.

### EXPECTATIONS OF A FREEMAN

In yesteryear, a Freeman of the Company was a fishmonger, with few exceptions. By association, they were also committed to the trade, its prosperity, and the welfare of those who had made their living from the trade, free of servitude. Whilst the context has changed markedly, it remains the case that the Company expects an individual considered for admission as a Freeman to hold or

demonstrate a belief in the values of the Company and its modern purpose. We continue to have a bias towards our namesake trade, and value our historical connections by family, while the Company now strives to support and reflect the diverse interests and causes of the modern world. The foremost quality is one of a contributory spirit.

### EXPECTATIONS OF A LIVERYMAN

That your personality and approach fit with the ethos and culture of the Company, with the expectation that you use your abilities and experience to be actively involved, and interested in, the affairs of the Company. This will likely involve active engagement in, or commitment to, the voluntary sector; participation in the

Fishmongers' charities, whether through activity or contributions to the Charitable Trusts; and attendance at key Company social events.

## THE COURT

As the Governing Body, the Court seeks candidates who are able to offer time and expertise to serve the interests of the Company.

As part of this commitment, each must be able to understand and contribute to relevant issues, be willing to act as an ambassador for the Company and our charities, and have clear potential to act as a Committee Chair.

Once elected, Court Members must accept collective responsibility for Company policy and decisions, act as a positive role model for all Company members and show a willingness to identify,

nurture and propose potential candidates for all levels of membership.

Limited in size by our Royal Charter, an election for a new Member from the Livery only takes place if a vacancy is created.

### Below

The Wardens processing to the Company's guild church, St Magnus the Martyr, as part of the Company's biennial Election Day in June.



## ELECTION COURT

To fill any Court vacancy, a special Election Court will be held to elect a new Court member. Potential candidates from the Livery must be proposed and seconded by two current Court Members, with their names entered into the Court Proposal Book ahead of their consideration. Eligible candidates will then be selected by majority ballot to fill the vacancy.

## THE ELECTION FEAST & SUCCESSION DINNER

In alternate years, Liverymen and Court Members are invited to attend the Election Feast or the Succession Dinner. This is when the Prime Warden changes over. The key difference between the two is that, at the

Election Feast, the two Senior Wardens depart, and two Junior Wardens are elected, alongside the annual changeover of Prime Warden. At the Succession Dinner, there is a changeover of Prime Warden only.

### PRIME WARDEN OR MASTER?

Many Livery Companies have a Master, whereas the Fishmongers is one of the few to have a Prime Warden.

This is because, in centuries past, the Company decided their only 'master' was God Almighty.

### WHY IS THERE AN ELECTION EVERY TWO YEARS?

Today, the office of Prime Warden is a 12-month term. However, under our original Ordinances, a Prime Warden would serve for two consecutive years.

When this was changed in 1844, the Succession Dinner was established to celebrate the changeover in alternate years, preserving the biennial Election Feast.



## FELLOWSHIP — HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED

From our beginnings as a fraternal trade body for medieval fishmongers, the Company has evolved into a modern collective of kinship and shared purpose: making a difference. We encourage all our members to actively involve themselves in any or all aspects of the Company where they feel they could make the biggest contributions.

## COMMUNICATIONS

The Information Portal is the central point for members to access all the important information about the Company and is the primary means in which Company communications reach our membership. Through the Information Portal you can book onto events, see key dates for the year, register interests in societies, as well as allowing you to directly connect with other members of the Company.

On becoming a member of the Company, you will be provided with a login and password for your own account.

## CO-OPTED COMMITTEE MEMBERS & TRUSTEES

The Company is involved with several different organisations that members of the Company are encouraged to get involved in, whether in a formal capacity, such as acting as a Trustee, or in a more ad hoc role as a Company representative. These are as follows:

- Being co-opted onto Fishmongers' Company Committees
- Being a councillor for City & Guilds
- Being a director of City & Guilds' Art School Property Trust
- Acting as a Governor for Gresham's School

- Acting as a Trustee for New Model School
- Acting as a Trustee for Billingsgate Seafood Training School
- Acting as a Trustee for St Michael's Trust (St Magnus-the-Martyr Church)

Further to the above, the Company is also involved in a number of additional external educational bodies and charitable partnerships and actively encourage communication from Members who want to volunteer their time and expertise to such good causes.

## EVENTS

### Below

The Company has organised the Race for Doggett's Coat and Badge, a single scull rowing race on the River Thames, since 1722.

The Company hosts a series of events throughout each Prime Warden's year for members of the Freedom, Livery or Court, which members are able to attend, sometimes with a guest. These events are aimed to celebrate fellowship and encourage engagement between our membership, while also highlighting the work the Company is doing

within the two Charitable Trusts and with our partner organisations. These events are crucial to our aim of using our conveying power to connect key individuals that can make the biggest impact to our charitable objectives. Certain events are open to all members, while others are limited to certain groups of Liverymen in rotation and Court Members.



## SOCIETIES

The Company has several different sporting societies, teams and interest groups. All offer a space for members to interact with each other in a variety of fields, alongside opportunities to represent

the Company at a number of annual Inter-Livery sporting competitions and activities.

## DONATIONS



We believe the act of giving creates a binding sense of commitment, a signal that each of us want to belong to a fellowship organisation doing good for the benefit of others. Our two Charitable Trusts, whilst independent as entities, each proudly carry the Fishmongers' Company label, and each are pursuing philanthropic themes that we strongly believe to be of high relevance in the 21st century and/or in keeping with our traditional interests.

Together, their activity, partnerships and outreach determine a great deal of our reputation and we therefore strongly encourage our membership to donate regularly to our Charitable Trusts to assist in the vital work they are doing.

Donating is easy — go to: [fishmongers.org.uk/donations](https://fishmongers.org.uk/donations) where you can specify how much you would like to give, how often and where your donation should go.

## USING THE HALL

As a member, you are able to receive reduced rates on private events booked at the Hall, including business conferences, corporate meetings and private dining to celebrate life events such as birthdays, anniversaries and retirements.

Our exceptional reputation for food also reflects wider Company values, with menus often showcasing the best of sustainable and seasonal British seafood.

The Hall has a variety of different spaces available to hire, from our expansive Banqueting Hall to one of our cosier dining spaces, such as the Court Drawing Room. Other suites of rooms are also available for smaller meetings and lunches as required.





## FREEDOM DECLARATION

### 'I solemnly and sincerely Declare

that I will be true and faithful to our Sovereign Lady The Queen, and to her heirs and successors, in all matters lawful and honest. I will be obedient to the Wardens of the Mistery of Fishmongers of the City of London, for the Time being in that Office, and ready to come at their Summons and lawful Warning except I have lawful Excuse, without feigning or delay, according to the lawful Ordinances of the Mistery of Fishmongers aforesaid, which Ordinances and every of them to my power I will observe and keep, or else will pay such Penalties and Fines as I shall forfeit by reason of my Disobedience. And I make this solemn Declaration conscientiously intending and being resolved faithfully and truly to abide by, perform and fulfil the same; and by the virtue of the provisions of an Act made and passed in the Fifth and Sixth years of the Reign of His Majesty William the Fourth.

## SOCIAL MEDIA



FISHMONGERS.ORG.UK



FACEBOOK.COM/FISHMONGERSCOMPANY



TWITTER.COM/FISHMONGERSCO



INSTAGRAM.COM/FISHMONGERSCOMPANY



LINKEDIN.COM/COMPANY/FISHMONGERSCOMPANY

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