



NEWS FROM Alderman & Sheriff Alison Gowman



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Dear friends,

May 2022 newsletter

Sheriffs' Ball:

The end of each Shrieval year is marked with a Ball in aid of the Lord Mayor's Appeal. It will be held on 23rd September and promises to be Bloomin' Marvellous. I hope you might all consider attending or even providing a prize for the silent auction. Details are here <https://www.thelordmayorsappeal.org/news-and-events/events-calendar/1057/sheriffs-ball-2022/>



Using the building at the Old Bailey

Many of you will have visited the Old Bailey for one reason or another. Everyone who leaves of their own accord recounts the amazing experience of the visit and the splendour of the Grand Hall. The facilities are available for use by outside bodies and the Sheriffs have been keen to demonstrate how they can be used to good effect.

The start of the month we hosted a special concert of 17th century baroque music. The Turners Livery have been researching the use of turned wood for musical instruments for some years now and a chance meeting at their wonderful Wizardry in Wood exhibition in 2021 led to the idea of a concert at the Old Bailey featuring the newly made recorder based on one likely to have been preferred by diarist Samuel



Pepys. The concert was spectacular with period instruments and music that fitted perfectly in the acoustics of the Grand Hall and the domed ceiling. A large audience meant we were able to raise a significant sum for the Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund. Thanks to all who attended and contributed.



The space worked equally well for a reception that followed on the next night. This was the chance for the Sheriffs to entertain the High Sheriffs from around England and Wales. The roles stem from the same historic basis but the two City Sheriffs are elected by the Livery; whereas the High Sheriffs are chosen by HM the Queen. High Sheriffs are volunteers and concentrate on the role of criminal justice, courts, prisons and police in their respective Counties; which aligns with a part of the City's Sheriffs' roles. See: <https://highsheriffs.com>

I have now hosted over 50 lunches entertaining over 200 guests and given over 50 speeches at other events. The lunch guests come from a very diverse range of sectors and places with an emphasis on financial and professional services. I am pleased to have totted up the demographics to find an almost equal number of men and women with a sprinkling of under 18s from schools. May saw my first dog, Barley, who accompanied former Home Secretary Lord Blunkett.

Press coverage by the Financial Times

I was approached by two newspapers to give interviews in the last few weeks. Both were published within a week of each other. I am very glad that the [Financial Times](#) (and on FT.com) featured me on 9 May, "*Using soft power to promote the capital*", read it at: [https://www.ft.com/content/38d8d717-9f6e-4d53-b0bd-](https://www.ft.com/content/38d8d717-9f6e-4d53-b0bd-931a10ae64d3)



[931a10ae64d3](#) Also, the Methodist Recorder ran a double page spread headed "*Christian faith within the powerbase of the City*"



These are two (of many) examples showing that I have succeeded in my time as Sheriff in making the role more visible. I have done this by using social media and this blog on my website which is also distributed widely. I have contributed to a few podcasts and

videos. There is a link on my website to these: <https://www.alisongowman.org/videos.html>
These new press interviews have allowed the message to get out even wider. I have had some very kind feedback.

Promoting the real economy

Whilst the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs promote the financial and professional services for which the City of London is renowned, the underlying economy is not far away. For example the Green Finance Institute has set itself to ensure that finance is used to help the real economy since this is what needs to adapt to climate change impacts. See: <https://www.greenfinanceinstitute.co.uk>

This last month has seen a series of City events that highlight how the City and the Livery are working in this area.

First, I had planned to hold a themed lunch at the Old Bailey with senior members of the leather industry. As a Glover I know the benefits of leather and visited Ethiopia and China in my role as Master Glover observing the leather trade in those countries. The pre-lunch meeting resulted in some useful discussion mainly around skills shortages and talent. I have written a blog giving a resume of these points: <https://www.alisongowman.org/blog/leather-industry-views>



I was also pleased to attend two Livery events that explored the issues for their professions around climate. The Engineers' Livery held a seminar about the Future of Air Vehicles on May 11 and the next day saw a full conference, held at Drapers' Hall by the Textile Livery Companies titled Sustainability in UK Textiles. HRH the Princess Royal opened the conference as the President of UK Fashion and Textiles Association and there followed a series of impressive presentations by companies working to make their businesses sustainable. From cashmere sourced in Mongolia to dry cleaning rentable clothes. See: <https://www.ukft.org>

These Livery events are in alignment both with the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy but also follow the work of the Livery Climate Action Group.

What's happening in the City

It does not do to neglect the Ward that I represent as Alderman and so I had breakfast one morning with a local business in order to catch up on any news. I also had a more extensive visit when I was taken for a walkabout by the CEO of Historic England, Duncan Wilson, and his team (who are based in Dowgate Ward). The City is the site of one third of London's scheduled monuments and these should be cherished by property owners and the City.



The launch of the programme, Destination City, by the new Policy Chairman, Chris Hayward, is a good prompt to consider how the City reflects these heritage assets, see: <https://news.cityoflondon.gov.uk/policy-chairman-sets-out-ambitious-destination-city-vision--for-the-square-mile/> The programme looks to enhance the tourism and visitor experience of the City and promote the cultural and physical spaces that the City can offer. I will try to ensure and promote the historical heritage implicit in the City's streets and open spaces.

London First, the business campaigning membership group that promotes London held a Building London Summit on May 11. This conference had many wide-ranging discussions around London's property challenges. I attended and engaged in the fruitful discussions and was able to ask a question about the role of heritage in preserving but also utilising all our buildings.

Linking across London and the World

I was pleased to greet the sailing ship Ilen as she arrived in St Katharine's Dock sailing from Limerick to London. Her active life had been spent in the Falklands transporting cargo between the islands. A party including the crew and Irish diaspora in London gave a warm berth in London see: <http://www.ilen.ie>



Both of the Sheriffs joined the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress with their dog India on the annual Whittington Walk from the statue on Highgate Hill of Dick's cat to the Mansion House (via Islington Town Hall). It is a bonding experience to walk the streets with this wonderful group of Mayors and Deputy Lord Mayor of Westminster. For many this was their last ceremonial role as their terms were ending in mid-May.

See: <http://www.londonmayors.org.uk> The new Mayors, leaders and chief executives of the 32 Boroughs will be attending the Mansion House on 30 May for the London Government Dinner which is another good opportunity to catch up with our London colleagues.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Big Curry Lunch was officially a great success. At the reception in Mansion House, the Lord Mayor announced the total raised to be a record beating £310,000. A rather atmospheric photograph by Charles Perrett captures the moment.



Best wishes

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