The Company of Human Resource Professionals
Putting People First in the World of Work

THE HERALD

the Newsletter *of* the HR Company

ARMED FORCES COVENANT
EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME
SILVER AWARD

"Putting People First in the World of Work."

Edition 28– May 2025



Awards

As part or our commitment to recognising and encouraging good practice the Company Launched two Awards within the HR profession and the Livery World.

Through the first Award, sponsored by Sheridan Worldwide, we wanted to celebrate HR leadership and innovation, a skill that is defining the future of our profession.

The Award aimed at recognising the achievements of Freeman, Members, Individuals, Teams or Organisations delivering groundbreaking HR Leadership and going above and beyond within their organisation or wider sphere of influence.

The entries were asked to demonstrate a concentrated effort on future-focused HR and/or the development of the profession either through the development of future leaders above and beyond "normal" training and development activities or groundbreaking innovation (a clear first) to facilitate enhanced HR deliverables.

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Board Effectiveness Programme 2025

For full details please turn to page 13.

Please can I ask you all to:

- Consider if there is anyone in your own team that would benefit from participating.
- Reach out to your networks to recommend the programme and to encourage participation.

For More Information Click Here

The Excellence in HR Award 2025 was won by SONNEDIX.

The Winners were judged to be shaping the future from outside in and inside out. Through rapid expansion in volatile markets and a highly competitive workforce landscape, this HR team has introduced a multi-faceted, future-focused HR strategy centred around leadership development, DEI, and technology-driven transformation. With a clear articulation of the problem statement and impressive impact data, the judges saw evidence of a range of robust plans that delivered targeted change and were embraced by a range of key stakeholders. Innovation and commitment to people development is a core component of living their purpose, which is to provide green, affordable electricity to customers, and act as true social citizens in the communities in which they operate. Through a One Team approach, doing the Right Thing, and an Owners mentality, the function remains at the forefront of future-focused HR and excellence in people and culture. Their positive energy builds resilience and drives sustainable impact.

The second Award, sponsored by Fox Williams LLP, was aimed at Livery Companies, Guilds and Ward Clubs within the city of London designed to celebrate success in the arena of Belonging, Inclusion and Diversity (BID) - an area where the perceptions of Livery Companies and Guilds may be less positive to the wider world.

The Award recognised the achievements of Livery Companies and Guilds in promoting BI&D, within their organisation or wider sphere of influence.

Any Livery Company or Guild was invited to tell us about an initiative of any kind to promote diversity or inclusiveness within their organisation or outside. The judges looked for an outline of the goal of the project that was undertaken, some data on the existing situation, an overview of the project or plan that was implemented and then some data to evidence the achievements.

The Livery BID award for 2025 was won by the Worshipful Company of Founders.

The Founders believe that attracting a wider pool of talent to engage with their Livery Company will assist in building a City of London fit for the future. And they have a diversity charter which ensures they make conscious decisions on Leadership and Freeman appointments. They monitor closely in numbers and provide feedback to ensure transparency and accountability. The judges recognised that they approached the challenge purposefully, off a low base, and are striving for continuous improvement, and helping to shape the Future of Livery.

The Quality of the entries was extremely high and the panel of judges really did struggle to select a winner. The Company thanks all those who sponsored, judged, supported and entered the Award programme.



A photograph of the Livery award winners from the Worshipful Company of Founders



A Photograph of the HR Leaders award winners from Sonnedix

EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME SILVER AWARD 2025

STOP PRESS!

The Company of HR Professionals are delighted to announce that we have been awarded Silver level in the DefenceEmployer Recognition Scheme. This is a major achievement for the Company as we are the FIRST and ONLY Livery Company to achieve this Award.

As you are aware, the Company of HR Professionals signed the Armed Forces Covenant in April 2023, showing our commitment to those serving in the Armed Forces and the Armed Forces Community. We then applied for Bronze level in the Employer Recognition Scheme in late 2023.

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant.

As Freeman or Member of the Company of HR Professionals we would ask you to encourage your employer to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and where possible show commitment through the Defence ERS Scheme.

The Company has recently appointed Freeman Alex Head as our Military Liaison and she is more than happy to support any members who wish to explore signing the Armed Forces Covenant. Please do read the article below about the Armed Forces Covenant.

Equally if your Company has signed the Covenant or holds Bronze, Silver or Gold ERS level please do let us know. We are keen to know what our members employers of our members are doing in this area.







Supporting the Armed Forces Community: A Strategic Opportunity for Employers

In this issue of The Herald, we are pleased to highlight the valuable opportunities and benefits available to employers who sign the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) and participate in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS).

What is the Armed Forces Covenant?

The Armed Forces Covenant is a voluntary pledge made by businesses and organisations to support the Armed Forces community. Described on the official website: *"The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation ensuring that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly."* Signing the Covenant is a powerful statement of support and appreciation, it can enhance a company's reputation and demonstrate their social value.

Why Does the Armed Forces Community Need This Support?

Service in the Armed Forces—whether full-time or as a reservist—entails significant personal sacrifice. Those who serve often forgo the freedom to choose where they live, the ability to spend key moments with family, and sometimes even the opportunity to return home for extended periods. Their families, too, face frequent upheaval and uncertainty.

Spouses may find it difficult to maintain continuous employment due to frequent relocations, while veterans can require tailored support when transitioning into civilian life. The AFC encourages employers to recognise these unique challenges and actively provide assistance. Signing the Covenant sends a clear message of solidarity and respect for the contributions made by those who serve the nation.

Benefits of Signing the AFC

By pledging support through the AFC, employers can access a range of benefits, including:

- Guidance and resources tailored to support the Armed Forces community
- Networking opportunities with like-minded organisations
- Access to potential funding and training
- A dedicated relationship manager to assist throughout the process

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Each AFC pledge can be customised to reflect the organisation's specific capacity and goals. Many businesses report improved employee morale, a more diverse talent pool, and a strengthened sense of corporate social responsibility after signing the Covenant. A robust internal veteran community can also attract further talent from the Armed Forces network—a valuable and cost-effective recruitment advantage.

Introducing the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS)

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme rewards employers who go beyond the basic requirements of the AFC. Operating at bronze, silver and gold levels, DERS acknowledges progressive levels of commitment and action.

The Company of Human Resource Professionals and has just achieved the Silver award. This level involves further pledges, including proactive recruitment of reservists and veterans, and enhanced workplace support for members of the Armed Forces community.

The Value of Reservists and CFAVs

Reservists and Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) offer a unique set of skills developed through military training. They are often highly disciplined, adaptable, and strong leaders. Their experiences translate into effective teamwork, problem-solving, and communication in the civilian workplace.

By including these individuals in a company's Armed Forces pledge, employers gain access to professionals who regularly engage in leadership development and are eager to contribute those skills to their civilian roles. Our lovely Clerk is a passionate CFAV!

How to Get Involved

For more information on signing the Covenant and accessing support, visit:

- Sign the Armed Forces Covenant
- AFC FAQs

Alternatively, members are welcome to reach out to **Alex Head**, one of our newest Freemen, who is happy to provide further guidance and support. Please contact info@hrprofessioanls.org.uk in the first instance.

What have we been doing this year so far?

Well, 2025 has proved to be an extremely busy year so far and we thought we would take a look back on all the events and activities we have hosted.

In January we kicked off with the annual Burns Supper held jointly with The Worshipful Company of Scriveners, Honourable Company of Master Mariners, The Worshipful Company of Distillers and the Worshipful Company of Painer Stainers. Over 140 people filled the room at Vintners' Hall for an evening of Tartan, Pipers, poetry and a huge amount of fun. This event is somewhat special as it is a now established pan livery event allowing our members to meet other Liverymen and women. This is one event NOT to miss!

Burns Supper - 21st January







We then moved swiftly to a Common Hall meeting in February, at which we launched the HR Company Film. Past Master Andrea Eccles presented some 'HR Oscars' to those who had provided 'Oscar winning performances' on the golden screen! The Common Hall also provided an opportunity for Members to meet and chat informally and learn more about the various committees and opportunities the Company has.

Common Hall and Social event - 5th February








In February we also welcomed 9 new Freemen of the Company who declared at a ceremony at Ironmongers' Hall and also celebrated Freemen of the Company who also became Freemen of the City of London.

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The Company also participated in the annual United Guilds' Service at St Pauls Cathedral in March. This is a special event with every Livery Company and Guild in attendance and all dressed in their various robes and colours. It is certainly an event well worth attending. This year we joined other Companies and processed from Apothecaries Hall up to the steps of St Pauls Cathedral.

United Guilds' Service - 28th March









Masters Seminar - 1st April

April saw the first of the Masters seminars take place, kindly hosted by Fox Williams. Some 20 or so members joined together to explore 'The EDI Backlash' following the change of direction in the USA. An interesting debate, enjoyed by all. April also saw presentation of our first ever Awards and a highly successful Charity Fundraising Dinner.

Charity & Awards Dinner - 30th April

The 30th April saw the Company host an incredibly successful Charitable Trust and Awards Dinner. This was the first for the Company as this evening saw the presentation of the first ever Excellence in HR Award sponsored by Sheridan Worldwide and the Belonging, Inclusivity and Diversity Award, sponsored by Fox Williams.

As well as the presentation of the first ever Company awards, all those present had the opportunity to participate in a wide range of fundraising activities, including a raffle, Heads and Tails and of course the traditional Auction. We had a full house at this event and are delighted to say that the evening was successful in raising £12,850 for the HR Charitable Trust, as well as enjoying each others company and a fabulous 3 course dinner!

We are forever grateful to our Award Sponsors, Award entrants, those who donated Auction Lots and Raffle Prizes and of course those who bid, bought raffle tickets and took an active part in all the activities. Thank you to everyone involved!

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Some Photographs from the Charity & Awards Dinner



Immediately into May and we held an informal Guided walk exploring the streets of the City of London, on an extremely cold evening. A fascinating and educational walk enjoyed by all present and resulting in a second walk being booked for early June.

City of London Walk - 6th May





Following hot on the heels of the guided walk, The Company took an extremely active part in the Knowledge and Human Potential debate, hosted at the Information Technologists' Hall and exploring DEI with input from two of our Freemen Members, Professor Nelarine Cornelius and Simon Fanshawe OBE. A fascinating debate with many attendees from the Communicators, Educators, Management Consultants and many others.

So we have arrived in June and there is no chance of the events slowing down. A second guided Walk was held exploring the history of Livery Companies in the first week.

We have the second of the Masters seminars on 17 June, this time exploring AI within the world of HR, quickly followed by the Masters weekend scheduled for 21/22 June. And of course not forgetting the ever popular annual Company BBQ on 1st July.

Fellowship - New Members of the Company

The Company continues to grow and in the last 6 months we have welcomed 22 new members as Freemen and Members. The Membership Committee has a target to recruit 60 new members during 2025 and we do need your help to do that. Thank you to all our members who have shared, introduced and encouraged potential members to get in touch, please do continue to introduce people you think will engage and enjoy being a member of the HR Company and give something back to the profession at the same time.

If you want to bring any potential members to an event, The Masters seminar and the BBQ provide an ideal opportunity for very informal meets with lots of opportunities to chat with others. Please do bring potential members as guests. Please do share the recruitment slides via LinkedIn and share the Company Introduction pack with anyone who might be interested.

The Company of Human Resource Professionals
Putting People First in the World of Work

Information Pack

We do welcome our newest Freemen to the Company and look forward to seeing you at lots of events.

Louisa Spicer	Freeman	Kofi Kyei	Freeman	Steve O'Reilly	Freeman
Sarah Sandbrook	Freeman	Yetunde Hofmann	Freeman	Isabelle Diethelm	Freeman
Bozena Birt	Freeman	Darshini Santhanam	Freeman	Sarah Boorman	Freeman
Anup Vora	Freeman	Stella Chandler	Freeman	Joanne Southey	Freeman
Alexandra Head	Freeman	Robyn Davies	Freeman	Nina Vania	Freeman
Mandy Roberts	Freeman	Sinem Unal	Freeman	Leo Walker	Freeman
Lucy Graley	Freeman	Grace Walton	Freeman		
Clinton Wingrove	Freeman	Fay Johnstone	Freeman		

Membership and Fellowship







LinkedIn Posts are available by clicking the links below

Post 1. Post 2. Post 3.

Almoner



I am Junior Warden of the Company and Chair of the Membership Committee. I have recently been asked to become the Company Almoner. This role dates back centuries and, historically, involved distributing 'alms' ie charitable donations, to the poor. Fast forward to the twentieth century and, in the days before HR was a profession in its own right, the two main strands were Welfare and Industrial Relations. In fact, the forerunner of the CIPD started in 1913 as the Welfare Workers Association. Clearly, HR as a profession has developed substantially since then; so much so that our own Company of HR Professionals was championed and brought into existence as a Guild ten years ago. The focus of the Almoner role is on welfare and pastoral care within the Company.

The key aspects of the Almoner role are as follows:

1. Identify the need of any Freeman, Member, their family or other individual associated with the Company in order that assistance can be provided where required;

2. Ensure that the Court and Freemen of the Company provide the necessary continuing support to those in need;

3. Liaise with the Court and Freeman as required;

4. Ensure that all Freemen of the Company are made aware, on a regular basis, that it is their duty to keep the Almoner informed if there is need or distress;

5. Keep an up-to-date Company Membership list for personal use, with names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses;

6. Maintain, for personal reference, a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of distressed Freemen of the Company and/or their families. Make contact, as long as these contacts are welcome, leaving personal contact details;

7. Act with discretion, compassion and confidentiality at all times;

8. Be aware of the type and scope of support that the Company may be able to offer Freemen and their families.

Please do make contact if you are having a difficult time or you know of an individual within the Company who is in need or distress. Be assured that your contact will be treated in the utmost confidence. In the first instance, please contact me on 07920 842580 or hgreatrex@executive-action.com.

Freeman of the City of London



If you are Freeman of the Company of HR Professionals and have been active within the Company for a around 18 months, then perhaps the next step for you is to become a Freeman of the City of London. So what does it mean?

The Freedom of the City of London started around 1237 as the status of a 'free man' or 'citizen', protected by the charter of the City of London and not under the jurisdiction of a feudal lord. In the Middle Ages, this developed into a Freedom or right to trade, becoming closely linked to the medieval guilds, the livery companies. In 1835 eligibility for the Freedom of the City was extended to anyone who lived in, worked in or had a strong connection to the City. The Freedom that citizens enjoy has long associations with privileges in the governance of the City.

Whilst no longer carrying many substantive rights and largely existing as a tradition, the freedom is a pre-requisite for standing for election to the Common Council and Court of Aldermen of the City of London. The Lord Mayor of the City must first become an Alderman and hence must also be a Freeman, Liverymen.

As we move closer to becoming a full Livery Company and achieving Worshipful Company status we will then offer a third level of Membership – that of a Liveryman. In order to become a Liveryman of a Company you MUST also be a Freeman of the City of London. Liverymen of Companies have a number of rights and indeed responsibilities. Only Liverymen of Companies have the right to vote for the Lord Mayor of London, not forgetting, the right to herd their sheep into the City of London over the river Thames!

The Worshipful Company of Woolmen organise an annual event to facilitate this and the Company has booked a slot on 28th September at 1400 for up to 10 Freemen of the City and HR Professionals to herd sheep.

You can book a slot at this time via our Members Area. If all the 10 places are booked quickly, you can still book directly via the Woolmans website. Try to book a slot close to 1400 to get as many HR professionals at the same time.

If you have been an engaged Freeman of our Company for at least 18 months and you would like to become a Freeman of the City of London then please contact info@hrprofessionals.org.uk and we will send you a link.

The Sheep Drive



Development

Board Effectiveness Programme

The HR Company is delighted to announce the launch of the third series of this innovative programme in partnership with the Non-Executive Directors'Association (NEDA) and supported by the CIPD.

The programme equips HR Leaders to become effective board directors either as part of a plural career or – increasingly – as a valued Non-Executive for another leading organisation whilst in situ as a CHRO in their own firm. Why? Boards are valuing many of the attributes of people leadership such as developing inclusive cultures, remuneration strategy, succession planning and employee engagement. Our profession is the custodian of the critical processes and operating models which support these elements and more.

1st October 2025 in person in a Board Room in the City of London

4th November 2025 via remote access for those working outside of London

The cost for the programme will be (£1,300 + VAT)

Registration

Giving Back

Can you buy us a coffee..... ?



Being a Freeman or Member of the Company of HR Professionals is not only about attending events etc there is an important part about giving back to the profession in some way. Some of our members offer their time as volunteers to support the Pro Bono work, others sit on Committees or the Court. But we do encourage all to make regular donations to the charitable trust. The trust is responsible for giving grants to those that need help whilst working in the world of HR.

Our plea to you is to buy the Trust a cup of coffee every month on a regular basis Just £3.80 would buy a nice Caffe Mocha, if you sign up for gift aid, then thats an extra 95pence on top. £4.75 per month would be £57 per year per member direct to the Trust. Collectively If every member bought the charitable Trust a coffee once a month we could raise over £11,000 a year including gift aid.

QR Code - Donating to the Charitable Trust

So..... Please buy the Trust a coffee and set up a regular giving to give back to the professional and really make a difference.

Please use the donation button below to set up regular giving to the trust or use the QR code to the left.

Donation

SUMMER BBQ

1st July 2025 - 6:00 pm



The Master and Wardens of the Company of HR Professionals invites all members, families and friends to the summer BBQ and drinks event

Tuesday 1 July 2025.

The evening will be held on the terrace of the Dogget's Coat and Badge and dress for the occasion is smart casual.

Enjoy a beautiful summers evening in the company of other members beside the River Thames. This does promise to be an excellent and very informal evening.

Cost for this exclusive event is £77 per head. This includes wine, beer and soft drinks and a BBQ with a wide variety of items on offer.

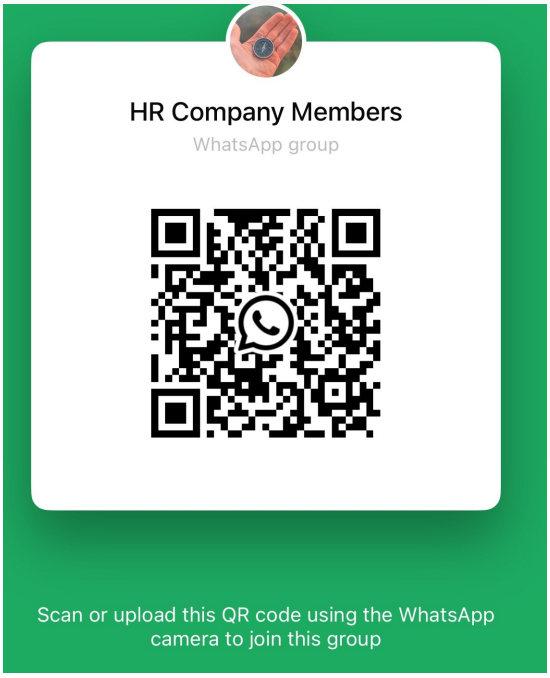
Booking will close on 20/06/2025 or earlier if the event is sold out!

Company Events Diary 2025

Date	Day	Time	Event	Venue
July 2025				
01-07-25	Wed	1830 -2200	Summer BBQ	Dogget's Coat & Badge
September 2024				
08-09-25	Mon	1200 -1430	Monday lunch with declarations	Ironmongers' Hall
19-09-25	Fri	1800 -2000	Master's Seminar	TBA
28-09-25	Sun	1400	Woolman Sheep Drive	TBA
October 2024				
14/10/25	Tues	1830 -2200	Installation Court Dinner	Vintners' Hall
November 2024				
09-11-25	Sat	0800 - 1500	Lord Mayors Show	City of London
December 2024				
TBC	Mon	1200 -1500	Festive Lunch	Ironmongers' Hall

Don't forget to sign up to the Company's WhatsApp Group for reminders of events and opportunities

The Company's WhatsApp Group is available to all members and is a great way to have an informal chat and catch up with other members of the Company. We also use this to advertise forthcoming events and provide reminders. If you have not already joined the please use the QR code.



LinkedIn

The Company has a LinkedIn page so we would encourage you to have a look and repost anything of interest to your network.

Below are some opportunities from other Livery Companies and similar, open to Company Members. Please feel free to book.

Ministry of Defence

Reserves Day 2025

How you can get involved as an employer

Armed Forces Week is fast approaching, and with it, Reserves Day on Wednesday 25 June 2025—a key opportunity to recognise the valuable contribution Reservists make to our Armed Forces and society.

To help you celebrate and show your support, we've created a downloadable Employer Toolkit featuring logos, digital assets, and example social media content to support both internal and external communications:

Toolkit & Resources

We're keen to amplify your social media posts across Defence Relationship Management (DRM) and Ministry of Defence (MOD) channels. The Toolkit includes examples of employer content from previous years to inspire your campaign.

This year, we're encouraging all employers to record a short video message of support, either from leadership or your Reservist employees. In the video, simply share why supporting the Armed Forces matters to your organisation. When posting on social media, don't forget to tag DRM and MOD so we can help amplify your message. Please also use the hashtags #ReservesDay and #SaluteOurForces.

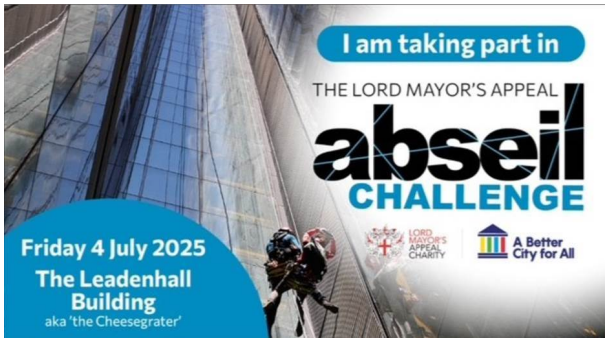
RESERVES DAY
SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

If you have any questions or would like to share your social media plan for Reserves Day, please get in touch at co-drmdigital@rfca.org.uk.

Thank you for your continued support.

Find us on:

- On X: @DRM_UK
- On LinkedIn: @Defence Relationship Management (DRM)
- On YouTube: Defence Relationship Management





LORD MAYOR'S APPEAL CHARITY

A Better City for All

I'm taking on the challenge of abseiling down the Leadenhall Building (aka the 'Cheesegrater') next month, as part of the Lord Mayor's charity appeal. This appeal supports charities focused on health, young people and community development in and around the Square Mile.

Mindful that everyone has personal causes that they contribute to already, any donation you're able to give as I conquer my fear of heights would be appreciated! Just click on my JustGiving page -> Nicola Auret is fundraising for The Lord Mayor's Appeal

Many thanks
Nicki Auret

Invitation to

City & Legal Lecture



The Environment & Human Rights
Insights from the Aarhus Convention: A lecture by Professor Áine Ryall, Chair of the UNECE Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee

With Keynote Speaker
Professor Áine Ryall
on
Friday 27th June 2025
Hosted by Alderman & Sheriff Gregory Jones KC

Join us at the Central Criminal Court, where the panel will discuss the question The Environment & Human Rights, Insights from the Aarhus Convention.

Panellists include Professor Maria Lee, Professor of Law at UCL and former director and co-director of the UCL Centre for Law and the Environment, and Mark O'Brien O'Reilly, top Junior planning barrister.

Guest arrival is from 17:45 at the Main Entrance of the Old Bailey for the talk beginning at 18:00 in the historic Court 1. The talk will end promptly at 19:00 and will be followed by a drinks reception until 20:00.

Dress code is business attire.

Should you wish to attend, tickets can be purchased for £25pp + fees via the Eventbrite link.



Join us for a one-night-only menu at Six Clerks, featuring 6-courses and a welcome cocktail by Executive Culinary Lead, Chef Scott Dineen.

Inspired by nostalgic British seaside memories, this immersive menu blends vibrant ingredients and storytelling into a playful, sensory journey of culinary theatre

.

Whether you prefer an intimate dinner for two or the lively atmosphere of our communal Supper Club Table, this event promises great food, drinks and company in the heart of London's legal district.

Thursday 10th July
From 6:30pm

Early bird tickets are £35 per person when using the code 'EarlyBird30' at checkout

The Early Bird offer expires at 23:30pm on 29th May 2025. Prices before early bird discounts are £50 per person. For reservations please click here

The Feltmakers' Inter-Livery Tennis Competition

This will be held on Thursday 18th September 2025 at Queen's Club.

The competition is open to teams of mixed pairs, with each Livery Company allowed to enter a maximum of 2 pairs. The competition is designed for Liverymen and their spouses/partners/ friends; one person in each pair should therefore be a Liveryman. The competition will be run as an American tournament, with quarter-finals, semi-finals and a final. The Feltmakers' Trophy will be awarded to the winners. There will be a knock-out Plate Competition for first round group losers. The start time will be 11 a.m.

The competition will be followed by dinner when the Master of the Feltmakers' Company will present prizes to the winners and the runners-up. The evening normally ends shortly after 9.30pm.

I will follow up with full details and application forms in mid-June but meanwhile please give some thought to your teams!