



The Guild Newsletter

September 2026

Master's Update

2025-2026 MASTER CHRIS CULLEN

Greetings all,

I trust everyone successfully navigated the heat and had an agreeable summer season.

Amongst other items, this issue has information on the Guild's principal officers for 2026-27, an update on our revised constitution, news of the refreshed website plus the usual preview of upcoming events.

As a voluntary organisation rooted in tradition and the mentoring of young people, the Guild relies on a clear line of succession to maintain continuity and preserve its knowledge and experience. This ensures incoming officers are prepared, supported and able to build on the work of their predecessors.

Following elections at the 2026 Annual Meeting and the recent EGM, I can confirm that **Jonty Yin** will progress to be Junior Warden, **Edward Le Good** will become the Renter Warden, and **Will Jackson** will assume the role of Master.

This structured progression is central to the Guild's governance model: each officer gains experience step-by-step, developing the knowledge, confidence, and relationships needed to lead effectively.

The changeover date will be the 29th of October, shortly before the Installation Dinner which provides a natural,

ceremonial moment for the transition. This timing reinforces tradition while allowing the new Master and Wardens to begin their duties with clarity and authority. It also ensures that guildmen and apprentices experience a seamless handover, strengthening trust in the Guild's leadership.

The succession plan for next year is set but it is the duty of the Court to ensure we have a strong pipeline of committed individuals for future years. If becoming a member of the Court, Warden and eventually Master of the Guild is something that would appeal to you in the future, please reach out to learn more about what is involved.

Next month brings the highlight of the Guild's social calendar: the 2026 Installation Dinner at Drapers' Hall. This is always a fabulous occasion and I very much look forward to seeing you there or at one of the other events.

Looking further ahead the 2026 Christmas Carol Service will be on Monday 14th December. Always a highlight of the festive season, the service will be hosted once again at St Martins within Ludgate in a service led by Father Andrew Crosbie. No doubt refreshments will be sought in a local hostelry after the service.

Keep an eye on the website's event page for updates on this and all events.

A facelift for the GMS website

If you have visited the GMS website in recent weeks you will have noticed that it has had an overhaul. The new-look website is designed to modernise our digital presence and better reflect the Guild's evolving role within the City of London. The project was aimed at making resources easier to find and creating a clearer, more welcoming online identity that supports guildmen, apprentices, and partner institutions while showcasing the Guild's heritage and purpose.

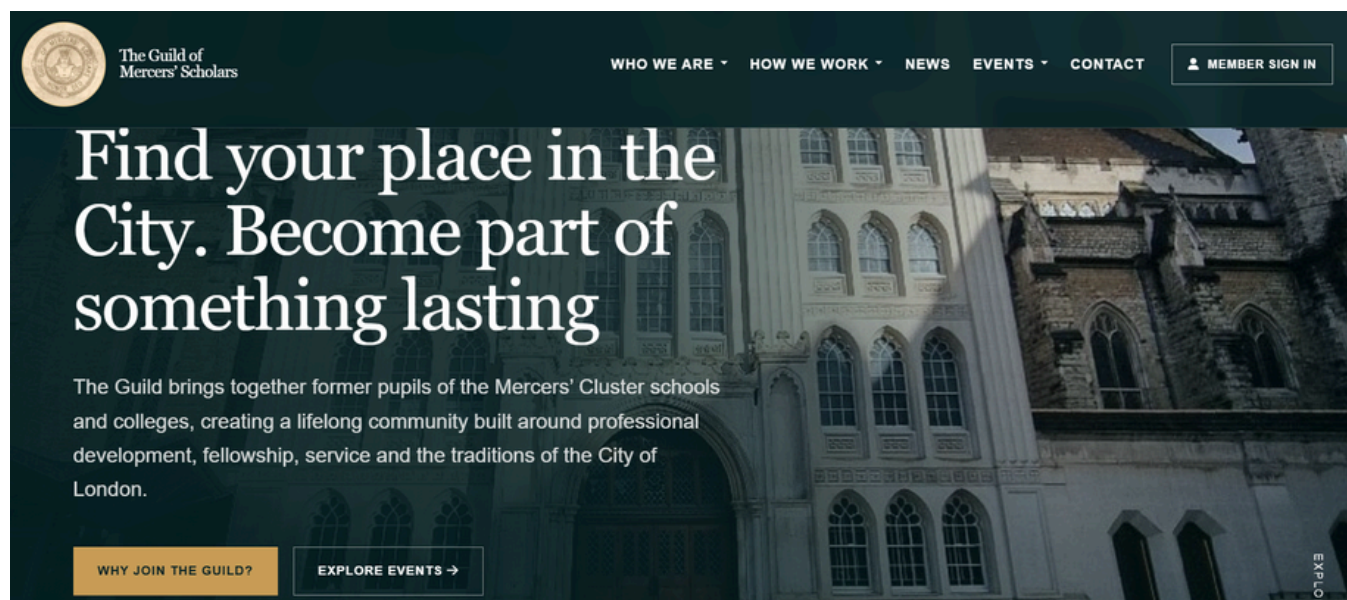
A key focus of the redesign was improved navigation, ensuring visitors can easily find information on membership, events, the Apprenticeship scheme, and the grant application process. The new site also introduces a more contemporary visual style, aligning with our commitment to diversity, accessibility, and professional standards.

Enhanced functionality such as streamlined application processes, clearer communication channels, and mobile friendly layouts will help us to engage more effectively with younger audiences and prospective members.

Content will be continuously refreshed to highlight the Guild's history, its connection to schools within the GMS cluster, and its role in supporting individuals pursuing the Freedom of the City or joining Livery Companies.

The project represents an important step in strengthening the Guild's visibility and ensuring its values, traditions, and opportunities are communicated with clarity and impact. Many thanks to all who contributed to the development, particularly Renter Warden Will Jackson who led the project.

Have a look around!



The GMS Constitution gets a refresh

An up to date governing document in the form of a constitution is essential for any organisation as it provides clarity, stability, and accountability across all aspects of its operation. At its core, a constitution acts as the Guild's formal rulebook, defining how decisions are made, who holds authority, and how roles and responsibilities are structured. This ensures transparency and consistency in governance, preventing disputes and guiding the Guild through both routine matters and moments of change.



GUILD OF MERCERS' SCHOLARS CONSTITUTION

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Constitution sets out the rules and regulations of the Guild or Mercer's Scholars that were originally documented on 30th May 1951 and periodically amended by the Court.
- 1.2. This current version was approved 26-March-2026

2. Title

- 2.1. The Guild shall be entitled the "Guild of Mercers' Scholars", or such other title as the Court shall decide.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the Guild shall be:

- To bring together former members of the Mercers' cluster of schools, colleges and academies who have an interest in the City of London, its customs, ceremonies and traditions to become Freemen of the City.
- To enable young people from the Mercers' cluster of schools to become Freemen of the City of London through the Apprenticeship scheme.
- To assist members to become members of a City Livery Company of their choice.
- To foster a sense of good citizenship by service to the Guild, to one's own Livery Company and to the Corporation of the City of London
- To support educational and charitable activities, both by the organisation of events and through grants to Guildmen and Apprentices from the Guild's own Charitable Trust.

4. Governance

- 4.1. The Guild shall consist of the "the Court", Guildmen and Apprentices.
- 4.2. The Court shall be made up of a Master, Renter Warden, Junior Warden, Past Masters, Clerk, Treasurer, Membership Clerk, Court Assistants with portfolio or without portfolio and any other officials that the Court may deem necessary.
- 4.3. The affairs of the Guild shall be under the absolute control of the Court

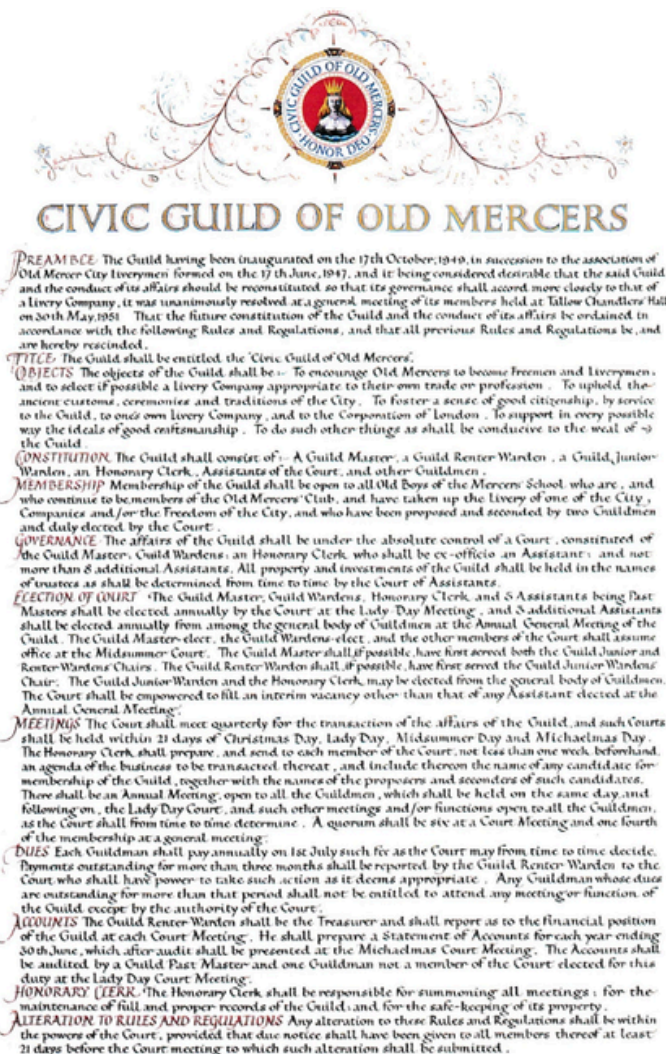
5. Membership

- 5.1. Membership of the Guild shall be open to all current and former students of the Mercers' cluster of schools, colleges and academies, and to such other persons approved by the Court, who have taken up the Freedom of the City of London or the livery of one of the City

The Court approved an updated version of the GMS constitution in 2026. An early version of the constitution from 1951 is pictured on the left. Although the document now runs to five pages instead of the original single page, its basic structure remains recognisable.

Ultimately, the constitution is more than an administrative document: it is the foundation that keeps the Guild coherent, legally sound, and able to fulfil its mission within the City of London.

You can read the updated constitution on the Guild website.



Installation Dinner 2026

Thursday 29th October 2026
Drapers' Hall
Black tie and evening dress
Reception from 6.15pm



Every Guild year has one evening that sets the tone for the rest of it.

Ours is the Installation Dinner, this year at Drapers' Hall - black tie, full company, music, and the night of installation for the new Master, Wardens and Court.

If you come to one thing this year, come to this.

What to expect

- **Drapers' Hall.** One of the great halls of the City, and not a room most people get to dine in. The livery halls are among London's best-kept secrets precisely because you have to be asked.
- **The company.** Guests from across the professions of the City - law, finance and industry, alongside representatives of our esteemed cluster schools. That combination is the Guild's real character: the City's working life and the schools that make up our membership in one room.

Guest Speakers

We will be joined on the night by a former Second Sea Lord of the Royal Navy, and by a speaker from Parliament. Names will follow closer to the time - for now, we will only say that the Guild has done rather well.

Booking

- Guildsmen and guests: **£135.**
- Apprentices: **£90.**
- The ticket covers the whole evening - a sparkling reception, a three-course dinner with wine throughout. Port, chocolates and coffee to follow. For a black-tie dinner in a hall of this kind, that is not a price you will see often.
- Book through the Guild website, or by email to the Clerk.
- Bookings close on Friday 2nd October. The Hall needs final numbers and we cannot add places afterwards.

Reserve your place

At the time of writing we are approaching 110 tickets sold. Drapers' Hall seats a finite number of people and this is the Guild's largest occasion of the year; the evening has historically sold out, and those who wait tend to be the ones who miss it.

If you are minded to come, book this week rather than next.

Guests are warmly welcome. If you have been meaning to introduce someone to the Guild, a hall like this on a night like this is how you do it.

Do not miss the highlight of the Guild's civic year.

The Year Ahead (2026-27) – A sneak preview

When a group of Mercers' School alumni sat down to lunch at Tallow Chandlers' Hall in June 1947, they were City folk who wanted to keep hold of something.

Eighty years on, that is still what we are for - and the eightieth anniversary of that lunch falls squarely in the upcoming year.

A Guild is not its constitution or its committees. It is the people who turn up. Our events are the lifeblood of this organisation: they are where members meet one another, where apprentices learn and pursue opportunities, and where friendships form that outlast any single Master's year. Membership on its own is a line on a list. Coming to things is what turns it into something worth having - and the members who get the most out of the Guild are, without exception, the ones who come.

Dates and further details will be on the website in due course and shared in subsequent newsletters, but here's a taste of what to expect this year:

- **The 80th Anniversary Lunch.** A highlight of the year. A City hall, guests from far and wide, and the Guild's own history given the attention it deserves. Keep space for this one.
- **A Leadership and Development Day** for apprentices and younger members: how the City actually works, what the Livery is, and where a Freedom can take you. Speakers worth hearing, and lunch afterwards. The outings are the pleasure; this is the purpose.

Guild occasions

- An evening among the cellars of one of St James's oldest wine merchants - a tour and a tutored tasting at **Berry Brothers and Rudd**.
- A private tour of the **Palace of Westminster**, hosted by one of our own members, on a Saturday so families can come.
- **The Colonel's Review on Horse Guards** - Trooping the Colour in all but a handful of mounted officers, at a fraction of the price.

Out into the City

- **The Inter-Livery Pancake Races.** A Guild team in Guildhall Yard, and we will want supporters. The most entertaining morning of the Livery year and by some margin the most photographed.
- **The United Guilds' Service** at St Paul's, processing with the whole Livery of the City.
- **The Woolmen's Sheep Drive and Livery Fair** across Southwark Bridge on the last Sunday in September. Freeman only, which is a standing argument for completing your Freedom application if one were needed.

We also plan to hold informal socials after each quarterly Court meeting at Guildhall.