



Message from the Master



The past month has been incredible – a genuine 'mensis mirabilis' – as readers of my Master's blog will know. On 28 February we had our Discussion Dinner with Rebecca Pow MP, Minister for Water, who was hugely impressed with the diverse range of skills and experience which our Company has to offer – and has since reached out to a number of us individually for input into the government's water strategy; it is no small thing to be specifically asked for advice in this way! Then on 21 March we had our annual City Water Debate with five very high profile speakers on the very topical subject of governance of the water sector. This was exceedingly well received with the warmest letters of appreciation from the City and fellow livery companies. In my view we are too modest and don't realise how much we have to offer to the current discussion on water and the environment – which is not going to get any less as time goes on. A glance at our web site will show a list of nearly 30 webinars and a very large number of consultation responses and think pieces. These all reflect our specific locus: we are not a trade association (though historically that was what livery companies were) or a single issue pressure group; rather we are a network of individuals, often very senior in their sector, with a diverse range of skills and experience, all bound together by our mission of 'promoting a diverse and sustainable environment.' This makes us uniquely well placed to convene serious fact based debate in the face of often very fractious public discourse on environmental matters. This is proving to be a hugely valuable role – let's build on it!

As I write we are about to admit six new

freemen, invest a new Liveryman and readmit a long retired Past Master. We will also welcome three new corporate members. Details on this great news will follow in next month's update.

Colin Drummond
Master

Follow the Master on: [https://
masterwaterconservator22.blogspot.com/](https://masterwaterconservator22.blogspot.com/)

April/May Events (see website for all event details)

- 21 April 2023, Lost Rivers Walk, City of London
- 4 May 2023, WCWC Webinar, History of the Medway Estuary
- 13 May, Livery Companies Thanksgiving Service, Chichester Cathedral
- 17 May, Associates Pub Evening, Location tba

April Webinar

Our 17th April webinar on "Sustainable Resources, Treasuring the planet's resources for the future: What you can do", has been postponed to late May, date to be confirmed shortly.

May Webinar



Our next webinar at 5.30pm on Thursday 4th May 2023 will be "Islands of the Medway Estuary" presented by Adam Taylor, a keen canoeist. Using historical sources, photos, personal experience, and maps from 1500's to present day he will show you the once inhabited islands of the Medway Estuary, the shipwreck of a WW1 German

submarine, the infamous Deadmans island, inside the abandoned forts which once defended Chatham Dockyard and some of the stunning natural beauty of this vast wilderness.

Whittington600 Celebration

A service was held on 14th March at St Michael's Paternoster Royal to commemorate the 600th Anniversary of the death of Dick (Richard) Whittington. The service was led by The Rt Rev and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally, Bishop of London. At the close a wreath was laid at Dick Whittington's memorial in the church. Afterwards there were presentations on the life and legacy of Dick Whittington by Professor Caroline Barron OBE and by our own Walbrook Warden, Professor Carolyn Roberts, notably highlighting Whittington's great contribution to the public health of the City. At the close Alderman Alison Gowman announced the City's 'Bin it don't block it' campaign, designed to address the scourge of sewer blockages and Alison paid specific tribute to the Water Conservators for our input and support.

City Water Debate

The topic for this year's WCWC City Water Debate, held on Tuesday 21st March, was "Does the governance of the water sector need to change to meet the requirements of the 2020s and 2030s, and, if so, how?" To discuss this, we welcomed the following expert speakers: Sir Dieter Helm CBE (Professor of Economic Policy at the University of Oxford); Alan Lovell DL (Chair of the Environment Agency); Iain Coucher (Chair of the Office of Water Regulation), Lila Thompson (Chief Executive of British Water) and John Hirst CBE (Chair of Anglian Water).

As you might expect, views were many and varied, however there was agreement on many points: 1) something needs to be done, 2) action is required by all: water companies, regulators, farming and industry, the general public and government, and we need to work together, 3) a lot of investment will be required and we need to think urgently how this will be provided.

