



BULLETIN FROM THE RT HON THE LORD MAYOR

12 October 2020

Fellow Liverymen

I am sending you this bulletin in an unusual dual capacity, as both Lord Mayor and Lord Mayor Elect. On 30 September, at a COVID-secure gathering of Common Hall, I was humbled to be elected to serve a second term of office, which will start on 13 November. It will be a very great honour to be one of the few Lord Mayors to serve a consecutive term. I am grateful to the Livery and to the Court of Aldermen for the support they showed at what must be a unique Common Hall in the City of London's long history. My thanks are also due to the Livery for their understanding and flexibility regarding the necessary but atypical election arrangements this year, and to the Livery Committee for making them. The Lady Mayoress and I are looking forward to working with you during this extended Mayoralty and to offering a degree of continuity at an uncertain time.

When I sent the first of these Mayoral bulletins back in March I am sure that I was not alone in hoping that the Coronavirus emergency would pass in a matter of months and that the normal rhythm of our lives would be re-established by the autumn. However, the virus continues to disrupt our activities, keeping our halls closed and causing financial anxiety for many. Among those cancelled events is the Lord Mayor's Show, our traditional opportunity to celebrate the Mayoralty, the City and the Livery. While I have been impressed by the Livery's resilience and versatility in response to the crisis, I recognise that this is a frustrating and worrying time for all of us, as well as a disappointing one. I think especially of those masters and wardens whose year in office has not been what they anticipated.

It is a troubling time for the City's businesses as well. Firms that had put in place preparations for staff to make a physical return to offices in the Square Mile are now keeping employees at home in accordance with the latest Government guidance. Significantly reduced footfall on our streets is having a clear economic impact on the wider ecosystem, including in the retail and hospitality sectors. Many fear that this will have a profound effect on their business and on London in the long-term. I am lucky to be working at the Mansion House for most of the week, where, with appropriate precautions, I have been able to undertake face-to-face meetings, including with the President of Ukraine on his visit to the UK this month. This has re-affirmed my conviction that being able to come to work and interact with colleagues and business partners in person is essential for organisations to prosper and for relationships to flourish.

For this reason, alongside the Corporation's Chair of Policy, I have been calling on Government to permit people to return to the workplace where appropriate. Employers have already dedicated considerable resources to deliver COVID-secure workplaces, which will be especially welcome to staff that need to be in the office for their mental health and wellbeing. Alas, this recent progress is in danger of being reversed.

We are asking that the Government's advice is reviewed regularly in light of the evidence. Other international financial centres have seen workers return to the office without an apparently linked increase in infections. The virus is not going to go away quickly so we need to find a way of living with it. Hibernating through the winter is not an option for our economy. To help to bolster confidence among City residents and returning workers, the Corporation is establishing a COVID19 testing site in Guildhall Yard. The facility is currently being installed and will be up and running by the end of this week.

These are issues which affect all of us. I believe that the Livery has an important role to play in helping the City through these challenges and ensuring that London has a robust future ahead of it. One of the ways we are already doing so is through the charitable and voluntary support that our Companies traditionally provide, which this year has been especially important. In order to build a better picture of the Livery's charitable giving, the Pan Livery Steering Committee will shortly circulate a survey to all Companies. The survey will seek to establish the scale and nature of charitable giving across the Livery, including financial, in-kind and pro-bono support. The collated results will permit a sophisticated analysis of the Livery's role in the

charitable sector and will be a useful tool both within the Livery and in our communications with key external audiences. I know that many of you are already keen to participate and I encourage you all to do so. Completed surveys are requested by 9 November and I look forward to sharing the initial findings as part of my annual briefing to the Livery from Mansion House on 25 November.

This is just one of the many projects that lie ahead of me as I enter the home straight of my first Mayoralty and prepare myself for another lap. I am in no doubt that these will continue to be very challenging times, but the Lady Mayoress and I draw much strength and cheerfulness from the support that we have been lucky to receive from the whole Livery on our journey so far. We are most grateful for it.

With best wishes from me and Hilary.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Russell', written in a cursive style.

Alderman William Russell
The Rt Hon the Lord Mayor



The Lord Mayor, with the Lady Mayoress, the Sheriffs and their Consorts, following Common Hall at Guildhall on 30 September.



The Lord Mayor welcomes the President of Ukraine to Mansion House.