



## The Master And Wardens 2018-2020

Andrew Dawson was installed as Master Woolman on 24th April 2018; at the same ceremony, Mark Johnson was installed as Upper Warden and Alderman Vincent Keaveny was installed as Under Warden. This is the team that will lead the Company for the next three years, following the three year rolling strategy approved by the Court.

Andrew was born in Huddersfield and brought up in Huddersfield and Niddersdale. He was educated at Arnside and Shrewsbury School. After a two year course at Huddersfield University on wool textile management he joined the family firm of H Dawson Wool Company – the third generation to work in the company. Part of his training was a year working on the wool-sorting floor of Lord Barnby's Airedale Combing Company in Shipley. In 1964 he moved to Italy to work in the Italian wool industry. In 1965 he opened a wool office in Biella, Piemonte supplying UK wool for the Italian mattresses. He returned to UK in 1966 and developed outlets for the company to sell wool from all origins into new markets; and to buy wools of different qualities for worldwide sales. He visited over forty countries including Iran, India, Japan, Russia and China, and in 1993 opened a permanent office in China. He married Ann in 1968 but sadly lost her to leukaemia

after 35 years, three children and five grandchildren together. In 2006 he married Gill, a friend since nursery school. Gill and Andrew live in Appletreewick, Wharfedale. He retired in 2012 after 50 years in the wool trade.

Mark works in insurance and Alderman Vincent Keaveny is a solicitor and Past Master of the Solicitors Company. The Master and Wardens would be delighted to meet people who are interested in the Livery movement in general or the Worshipful Company of Woolmen in particular to discuss the benefits of membership, the Company's charitable aims, and links with the wool trade. They can be contacted through the Clerk, Duncan Crole, whose contact details are given below.

### Contact Details

Further information about our Company may be obtained from Duncan Crole, our Clerk, who can be contacted on 020 7193 4448 or [clerk@woolmen.com](mailto:clerk@woolmen.com). There is also more information on our website at [www.woolmen.com](http://www.woolmen.com).

If you are interested in taking part in the annual Sheep Drive across London Bridge on the last Sunday in September, the details are at [www.sheepdrive.london](http://www.sheepdrive.london).

Our Clerk can also arrange for you to receive a copy of our latest newsletter and through him you can purchase other publications, including "The Woolmen's Tale" by David Buirski; "There Is No Substitute for..." a collection of wool rhymes edited by Past Master Richard Proctor, with a foreword by HRH The Princess Royal; and a commentary on The Company Admissions Book (1666 to 1948) by Bill Clark.



[www.woolmen.com](http://www.woolmen.com)

## THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF WOOLMEN



### The Worshipful Company of Woolmen

#### The opening paragraph of our Ordinances states: The Worshipful Company of Woolmen of the City of London

"The Worshipful Company of Woolmen having already been in existence in 1180 when King Henry II fined nineteen "adulterine" guilds (including that pertaining to wool) for operating without a license; and King Henry II having imposed a tax on wool to contribute towards the cost of the construction of the first stone London Bridge and in the year 1336 King Edward III having negotiated a specific tax on wool and arranged for "the English Wool Company" to finance his war with France (later called "the hundred years war") in the imposition of which taxes the predecessors of the Company were indubitably involved;

and the craft of Woolmen and Woolpackers having petitioned the Mayor and Aldermen of the City on 23rd July 1488 that certain articles might be approved for the better rule of the craft such petition being granted; and King Henry VIII having granted incorporation of the Company in the year 1522; and the Company having presented a book for the incorporation of the Company as a body corporate to the Right Honourable the Lord Chancellor of England and to the Lord Chief Justices of the other Benches it was ordained on 2nd May 1587 by the Court of Common Council of the City that certain Aldermen there should consider the same; and on the 18th June 1587 the Court of Common Council having ordered that it should be lawful for the Company of Woolwinders to be suitors to the Lord Chancellor and the rest of the most Honourable Privy Council of Queen Elizabeth the First for permitting reasonable ordinances for the government of the Company; and in consequence thereof on the 26th September 1587 the Right Honourable the Lord Chancellor and two Chief Justices having granted ordinances to the Company of Woolmen; and on the 29th March 1825 the Company having been granted livery by the Court of Aldermen."

Our Company grew out of the ancient Guild which regulated the wool trade. Queen Elizabeth I was so concerned about the wool trade that



she had Parliament make everyone over the age of six (except the wealthiest) wear on Sundays "a cap of wool knit and dressed in England". Under Charles II Parliament passed a law requiring coffins to be lined in fleece; shrouds to be made of wool; and carriages had to be lined with it.

Perhaps much of the interest of successive kings and queens lay in the substantial taxes they raised on the sale of wool. Wool was weighed on a Great Beam one of which stood close to where Mansion House now stands in the centre of the City. The measure – or staple – was a uniform weight which governed exports to Europe – an early example of European standardisation! Some of the taxes went to build Old London Bridge which was built between 1176 and 1209 and is said to have been built on sacks of wool. So the life of our Company runs like a long woollen thread woven into the history of England.

The association of the Guild of Woolmen with taxes, and with licensing the most important woolmongers, brought an association of the Company with the Law and lawyers which continues to this day. Until the creation of the Supreme Court, The Lord Chancellor sat in the House of Lords on a Woolsack. A woolsack has long been a symbol of the wealth of England.

Many of our Company's records were destroyed in the Great fire of 1666; and others were lost during the Blitz in 1940, so our history is patchy; but much can be gleaned from references in books in the Guildhall Library and other ancient documents.

From the very start many distinguished people have been members of the Company. Among the earliest was Martin Box, sheriff of London in 1283-4. Most Livery Companies have produced at least three Lord Mayors of London. Most of our members have been active in the wool industry and that tradition continues to this day. Perhaps the most distinguished member of our Company, in all its many years, was our Master in 1994/5, HRH The Princess Royal. The Lord Mayor for 2012/13 Alderman Sir David Wootton is also a Woolman and a member of our Court.

Throughout its long years the Company has been immersed in the wool industry and this remains its most important activity. We have links with the industry throughout the Commonwealth. Our international interests go back at least to 1609 when the Company, along with 54 others invested in the colonisation of the State of Virginia, USA. In like manner, the Company took part in the "plantation" of the County and City of Londonderry a few years later – this as part of a syndicate of companies led by The Salters – an association annually commemorated down to the present.

The Campaign for Wool with HRH The Prince of Wales as its Patron and Founder, the British Wool Marketing Board, and the Australian Wool Innovation are all important collaborators with the Livery – bringing together the global wool industry and the City. We give scholarships and awards for those studying wool from shearing through to high fashion design. Through our young Journeymen programme we provide mentoring support for our award winners up to the age of thirty. We are told we are also famous for the warmth of our hospitality although you would not expect us to comment on that! By custom, every year the Lord Mayor dines with us in great state.

Wool is very important to all of us. It is a global industry with sales in excess of \$80 billion and employs thousands of people. In recent years there has been stronger recognition of its sustainable and environmentally-friendly qualities in comparison with mad-made fibres.

Hundreds of years ago a wealthy merchant had the following engraved on the windows of his house: "I praise God and ever shall – it is the sheep hath paid for all". Today we put it differently for we all know the truth of the Golden Rule: "there is no substitute for wool."



## Some highlights from a year in the life of the woolmen

The Woolmen retain close links with the wool industry from sheep welfare to sheep shearing through to uses of wool in fashion and design, and other applications.

The Woolmen's dinners are formal events in the sense that we dress formally (white tie and tails) and follow formal procedures, but everyone is made most welcome in a very informal atmosphere.

The Woolmen enjoy the pageantry in the City – marching military bands and the ceremony of the Freedom of the City in the Chamberlain's Court – as well as the activities at the major agricultural shows – The Royal Ulster Show, the Royal Bath and West Show, the Royal Highland Show, the Great Yorkshire Show and the Royal Welsh Show. The Master presents medals and prizes for shearing at these agricultural shows, which encourages men and women to become shearers. We presented an old pair of hand shears to the Chamberlain's Court to remind new Freemen that the wealth and prosperity of Medieval Britain was built on wool.

HRH Prince Charles, as Patron and Founder of the Campaign for Wool, attends wool-orientated events, and was almost persuaded to invest in a wool coffin!

The Livery Schools Link is supported by the Woolmen, and we set up an informative display at their annual showcase event for schools in the City. We present scholarships and bursaries to students studying the uses of wool and veterinary procedures to help ewes in lambing. We also take part in inter-Livery sports; and we organise the annual Sheep Drive across London Bridge for Freemen of the City.



# The Worshipful Company of Woolmen

## Connections and links



### The City – how we fit into the City

Ancient traditions  
 Connections to aldermen and sheriffs and the Lord Mayor  
 Participation in City events – elections, UGS, Lord Mayor's Show  
 Livery Schools Link showcase events (with links to other liveries), sheep drive  
 Wool, the City and Global Markets  
 Society of Young Freemen – source of younger members

### The Livery Movement – links to other liveries

Ancient traditions  
 Connections to aldermen and sheriffs and the Lord Mayor  
 Participation in City events – elections, UGS, Lord Mayor's Show,  
 Livery Schools Link showcase events, sheep drive  
 The Society of Young Freemen  
 Inter-Livery Sports – golf, shooting, tennis, swimming, bridge, sailing

### Membership – What we do for members

Informal events – wine bar evenings, visits, military connections  
 Formal dinners in different halls and city institutions  
 Information about the City  
 Information about the Livery movement  
 Participation in City events – elections, UGS, Lord Mayor's Show,  
 Livery Schools Link showcase events, sheep drive  
 Society of Young Freemen – source of younger members

### What is Unique about The Woolmen

Ancient and Modern; tradition and progress  
 The Woolmen's annual Sheep Drive  
 An 'Open' Livery – a third industry, a third City, a third elsewhere  
 a third London, a third Yorkshire, a third elsewhere  
 Close links to the City, close links to the wool industry,  
 Close links to the livery movement, and a leavening of  
 people from all backgrounds

### TARGET AREAS FOR NEW MEMBERS

The City  
 Aldermen below the Chair  
 The Livery Movement  
 Members of Modern Livery Companies  
 Guild of Freemen  
 Society of Young Freemen  
 Wool industry – in its widest sense  
 Honorary Freemen/Patrons  
 Academic Institutions  
 Scholarships and bursaries  
 Livery Schools Link  
 Students – Journeymen  
 The Young Society of Young Freemen  
 Journeymen  
 Livery Sports  
 Armed Forces  
 All geographical Areas  
 Family and Friends – keeping the family connections in the livery

### Wool Industry – how we connect with our industry

Wool, the City and Global Markets  
 Agricultural shows  
 Shearing awards  
 Design/manufacturing/retailing/fashion  
 Mentoring  
 Farm to retail: farm to fashion  
 Honorary Freemen/Patrons

### City Wool Project – connecting industry with the City

\$80 billion a year industry  
 Campaign for Wool – source of members  
 Active business role  
 Mentoring  
 Funding  
 Joint projects

### Charity – What we do for others

Fund raising events – sheep drive  
 Benevolence  
 Academic awards  
 Practical awards – source of younger members  
 Other beneficiaries  
 The Woolman's Innovation Prize – source of younger members

### Education and Training

Charity – academic awards  
 Fashions shows  
 Livery schools link  
 Governors for London schools  
 Journeymen/students  
 Mentoring

## Key Messages

- The Woolmen provide the bridge between ancient traditions and a modern, vibrant livery, encompassing tradition and progress
- The Woolmen provide access to the City Institutions and governance bodies
- The Woolmen are an 'Open' Livery, but still retain strong links with their Industry
- The Woolmen use their charitable benevolence to support the wool industry, education and City charities
- The Woolmen are a sociable group of people of all ages from all backgrounds, with one main aim – to support the wool industry and the City

- And you really can drive your sheep across London Bridge!