



Durham City Freemen



Yearbook 2021

Contents

Front cover	Front Cover
Foreword	Page 1
Message from the Mayor of Durham City	Page 3
Diary Dates	Page 4
Wardens and Trustees	Page 5
New Warden of the Barbers' Company	Page 6
Tenure of Appointment	Page 7
New Members Admitted in 2020	Page 8
Current Membership at 2020	Page 11
Membership Criteria	Page 15
History Group	Page 17
Chairman of the Trustees Report	Page 19
Treasurers Report	Page 21
Freemen Website	Page 22
Charitable Trust Report	Page 23
Moving Forward	Page 34
Back Cover	Back Cover

All images by Geoff Kitson except where stated

Foreword

Ann Thurlow Chairman of Wardens



I wish a happy New Year to you all.

I must start by saying how delighted and privileged I am to be serving the Durham City Freeman as the first female Chairman of the Wardens. It makes me particularly proud to be the first female chair in the Freeman's 700-year history.

I come from a long line of Freeman and can trace my roots back to my great grandfather, grandfather, father and brother who have all been former Wardens of the Joiners Guild. My mother Rita was admitted as a Lady Freeman in 2015.

Thankfully, before the Covid19 pandemic hit us, we were able to hold our Candlemas Guild Day in February admitting three new members to the ranks before the lockdown in March. The new members are Abiodun Williams JP, now Warden of the Butchers' Guild with Trevor Carter and Arthur Lockyear being Deputy Wardens. There is more information regarding the new members later in the Yearbook.

The imposed government restrictions forced us to cancel all our Guild Days and the Annual Dinner until further notice, as a consequence, the scheduled admissions for 2020 are on hold.

Following consultation with the membership and taking their views forward brought about the implementation of the Sustainability paper, which aims to involve the membership in decision making, and with the introduction of Deputy Wardens strengthen the management of our organisation.

I am delighted to inform you that our new Deputy Wardens are Mrs Theresa Ford, Mr Trevor Carter, Mr Garry Dunnill, Mr Neil Graham, Mr Royston Dent, Mr Dave Howard and Mr Arthur Lockyear. They are making a valued contribution to the management team, bringing about positive change which I believe is legitimate management having the potential to prove exciting as we move forward.

Sadly I have to report that Mr Carl Granville Firmin, passed away peacefully on April 20th aged 85 years. Carl was a member of the Cordwainers Guild. He was former Town Clerk and Chief Executive of Durham City Council. Our deepest condolences go to his Family.

I would like to acknowledge our our Clerk and Receiver, along with the Trustees for the work they are doing with regard to the deregistration of part of the Sands Common Land, to enable its use as a car park for the new civic headquarters.

Our Trustees in partnership with the Parish Council are making every effort to secure a positive outcome. We are so fortunate to have professionals with the relevant legal skills working for us, and for this we are extremely grateful.

The History Group have come to the end of their project. They have produced booklets, recording the history and heritage of six of the remaining Guilds: The Barbers, Butchers, Curriers, Drapers, Joiners and Plumbers. There is more information regarding the History Group later in the Yearbook.

Last year Eric Bulmer stepped down as Chairman of the Wardens. I would like to thank him for all the hard work he has undertaken to ensure the sustainability of the Freeman and his commitment to promoting and raising the profile of the Freeman.

I wish to personally thank Mr John Booth our Website Manager and a former Warden of the Butchers Guild, for his time and valuable contributions of which have not gone unnoticed and all being very much appreciated. For his support, I am extremely grateful.

Kindest Regard

Ann Thurlow

Chair of the Wardens



A Message from the Worshipful Mayor of Durham County Councillor Katie Corrigan



Well I don't think any of us quite expected the year 2020 turned out to be. I hope you and your families managed to stay safe during the Pandemic.

Due to COVID restrictions, it was not possible to hold a traditional Mayor Making Ceremony, therefore, I have remained in office as Mayor. I am becoming an expert at Chairing meetings, presentations and awards ceremonies over Teams. Live committees and events were not possible and I anticipate virtual offerings will be with us for a while.

It is a shame that Guild meetings were postponed but I look forward to seeing you all in February, fingers crossed.

I wish the Freemen all the best for 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K m Corrigan".

Councillor Katie Corrigan
The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Durham

Diary Dates for 2021

All meetings will be in the Guildhall with the exception of Martinmas Guild Day and the Annual Dinner which will be held in the Main Hall. The venue for the Charitable Trust meetings are yet to be arranged.

Guild Days 11:00 – 12:30

Candlemas Monday 1st February 2021
May Day Monday 10th May 2021
Lammas Monday 9th August 2021
Martinmas Monday 15th November 2021

Annual Dinner

Saturday 23rd October 2021

Warden's and Trustees Meetings 2:00 – 4:30

Friday 22nd January 2021
Friday 23rd April 2021
Friday 24th September 2021
Friday 19th November 2021

Warden's and Deputy Wardens Meetings 6:00 – 7:30

Thursday 14th January 2021
Thursday 15th April 2021
Thursday 16th September 2021
Thursday 11th November 2021

Member's Meetings 6:00 – 7:30

Tuesday 19th January 2021
Tuesday 20th April 2021
Tuesday 21st September 2021
Tuesday 16th November 2021

Charitable Trust Meetings 1:00 – 2:30

Monday 11th January 2021
Monday 19th April 2021
Monday 27th September 2021
Monday 8th November 2021

Members Meetings

We are aware that extensive structural work is taking place at the Town Hall in early 2021, this will impact on some Member's Meeting dates.

Any cancellation of Members Meetings will be announced on the website. Please check the website nearer the time of the scheduled members meeting.

Wardens and Trustees

If you have any comments, or suggestions relating to any aspect of the work of Durham City Freemen please contact the Warden of your Company. The activity and business of Durham City Freemen is overseen by the Trustees.

Wardens

Ann Thurlow

Chairman of the Wardens
Joiners' Company
Tel: 0191 3779706

Fred Snowdon

Barbers' Company
Tel: 0191 3730077

Abiodun Williams

Butchers' Company
Tel: 07496374168

Alan Metcalf

Cordwainers' Company
Tel: 01740657624

Ian Wilmhurst

Curriers' Company
Tel: 0191 3782011

Kathleen Vasey

Drapers' Company
Tel: 07761035675

Bob Elliott

Masons' Company
Tel: 0191 383 0934

Eric Bulmer

Plumbers' Company
(0191 3780554)

Secretary to the Freemen

Kathleen Vasey Tel: 07761035675
e-mail: kathleenvasey@aol.com

Deputy Wardens

Dave Howard

Butchers' Company

Alan Metcalf

Cordwainers' Company

Neil Graham

Curriers' Company

Trevor Carter

Drapers' Company

Theresa Anne Ford

Joiners' Company

Royston Dent

Masons' Company

Garry Dunnill

Plumbers' Company

Trustees

Chairman**Patrick Conway OBE**

Tel: 0191 3868216

Vice Chair**Malcolm Proud**

Tel: 0191 3867615

Clerk and Recorder**Philip Wills**

Tel: 01388603073

Treasurer**Stewart. Atkin**

Tel: 0191 5238918

Philip Bramwell

Tel: 0191 3868066

Philip Dyer

Tel: 0191 3721650

Kenneth Howe

Tel: 0191 3840589

Richard Scothan

Tel: 0191 6827708

Venerable Cannon**Michael Everett****Helen McMillan**

New Warden of the Barbers' Company



Abiodun Williams

Mac, started his working life at Dawdon Colliery in 1960 and after attending day and night classes at Sunderland and Durham Colleges he landed a job with Seaham Urban District Council in 1971. He then moved on to Wear Valley then Durham City Council as Health and Safety Officer.

He became a Durham County Councillor in 2006 representing the Coxhoe ward and was elected Chairman of the authority in 2010. During his year in office he raised many thousands of pounds in the wake of the Japanese tsunami and received letters of appreciation from the Japanese Embassy and Consul General. He stepped down from the council in 2016.

Now in his 70s, Mac was appointed a magistrate in Durham City in 1979, taking on the chairmanship of the bench in 2001 before accepting the same role with the North Durham Bench two years later. He retired from the bench in 2014 after a remarkable 35 years of service.

He became a member of the Durham Police Committee in 1988 and continued sitting when it became the Durham Police Authority, serving both for more than 15 years. He was a member of Durham University's Ruth First Trust until 2016 and is currently a governor of the Durham and Darlington NHS Trust. He was admitted an associate member of the Freemen of England and Wales in 2017.

Last year Mac became Durham's Pant Master – now an honorary role represented in mayoral processions - but was once, as guardian of the city's wells and water, vital to every citizen's wellbeing.

Tenure of Appointment

A table of tenure for the appointment of Wardens is set out below.

COMPANY	DATE ELECTED	END OF TERM	ELECTIONS
Chairman Ann Thurlow	Sept 2020	Aug 2023	Aug 2023
Barbers Fred Snowdon	Feb 2018	Jan 2021	Jan 2021
Butchers Mac Williams	Sept 2020	Aug 2023	Aug 2023
Cordwainers Alan Metcalf	June 2019	May 2022	May 2022
Curriers Iain Wilmshurst	Jan 2019	Dec 2022	Dec 2022
Drapers Kathleen Vasey	Feb 2018	Jan 2021	Jan 2021
Joiners Ann Thurlow	May 2020	April 2023	April 2023
Masons Bob Elliott	Dec 2019	Nov 2022	Nov 2022
Plumbers Eric Bulmer	Jan 2020	Dec 2023	Dec 2023

Companies will be informed when an election is to take place.

Details of forthcoming elections and the procedure for an election of a Warden will be posted on the website and can be obtained from the Secretary of the Freeman.

New Members Admitted in 2020

Candlemas Guild Day 4th February 2020



Durham City Mayor Katie Corrigan and Trevor Carter

Trevor arrived as a student at Durham University 50 years ago - and never left. He taught maths and computer studies in three local schools for 20 years and was a head of department before leaving to set up his own I.T. training business. For the last five years of his career he worked with the I.T. advisory service for a north-east local education authority.

After serving as a governor at three different schools he was elected as the region's representative on the National Governors' Association and for more than a dozen years has been a member of a Foster Care Panel, interviewing prospective foster carers.

He was a founding member of the local history society in his home village, serving on its' committee for over 20 years and has also been an active member of a local PCC.

In addition to his work with the Pointers he is also a steward at the cathedral and a volunteer at the World Heritage Site Visitor Centre. Having been a mentor at one of the university's colleges and an invigilator in exams, he has more recently been seen as a Beadle, fronting academic processions and other ceremonies.

Trevor has recently been appointed Deputy Warden of the Drapers Company.



Durham City Mayor Katie Corrigan and Arthur Lockyear

Sixty-seven-year-old Arthur, brought up in Seaham and now based in Durham, served as an operational fireman in stations in Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead. While with the fire service he helped organise Remembrance Day parades in Sunderland and since 2014 has played a key role in Durham City's Remembrance Parade and the Durham Cathedral Festival of Remembrance.

He is the author of the book "Warriors in Fire Boots" – a tribute to the valour of firefighters and has taught the Japanese martial art of Aikido in Durham for over thirty years.

Arthur was instrumental in bringing many internationally renowned martial arts masters to the city and as a consequence of his efforts a three part television documentary, entitled "Budo Sai," was commissioned by Tyne Tees Television and syndicated internationally. He is a well-known teacher of and writer on Aikido and is currently a 5th Dan Black Belt.

Arthur was recently appointed Deputy Warden for the Plumbers' Company.

*Arthur Lockyear
and family*



*Abiodun (Mac) Williams
and family*



*Trevor Carter
and family*



Current Membership at January 2020

Barbers' Company

Anderson	Mark John	Mr		Handy	Joyce	Ms
Anderson	Peter Stewart	Mr		Faulkner	Kay	Mrs
Anderson	Jeffrey Rowland	Mr		Kahane	Ahuvia	Professor
Atkinson	Carl Alan	Mr		Kitson	Geoffrey	Mr
Atkinson	Kieran Andrew	Mr		Milbourne	Philip John	Mr
Atkinson	Alan	Mr		Milbourne	Richard James	Mr
Brolls	Hilary	Mrs		Nightingale	Judith	Ms
Calvert-Lee	Rupert Guy	Mr		Nightingale	Craig	Mr
Calvert-Lee	Giles Lindsey	Mr		Nightingale	Gavin	Mr
Calvert-Lee	Thomas			Nightingale	John	Mr
Coxon	Kevin Lee	Mr		Snowdon	Frederick John	Mr
Dufton	Alan	Mr		Weightman	Una Dawn	Mrs
Dunn	Dennis	Mr		Wills LLM	Philip	Mr

Butchers' Company

Bancroft	David George	Mr		Laws	Steven	Mr
Bregazzi	John	Mr		Latue	John	Mr
Chapman	Michael Andrew	Mr		MacDonald	Ian Edward	Mr
Chapman	Robin	Mr		Milbourne	Malcolm	Mr
Forster	Guy	Mr		Oliver	George Robert	Mr
Forster	Heather	Ms		Patterson	Thomas Wiliam	Mr
Forster	Jonathan Paul	Mr		Pickering	George Robert	Mr
Forster	Stephen James	Mr		Staveley	Susan	Mrs
Hart	Norman Thomas	Mr		Williams	MacDonald Abiodun	Mr
Howard	David Richard	Mr				

Cordwainers' Company

Davidson	Peter Richard	Mr		McElwee	Joe	Mr
Greenwell DL CBE	Arthur Jeffrey	Mr		McElwee	John Denby	Mr
Heron	David	Rev		Metcalf	Alan	Mr
Heron	Peter	Mr		Minto	Peter	Dr
Joicey	Barry	Mr		Norris	Roger	Mr
Lumley	David Martin	Mr		Ribchester MBE	Alan	Mr
McElwee	Davey John	Mr		Shotton	Barry	Mr
McElwee	Doris	Mrs		Wright	Rebecca Hanah	Miss
McElwee	Jack Denby	Mr		Wright	Stuart	Mr

Curriers' Company

Charney	Barbara	Ms	Luther	Kate	Ms
Charney	John	Mr	Luther	Richard	Mr
Clark	William Henry	Mr	Marsden	James Robert	Mr
Crawford	Karen	Mrs	Marsden	Nicola Hazel	Miss
Crawford	Ron	Mr	McDonough	Adam	Mr
Graham	Neil William	Mr	McMinn	Michael	Mr
Hall	Adrian Matthew Edward	Mr	Ridley	Stuart George	Mr
Hall	Charles Jonathon Peter	Mr	Wilmshurst	Fionna Louise	Ms
Hall	Oliver Timothy Luke	Mr	Wilmshurst	Holly Alison Olivia	Ms
Heslop	Sandra	Ms	Wilmshurst	Iain Stuart	Mr
Howarth	Michael David	Mr	Wilmshurst	Rebekah Anne	Ms
Jones	Derek Newton	Mr	Wilson	Michael Colin	Mr
Kitson	Leighton	Mr			

Drapers' Company

Adamson	David Ivor	Mr	Milbourne	Stephanie Helen	Ms
Allison	John Gordon	Mr	Mullaney	Kimberley	Mrs
Allison	John Stuart	Mr	Nattrass	Sarah Elizabeth	Mrs
Allison	Malcolm Nigel	Mr	Samuel	Barbara Anne	Ms
Allison	Peter David	Mr	Samuel	Tom	Mr
Allison	Sandra Anne	Ms	Scott	Barbara Jean	Ms
Angus	Pamela	Ms	Scott	Charlotte Anne	Miss
Arkley	Gillian Roberta	Mrs	Scott	Vanessa Laura	Miss
Brookes	Gillian	Ms	Smith	Adele	Ms
Carter	Trevor Richard Earl	Mr	Snowball	Dorothy Margaret	Rev
Crofton	Ted	Rev	Vasey	Andrew David	Mr
Davidson	Vera	Mrs	Vasey	David	Mr
Freelend	Leah Felicity	Mrs	Vasey	John Frederick	Mr
Hayes	Mary	Ms	Vasey	Kathleen	Ms
Hepburn	Alan	Mr	Vest	Alan Cruddass	Mr
Heslop	Victoria Jane	Mrs	Vest	Arthur	Mr
Jackson	Catrina Margery	Mrs	Vest	David Charles	Mr
Jackson	Richard	Mr	Vest	Derek	Mr
Kingston	Barbara Hilda	Mrs	Vest	Gavin	Mr
Kothari	Ingrid Allison	Mrs	Vest	Joanne	Miss
Lee	Jonathan Mark	Mr	Vest	Mark	Mr
Lyle	Susan	Ms	Vest	Paul Robert	Mr
Mackay	June	Ms	Vest	Rachel	Miss
Magee	Andrew Fawcett	Mr	Vest	Richard	Mr
Magee	Judith	Ms	Vest	Roland	Mr
Magee	Stuart John	Mr	Vest	Steven	Mr
Middleton	Alan	Mr	Watson	Judith Gwen	Mrs
Milbourne	Alexander J	Mr	Watson-Lee	Alexander W	Mr
Milbourne	Andrew John	Mr	Watson-Lee	James K	Mr
Milbourne	David Michael	Mr	Watson-Lee	Mark Alexander Strachan	Mr
Milbourne	Michael Stewart	Mr	Watson-Lee	Peter James	Mr
Milbourne	Rodney James	Mr	Wilson	Thomas Dobson	Mr

Joiners' Company

Bennett	Peter Neil	Mr	Ford	Regan James	Mr
Brown	Adam Ridley	Mr	Ford	Stuart Wiliam	Mr
Brown	Darren Ridley	Mr	Ford	Theresa Anne	Mrs
Brown	Dean Ridley	Mr	Ford	William	Mr
Brown	Rita	Mrs	Gilroy	Clifford Richard	Mr
Brown	Robert Dennis	Mr	Gilroy	Peter Andrew	Mr
Brown	Tony Michael	Mr	Hesp	Eric	Mr
Bryden	Irene May	Mrs	Jopling	Trevor	Mr
Bryden	Robert Arthur	Mr	Morris	Edward James Bowring	Mr
Clarkson	Andrew Robert	Mr	Morris OBE	Roger John Bowring	Dr
Clarkson	Christopher Paul	Mr	Neale	David Charles	Mr
Clarkson	Nigel David	Mr	Neale	Michael Paul	Mr
Clarkson	Robert William	Mr	Neale	Steven Thomas Edwin	Mr
Clarkson	Ronald	Mr	Peverall	Iain	Mr
Dawson	Peter Robert	Mr	Pritchard	Anthony A.	
Donkin	Joan Elizabeth	Rev	Squires	Eric Charles Arthur	Mr
Fenwick	Alexander Luke	Mr	Swallow	Anthony	Mr
Fenwick	Amalia Jane	Ms	ThurLOW	Ann	Mrs
Fenwick	Christopher	Mr	Trow	Stuart	Mr
Ford	Alan	Mr	Wigham	Claire	Miss

Masons' Company

Browell	Duncan James	Mr	Haunch	Nicola Louise	Mrs
Browell	Martin Elliott	Mr	Hotchkiss	Connie	Mrs
Clark	Cyril Douglas	Mr	Johnston	Norman Cyril	Mr
Clark	James	Mr	Jones	John Richard	Mr
Clark	Peter	Mr	Mallen	Ann	Mrs
Cooper	George Richard	Mr	Mann	Steven	Mr
Dent	Norman R	Mr	Mawson	Nigel	Mr
Dent	Royston Norman	Mr	Nicholson	Paul Douglas	Sir
Elliott	Elizabeth Grace	Miss	Richardson	Alan Elliott	Mr
Elliott	Jack Andrew	Mr	Tindale	Peter John Henry	Mr
Elliott	John	Mr	Tindale	Peter	Mr
Elliott	Matthew James	Mr	Wesencraft	Amy	Ms
Elliott	Robert Lennox	Mr	Wesencraft	John	Mr
Granlund	Alan Campbell	Mr	Young	Gordon Frank	Mr

Plumbers' Company

Abson	Phillip	Mr		Heron	Adam Mark	Mr
Allan	Patricia	Ms		Heron	Clive Emmerson	Mr
Billsborrow	Patricia	Rev		Heron	Leslie	Mr
Booth	John	Mr		Inglis	Sydney	Mr
Brass	Andrew	Mr		Johnson	Peter Alan	Mr
Brown	Alison Jane	Mrs		Latue	John J	Mr
Bulmer	Eric	Mr		Lockyear	Arthur Clifford	Mr
Bulmer	Jane	Ms		McDonough	Alison	Mrs
Bulmer	Michael	Mr		Oliver	Alan	Mr
Bulmer	Sean	Mr		Pearson	Anne	Mrs
Cain	Elizabeth Ann	Mrs		Pearson	Malcolm Neil	Mr
Cunliffe	Lisa	Mrs		Todd	David William	Mr
Davis	Margaret Ruth	Mrs		Walker	John	Mr
Dunnill	Garry	Mr		Willey	Brian Fawcett	Mr
Dunnill	Keith	Mr		Wortley	Katherine	Ms
Gent	Helen Patricia	Mrs		Wortley	Melvin	Mr
Head	David Colin	Mr				

Membership Summary

COMPANY	MEN	WOMEN	IN-DISTRICT	EX-DISTRICT	TOTAL
Barbers	20	6	6	20	26
Butchers	16	2	11	7	18
Cordwainers	16	8	7	17	24
Curriers	8	4	8	4	12
Drapers	37	27	12	52	64
Joiners	33	7	19	21	40
Masons	23	5	16	12	28
Plumbers	22	11	13	20	33
TOTAL	175	70	92	153	245

Membership Secretary

Eric Bulmer
2 High Meadows
Brandon Village
Durham

Tel: 0191 3780554

Email: eckabulmer@btinternet.com

Membership Criteria

Any man or woman who has attained the age of 18 years and has any of the qualifications set out below is eligible for consideration for admission to the Freeman of the City of Durham. The qualifications for eligibility for Freedom of the City of Durham are:

1. Guild Servitude

Completed service in an apprenticeship of at least three years duration in a recognised trade, or equivalent trained employment status deemed satisfactory to the Wardens of the Durham City Freeman with an employer who is a Freeman of the City of Durham.

2. Durham Servitude

Completed service in an apprenticeship of at least three years duration in a recognised trade, or equivalent trained employment status deemed satisfactory to the Wardens of the Durham City Freeman, in one or more trades within the Durham City boundary.

3. Hereditary Freedom

He or she is the son or daughter of a Freeman of the City of Durham.

Customary Freedom

Men and women who have attained the age of 18 years who are not otherwise qualified in accordance with 1.2.3. above, may be admitted as Freeman in accordance with ancient local custom or practice subject to the approval of the Wardens.

All claims to Freedom of the City should be supported by sufficient documentary evidence of entitlement to be submitted for consideration by the Wardens of the Guilds meeting collectively. Following due consideration, the decision of the Wardens in respect of any claim to Freedom of the City shall be final.

Honorary Freedom conferred by the former Durham City Council or by Durham County Council is distinct and separate from the Freedom granted through the eligibility outlined above and the approval of the Wardens. The rights, duties and powers of the Durham City Freeman shall continue in accordance with the provisions of the Durham City Council Act 1985 and associated customary practice.

All applicants should contact the Membership Secretary in the first instance. (Ref. Summary of 'Revision of Admission Criteria' 10 May 2010).

Customary Freedom

Appended - Note of Clarification (July 2019)

These discretionary awards, generally fall into the following three categories (a) (b) (c).

a) Personal applications by individuals who do not qualify to be admitted under 1,2, and 3 above, but who can provide evidence of craft servitude or a link with the Freeman through hereditary, (sometimes called patrimony) e.g. via grandfather etc , where a direct route via a parent is not possible.

b) Individuals identified by the Wardens who can make a significant contribution by undertaking a specific role/need within the management structure and having personal qualities of integrity, tolerance, and judgment and who are able to demonstrate experience or support relevant to the Freeman's activities, together with one or more of the following;

- A desire and capacity to devote time to the activities of the Freeman.
- Existing or previous involvement in public or charitable service.
- Success in their chosen profession or career.

c) Gentlemen and Lady Freeman is an award conferred on individuals, in recognition of a significant contribution they have already made in supporting the work of the Freeman.

An important point to note is that categories (b) and (c) are by invitation only and will not be available upon application. Category b) will only be exercised when the Wardens believe there are areas within the current management function that may not be sustainable and may cause its future development to be blighted. It is anticipated that the number of Freeman admitted via this process will be limited to only a few in number.

Admission on Guild Day

*Guild Servitude, Durham Servitude and Hereditary Freedom
(Admission via 3 calls on Guild Day)*

Customary Freedom

(Admission via one call on Guild Day)

History Group

On the 24th January 2017, the Freemen, under the guidance of Eric Bulmer established a History Group comprising of both Freemen and local people, who had an interest and passion for the history of their city.

The aim of the project was to explore and record the history and heritage of the eight remaining guilds/companies, using archive material, together with artefacts discovered and recovered from the bed of the River Wear beneath Elvet Bridge, by Gary Bankhead.

Their work is not intended to be an academic study, but has been created for the general public, with the aim of shedding light on the history of the guilds/companies and sustaining the heritage of the Durham City Freemen for future generations.

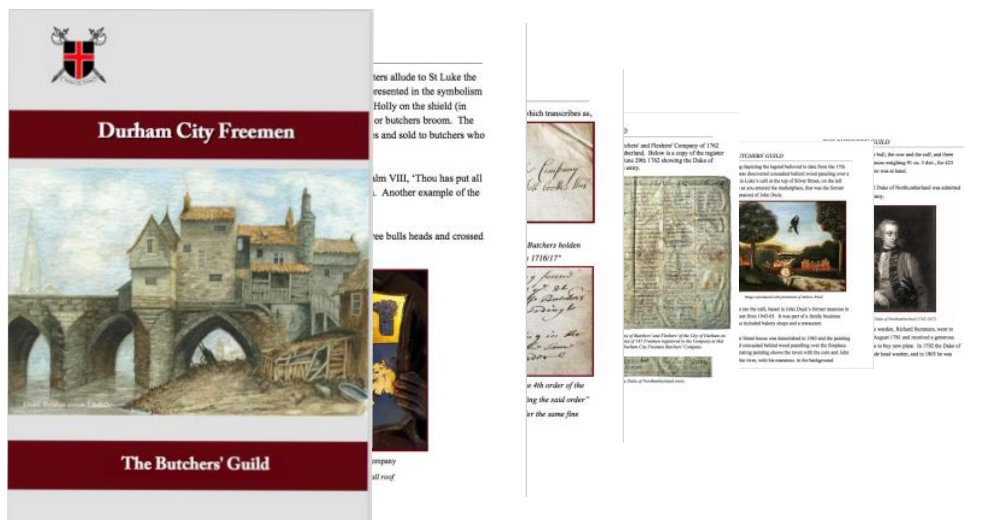
The group undertook training and research, supported by staff from The County Record Office at County Hall, Durham University library and the Durham University Department of Archaeology.



First meeting of the History Group 24th January 2017

The project researched a selection of artefacts recovered from the River Wear by Gary Bankhead, some of which are included in the published booklets, along with archived documents, with the aim of producing booklets reflecting the life and work of the Freeman and Guilds of Durham City.

Much time was spent at the County Records Office and the Durham University Library researching the wealth of archive material available, resulting in gathering valuable material for the production of booklets for six of the eight remaining Guilds: the Barbers, Butchers, Curriers, Drapers, Joiners and Plumbers.

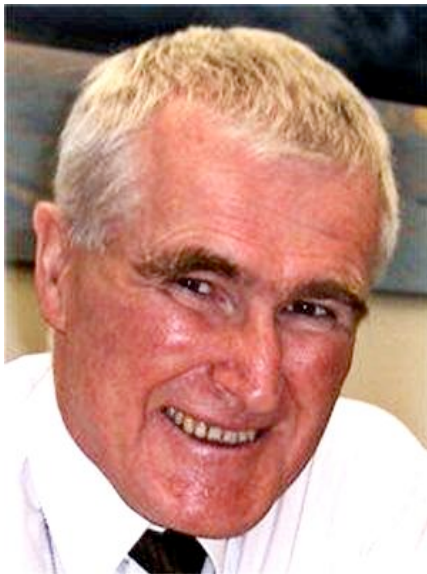


Sample pages from the Butcher's Guild booklet

Apart from the booklet "Durham City Freeman A Brief Guide", these booklets are the first published since C E Whiting published "The Durham Trade Guilds" in 1943, some seventy seven years ago, and will serve to provide an informative picture of the six Guilds and showcase the history and heritage of the Freeman.

We are extremely grateful to Liz Bregazzi, County Records Office, Chris Caple and Gemma Lewis of the Archaeology Department, Durham University, Francis Gotto from the Palace Green Library, Gary Bankhead, the History Group members from the general public and John Booth who produced the booklets, who, without their support the research and production of these booklets would not have been possible.

Chair of the Trustees Report



As we celebrated New Year, none of us could have anticipated how 2020 would unfold. The country is entering a second lockdown, as I write these notes consequent on the pandemic Covid 19 continuing to affect every community. I expect all of us know family or friends who have been diagnosed positive. Given the effects on commerce, industry and family life it is not surprising Durham City Freemen had its work severely curtailed for nine months of the year.

You will read elsewhere of the reduced programme of activities and the interim management arrangements put in place. Trustees conducted their business digitally, quickly becoming adept at participating in a series of Zoom meetings. So much so, that it was suggested in jest a new guild might be established for information technologists.

Last year I made reference to the fact Durham Council had made application to deregister an area of common land (the former coach park), adjacent to the new civic headquarters currently being constructed. The Council proposed replacement land would be provided east of the Rivergreen Centre at Aykley Heads. Trustees opposed this proposed deregistration on the grounds of accessibility and distance of the proposed replacement land from the Sands.

Discussions began with the City of Durham Parish Council who share our view. There is concern the proposed deregistration might set a precedent for future changes to the Sands.

Our objections, and those of other parties were logged with the Planning Inspectorate, who concluded in March a public inquiry was necessary. Because of Covid 19 it proved impossible for the Inquiry to take place during 2020 and at the time of writing it is expected this will be taking place in early 2021 by one of the digital platforms.

Durham City Freemen will be legally represented at the Inquiry and it is expected a number of us will be giving evidence. During 2020, a series of additional Zoom meetings were conducted to progress this important issue

A key task for trustees is the stewardship of the Freemen's assets, tangible and intangible. Our treasurer has reported on the turbulence in the financial markets. This, and uncertainty about future levels of income will require continued careful and prudent consideration.

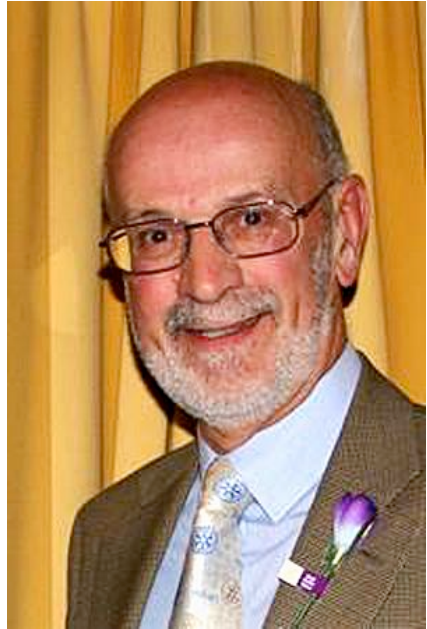
Intangible assets cover the reputation of the Freemen and public perception of the community work undertaken and charitable support provided to local organisations. Wardens continue to be proactive and I would like to close by thanking Eric Bulmer for his work as chair of the wardens. Eric stood down from this position during 2020 and I wish his successor Ann Thurlow every success in the years to come.

Patrick Conway
Chair of the Trustees

Treasurers Report

For most of 2020, the nation's finances have been dominated by the impact of Covid 19. As the pandemic exploded in March, the potential risk to commerce and industry resulted in a massive fall in stock markets around the world.

The FTSE 100 Index fell from 7286 on 31 January to 4993 on 23 March: some 31%. Our own portfolio reduced in value by 11% in the same period. However, as I write, the FTSE has recovered less than half of the fall, whilst our portfolio has made a full recovery. The difference being that our brokers, Brewin Dolphin, do not simply track the index; our holdings are actively managed.



Whilst I am pleased to report a 12-month gain of 7.6%. The regular income we derive from dividends is expected to fall to around 2% in the coming year. This reflects the policy of many companies to cut dividends and retain cash reserves to combat the impact of Covid 19.

It is our normal policy to hold a healthy cash reserve, and whilst this earns little or no bank interest, it does enable the Freemen to manage commitments without resorting to encashing investments.

Due to the periods of lock down and social distancing, lettings income evaporated and the annual dinner was cancelled and the Freemen continue to manage finances in a prudent manner.

Stewart Atkin
Honorary Treasurer

Freemen Website

The website, undoubtedly remains a key asset in recording and celebrating the activities of the Freemen providing access to current Freemen news articles, a calendar of events, and timely announcements from the home page.

Serving as an information archive and a valuable reference tool, it exists to inform our members and the wider world about what we do and how we do it.



We are Durham City Freemen

The Freemen of Durham are the members of the eight Guilds or Companies comprising Barbers, Butchers, Cordwainers, Curriers, Drapers, Joiners, Masons and Plumbers. These Guilds are all that remain of the sixteen in the Middle Ages of which there is written evidence going back as far as 1450.

Latest News [View all](#)

Rotary Masketeer

Freemen's Covid 19 Cash Injection Reaches People of All Ages
4 October 2020

Two "masketeers," among volunteers across the Durham area providing a range of vital c...

Next Event
9 November 2020

Upcoming Events

- > 9 November 2020: Charitable Trust Zoom Meeting
- > 17 November 2020: Warden's and Deputies Meeting
- > 20 November 2020: Warden's and Trustees Meeting

[Meetings](#)

Meetings [View all](#)

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Announcements

I am delighted to say we still have the services of Geoff Kitson our official photographer and George Oliver our Press Officer, who provide the copy and images for the local press and news articles posted on the website. Their combined efforts continue to raise a positive profile for our organisation.

If you require large resolution images suitable for printing, Geoff is only too happy to send them free of charge by emailing him at: geoffkitson8@yahoo.co.uk

www.durhamcityfreemen.org.uk

John Booth
Website Manager

Charitable Trust Report

The Charitable Trust, the charitable giving arm of the Freeman, continues to support local organisations and communities.

The Trust currently comprises of the following Members:

Eric Bulmer (Freeman) Chairman
Stewart Atkin (Trustee) Treasurer
Alan Ribchester (Freeman) Secretary
John Booth (Freeman)

During 2020 the “Trust” provided support to the following organisations;

In The Press

04/10/2020

Freemen's Covid 19 Cash Injection Reaches People of All Ages

Two “Masketeers,” among volunteers across the Durham area providing a range of vital community support to those among the hardest hit by the flu pandemic, are sharing a £1,100 shot-in-the-arm from the city’s freemen.

The cash is benefiting local food banks, children in refuge centres, the city’s homeless, as well as vulnerable families and the elderly – among them a woman who has celebrated her 100th birthday.



Durham Elvet Rotary Club members Tom Sharples and Peter Atkinson

The “Masketeers” – Durham Elvet Rotary Club members Tom Sharples and Peter Atkinson – initially set up a mini production line in their homes to craft and supply colourful face masks to the Durham Community Foodbank and Waddington Street Centre. But their work was so well received they gifted them for the wider community, more recently adding the Dragonfly Cancer Trust to their supply line.

“The freemen’s £250 donation helped kick start our work and we were helped with cotton and fabric donations from Kite Packaging based in Washington. We have given out nearly 1,000 masks and plan to continue making them for as long as they are required,” said Tom.



Staff from Ushaw Moor Silver Trees Primary School

Mrs Monica Smith celebrating her 100th birthday was among the beneficiaries of support from staff and youngsters at the Silver Tree Primary and Nursery School in Ushaw Moor.

The £300 they received from the freemen helped towards the cost of putting together food parcels distributed once a fortnight to 20 needy families, as well as isolated pensioners and the disabled, within their catchment area.

Mrs Monica Smith, was singled out for extra-special attention to mark her landmark birthday. In addition to her congratulations from the Queen she also received flowers, chocolates and a birthday cake when she was visited by staff from the school.

“Families and individuals most at risk were identified by local churches, those involved in community work and the local Co-op. Staff have gone above and beyond to offer support to the community we serve and we are particularly grateful to the freemen and all those who made contributions to our cause,” said head teacher Mrs Natalie Maughan.



04/10/2020

The Salvation Army

The freemen's £300 gift to the Salvation Army's work provided a "very valuable addition" to monies contributed towards the cost of finding permanent and temporary accommodation to homeless men and women who were sleeping on the city's streets.

Church leader Darryn Hook said coronavirus forced the eventual closure of their Sanctuary 21 café in Saddler Street, ending their provision of meals and support to those sleeping "rough."

"We worked with the county council and other organisations to find them permanent or temporary accommodation across the wider county.

The money from the freemen, and other donor organisations, allowed us to source cookers, microwaves, televisions, paint and decorating equipment to make their accommodation feel a more permanent place. For up to 20 individuals we have achieved some very positive outcomes and there are fewer people living on the streets of Durham as a result,” he said.

04/10/2020

Kids Out UK

Ten underprivileged children will be spending a happier Christmas in three refuge centres in County Durham as a result of the freemen’s donation to local representatives of a national charity.

Their £250 gift is a key starter to covering the cost of a box of toys, each worth in excess of £80, which will be delivered at Christmas under a scheme run by the charity Kids Out UK.

“Regional ambassador for the charity, Norman Sellar (Consett Rotary), explained: “There are 180 children sheltering with a parent in the 16 refuges in the region stretching from the Tweed to the Tees. Donations from rotary clubs across the region, as well as individual gifts like those from the freemen, will underwrite the total cost of providing toys for every child.”

Eric Bulmer, who chairs the freemen’s charitable trust, said: “We are delighted our gifts have provided the building blocks for support work delivering much-needed help to the needy of all ages at this particularly challenging time.”

28/07/20

Freemen Play Key Role In Launch Of Life-Saving Medical Network

At the start of this year three Rotary Clubs - Durham Bede, Durham and Durham Elvet – secured permission and funds to give the public 24-hour-a-day access to Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in the Market Place and on Palace Green fronting Durham Cathedral.

The trio set themselves a target of £5,000 and reached their goal with a crucial £800 gift from the city's Freemen, alongside other key contributions from the Shakespeare Temperance Trust and the Durham Area Action Partnership. The project was due to be launched in March but was put on hold by the coronavirus outbreak.

But, in the vacuum created by the national lockdown, the region's 54 rotary clubs took the opportunity to develop more wide-ranging proposals, costing tens of thousands of pounds. Their plan will give members of the public access to scores of machines – each with a proven nation-wide record of saving lives – across an area stretching from the Scottish Borders in the north, to the North Yorkshire border in the south and the Pennines to the west.



*Tom Sharples Lead for Durham City Defibrillator Project, Mary Kelly Foy MP for Durham City,
Barbara Broadbelt Rotary North East Governor*

The Market Place machine went “live” on Friday, July 31st and its’ twin on Palace Green is expected to be up and running within weeks.

Rotarians hope to add up to 100 installations to the existing North East Ambulance Service regional network by the end of next year. Each of the self-contained units gives the public access to a machine - along with simple operating instructions - to deliver a high energy electric shock to victims in the immediate aftermath of a cardiac arrest.

Spokesman Tom Sharples said each rotary club was committed to improving the lives of everyone in their local communities and the latest proposals provided the opportunity for the region’s 54 clubs to unite in a common cause.



“The first two defibrillators, in the Market Place and on the approach to Durham Cathedral, are important and well-known thoroughfares used by many tens of thousands of local people and visitors to the city during the course of a year. Other sites identified within the regional network will also be positioned in similarly busy areas.

“UK NHS ambulances are targeted to reach people who have suffered a cardiac arrest in eight minutes and the defibrillators are the key to improving survival. An electric shock delivered within three to five minutes of a cardiac arrest improves survival odds between fifty and eighty per cent. This project has the potential for saving many lives,” said Mr Sharples.

Eric Bulmer, chairman of the freemen's charitable trust, said: "We were pleased to offer our support to Rotary's very laudable Durham City initiative which provides a vital facility for both our community and visitors to our city. We are doubly delighted that during lockdown the same life-saving opportunity will soon be available to a great many more people across the region."

08/07/2020

Durham Rotary Clubs Face Mask Initiative

The initiative is coordinated by Tom Sharples Community Chair of Durham Elvet Rotary, who with a small group of dedicated volunteers, are becoming proficient machinists as they produce hundreds of face masks.

The Freeman's donation will go towards the purchase of fabric and elastic to enable them to continue with their project. Tom, who can be contacted by :
telephone: 07538942129 or email: tomsharples766@btinternet.com,
will be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to volunteer to support the project, or who can provide details of any vulnerable groups/individuals within the community who would like face masks.

The Freeman welcome the opportunity to congratulate Tom and his volunteers together with Durham Rotary, for their initiative in supporting the community in these challenging times.



An attractive collage of face masks produced by Tom Sharples

19/02/2020

Freemen's Grand Response to Hospital's Cancer Care Appeal

Durham's hospital bosses, campaigning to raise more than £2 million to tackle an overwhelming rise in demand for cancer treatment, have offered a thousand thanks to the city's freemen for responding to their appeal.

A total of 2020 businesses, organisations, groups and schools county-wide are being sought to make a £1,000 donation towards the cost of the “big build” – the creation of a centre of excellence for cancer care at the University Hospital of North Durham.



Charitable Trust Chairman Eric Bulmer, Alan Ribchester Charitable Trust, Pat Chambers NHS Trust Charity Development Manager, Beth Gibson chemotherapy ward sister, and John Booth.

The existing chemotherapy day unit at the hospital struggles to meet the needs of ever increasing numbers being diagnosed, particularly across the main cancer groups of bowel, prostate, breast and lung cancer – which represent some of the biggest increases in England. To alleviate pressure at the Durham City hospital some patients are being sent to Newcastle and Middlesbrough for treatment.

The County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust admits it faces many challenges as it invests to support the largest trust in the north east with eight hospitals. The immediate need in investment priority, says the trust, is to provide new Accident and Emergency and new theatres and on that basis the chemotherapy unit would be many years away from reality without charitable funding.

Alan Ribchester, a member of the freemen's charitable trust, said he and his colleagues had no hesitation in pledging their £1,000 towards the cost of helping buy vital equipment for the centre.

"The men and women within our ranks are well aware of the ever increasing incidence of the various forms of cancer and there are few families who have not been touched by the disease in one form or another. We all feel privileged to be able to help provide the new enhanced and sorely needed centre of excellence in our city," he said.



The NHS Foundation Trust's Charity Development Manager, Pat Chambers, explained: "We are working hard to deliver this new centre of excellence in cancer care here in Durham funded through charitable giving. The reality is that without the help of organisations and businesses like the City of Durham Freemen we would simply not be able to make this vision a reality."

It is hoped work on the centre could begin early next year and be operational within 12 months of the start date. The support of each donor will be recognised with an inscription on the "2020 wall of honour" within the new building.

04/02/2020

Freemen Embrace City's Plan To Replace Lost Trees

A total of 70 deciduous trees were felled before building work could start on the controversial development which was opposed by many, including the freemen.



But, under a joint “green” initiative led by Durham’s parish councillors and the city’s churches, more than 110 saplings of seven species of native trees have been planted to compensate for the loss. At a special ceremony 40 primary and secondary schoolchildren, along with volunteers from community groups, carried out the work within a semi-circular area fringing the Sands.

The freemen, whose ancient herbage rights give them a controlling interest in access to the Sands, welcomed the partnership’s move to mitigate the loss of trees.

Eric Bulmer, Chairmen of the Freeman’s Charitable Trust and Warden of the Plumbers’ Company, said: “We were more than pleased to support the local community in their endeavours to promote a ‘green’ initiative for the city which makes a contribution to the damaging effects of climate change.”



Councillor Richard Ormerod, Durham City Freeman John Booth, Kathleen Vasey and Eric Bulmer with Councillor David Freeman.

Councillor Victoria Ashfield, who chairs the parish council's environment committee, said: "We are delighted to be working in partnership with the freemen on this event. The tree planting is connected to our huge commitment to improving our environment and we are delighted local schools and community groups have been involved in making the city cleaner and greener."

Kirsty Thomas, secretary of the Durham Churches Together group, who sought the freemen's help, said the saplings around the edge of the Sands would "lessen the sense of bitter disappointment" felt after the loss of trees near the Pennyferry Bridge and signal the "Climate Emergency" was being taken seriously.

"Trees are one sure way of mitigating the consequences of carbon but have so many other advantages, not least in providing beauty in the environment, which aids a sense of wellbeing," she added.

Additional Awards

A further six awards have been made during 2020 these were to: Durham Agency Against Crime (DAAC), Brandon Boxing Club, Silver Tree Primary School, Laurel Avenue Community Association, Durham Agency for Single Housing (DASH) and Durham Christian Partnership-County Durham Foodbanks.

Moving Forward

I have no doubt that 2021 will bring with it more guidelines and restrictions to keep us all safe and although essential, makes forward planning uncertain.

We remain hopeful that this year's calendar will continue at some point, and we are able to meet up again at Guild Days, admitting candidates who have been put on hold, when normality is resumed.

Modern technology is playing its part with all Freeman meetings being conducted using the Zoom software. This will continue to help us conduct the business of the Freeman until we are able to meet face to face again.



Looking ahead, we are working on a new structure which aims to allocate the workload more evenly amongst the management team and share the burden of responsibility, making the Chairman's role more appealing to Wardens.

One of the working groups has been planning the Butchers' Guild 500th year celebrations, which was cancelled last year, but promises to be an exciting event and hopefully will take place sometime this year, restrictions permitting.

The management team are here for all our members. If you feel there is something you need to bring to our attention, please contact the Warden of your Guild. Details can be found in this year's Yearbook.

It is essential our members contact details are up to date, we would ask that you forward your address, email and contact numbers to your Guild Warden or the Members Secretary, all of which can be checked and amended accordingly.

You are also, most welcome to join us at our Member's Meetings when they resume, details are in the Yearbook. Hope to see you there.

Ann Thurlow
Chair of the Wardens
Warden of the Joiners' Company

