



THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF PLUMBERS

*Encouraging wider engagement
across our profession*

Membership

www.plumberscompany.org.uk

OUR COMPANY

The Worshipful Company of Plumbers is one of the most ancient of the Livery Companies of the City of London, with our ordinances dating back to 1365.

The Company today maintains its relevance by working closely with the plumbing industry, undertaking charitable works and supporting the City of London. We have an active membership drawn from a wide variety of professions.

Our Role

Today the role of the Company is reflected in its Aims and Objectives which are summarised below. We actively approach the present and the future, yet at the same time remember our past heritage.

Craft

To encourage excellence in plumbing by:

- supporting and promoting the history of the craft
- supporting and recognising individuals, organisations and institutions who achieve excellence in plumbing standards, education and technical development
- influencing and raising the profile of key future plumbing developments related to safety, public health, sustainability and water conservation



City

To support the City of London and the Mayoralty by:

- supporting City and Livery functions
- encouraging Liverymen to actively participate in City elections
- raising funds for Lord Mayors' Charities

Charity

To raise funds and be involved in charitable and educational work by:

- all members contributing to the Charitable and Educational Trust
- providing bursaries and awards to support and encourage excellence in plumbing standards, education and technical development
- providing donations to The City and water and plumbing related charities

Friendship

To generate friendship in The Company by:

- providing an active social calendar for like-minded people
- organising high quality Company events which maintain the standards and traditions of the Livery
- utilising the latest communication and publishing methods

HISTORY

As early as 1365 the Company received its Grant of Ordinances from the Aldermen of the City of London. The Ordinances indicated that 'it was the desire of the craftsmen that their work should be well done'. Livery Companies assumed responsibility for the education and training of apprentices to their craft. In 1611 the Company received its Royal Charter from King James I.

There are currently just over a hundred Livery Companies in the City of London. The Plumbers' Company ranks thirty-first in the order of precedence and is one of the oldest Livery Companies, which still actively pursues and supports its ancient (and modern) craft.

In 1639 our first Court Meeting was held in our own Hall in Chequer's Yard. This Hall was destroyed by fire in 1666 and when rebuilt was occupied till 1863 when the Hall was compulsorily purchased in order to build Cannon Street Railway Station. From that date the Company has held its meetings in other Livery Halls. There is now a plaque at Cannon Street Station entrance commemorating our former home and in 2011, the 400th Anniversary of the granting of our Royal Charter. A statue of a Plumber's Apprentice was erected on the station concourse to recognise our past and future support to training.

The Company's offices are currently at Wax Chandlers' Hall, which is used for Court functions. Other Livery Halls are used from time to time for other functions.

The Company has never lost its connection with the 'Art and Mystery' of Plumbing and was the instigator of the concept of a Register of Plumbers, a logical successor to the medieval role of the Company. The Register of Plumbers was inaugurated in 1886 and efforts to get "The Plumbers' Registration Act" through Parliament occupied the activities of the Company in the 1890s. Today the Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering carries on this important role. The Company has very recently chaired an initiative, WaterSafe, which has, for the first time across the whole industry, set minimum standards of training for plumbers. This information is available to consumers through the WaterSafe website.

The Company is committed to continually raising standards which is reflected in our awards programme. Our annual award of a Gold Medal to one of the top twelve students in the City and Guilds of London Plumbing examinations and similar annual awards to the top Services' trainees, demonstrate our current interest in the profession.

In addition, the Company has sponsored and equipped two Museums, one of which is housed at The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton, near Chichester. The Plumbing and Tin Plate Workshop was opened in June 1989 at Blist Hill, which is part of the Ironbridge Museum at Telford.

THE LIVERY YEAR

As a Liveryman you are permitted and encouraged to attend the election of the Lord Mayor of the City of London. In addition there are certain Company formal functions and City events during the year, which are normally held in the following months and which it is hoped you can attend. They are:

October	Installation Service
November	Ladle Dinner
December	Carol Service
January/ February	Annual Lecture
March	Annual Banquet
June	Election of Sheriffs – All Liverymen are encouraged to attend.
September	Election of the Lord Mayor – All Liverymen are encouraged to vote
September/ October	Autumn Festival

In addition, a wide variety of visits and social activities are arranged throughout the year for members of the Company and their guests.





Master Certificate Awards Ceremony with the Lord Mayor.

ORGANISATION OF THE LIVERY

Like most Livery Companies, the Plumbers' Company consists of:

- a. Liverymen
- b. Freeman
- c. Court of Assistants
- d. Officers of the Company: Master, Upper and Renter Warden
- e. Stewards
- f. Company Committees
- g. Clerk, Clerk's Assistant, Financial Assistant and Beadle

The Court of Assistants is drawn from within the Livery and reflects in its membership those disciplines which are needed for the Court to advise and help the Officers of the Company to run its affairs. The Master and Wardens are installed annually in October and serve for one year.

Stewards serve for seven years and help to ensure the smooth running of functions and organise Company visits.

There are six major committees; Freedom and Livery, Finance, Technical, Education, Membership and Social, each chaired by a Court Member.



JOINING OUR COMPANY

In spite of the name of the Company, you do not need to be directly active in the plumbing industry to join. As explained below, we embrace designers, manufacturers, retailers, all tradesmen, as well as individuals who can contribute to the professional running of a modern Livery Company.

The Plumbers Company, whilst focused on the City of London, is international and is always keen to admit new members, men and women, into the appropriate membership category of the Company. To take a full part in the Livery though means becoming a full Liveryman — which we would encourage all applicants to become or aspire to.

All members of the Plumbers Company are asked to sign up to our Aims and Objectives, these are summarised above. Whilst broad and diverse, we maintain high standards and encourage active participation in our work.

Membership Categories

There are three principal categories of membership to suit individual circumstances:

Liverymen: Today there are some three hundred and fifty members. About 70% are connected with the plumbing craft and allied disciplines. The remaining members cover a wide spectrum of interests and professions including engineers, scientists, architects, builders, accountants, lawyers and many others. We actively encourage women to become Liverymen and were one of the first Livery Companies to admit women. With a third of Liverymen living over a hundred miles from London, the Company reflects a national interest by its members in its activities.

Freeman: This category recognises that some individuals may not be able to make a full commitment to become a Liveryman when they initially apply. The Freeman membership category limits the functions you can attend, however gives a good insight into being a full Liveryman and Freeman are encouraged to become a full

Liveryman at an appropriate time. Freeman can attend all visits and activities, but not the formal Company functions, unless invited as a guest by a Liveryman. They also cannot vote in the City of London elections.

International: This category is reserved for members who live permanently outside of the UK and carries similar entitlements to the Freeman category. In addition, Liverymen who temporarily move overseas may move to this category by agreement.

Other categories include:

Family member: individual members can apply for their immediate family (eg. child, grandchild, nephew or niece) who are aged 16–40 years to become a family member. Spouses and Partners of deceased Liverymen can also apply for this category. Family members have full entitlement to attend events and functions as a guest.

Corporate Membership is also open to a limited number of qualifying companies, please see our separate brochure on this or visit our website.

How to become a Member of the Company

Should you wish to become a member of the Plumbers' Company you will need to be proposed and seconded by existing Liverymen. Your proposer will remain as your friend and mentor all the time you remain in the Company and you should feel free to consult your proposer at any stage. If you do not know anyone in the Company please contact the Clerk, who may be able to assist you.

Admission as a Liveryman is by one of three routes:

- **Redemption** — the most common route;
- **Young entry scheme** — if aged between 21 and 40;
- **Patrimony** — if parent was a Freeman at time of applicant's birth.

There is a five stage procedure for Liverymen and Freemen of which two stages are applicable for International, these are as follows:

- 1 Complete application form including proposer and seconder. Your proposer should then return this to the Clerk.
- 2 Attend a short interview with the Admissions Committee.
- 3 Swear an oath to the Company in the presence of the Clerk to obtain the "Freedom of the Company".
- 4 Attend the Guildhall to make an appointment to become a Freeman of the City of London. This sometimes done at the same time as the interview. On approval by the Court of Aldermen, attend the Guildhall to receive the Freedom of the City of London. A delightful and historic event to which family members are welcome.
- 5 Attend a meeting of the Court of Assistants of the Company to be admitted to the Livery.



For the International category only stages 1 and 3 apply. Stage 3 could be undertaken at a convenient location.

Timescales for the whole admissions procedure will vary but usually will take between 3 and 12 months.



YOUR INVOLVEMENT

As a Freeman or Liveryman of this Company you are expected to:

- Make a life-long commitment to the Company.
- Vote in the annual Elections for the Sheriffs and the Lord Mayor (Liverymen only).
- Use your professional expertise to support the Aims and Objectives of the Company.
- Support the activities of the Company, listed in the Calendar of Events.
- Represent the Company when invited.
- Support the Company's Charitable and Educational Trust.
- Serve, in due course, on Committees.

In doing so, we hope you will enjoy your life-long participation in the Company.

Your Next Step

If you are interested in joining the Worshipful Company of Plumbers do have a look through our web-site at www.plumberscompany.org.uk and download the application form and current membership rates. Don't hesitate to contact our Clerk — e-mail: clerk@plumberscompany.org.uk or telephone: +44 (0)20 7796 2468.

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