

CUSTOMS OF THE COMPANY/CITY PROTOCOL

The following customs are included for the guidance of members and of their guests where appropriate. They are based upon the guidance issued to Livery Company Clerks by the Fellowship of Clerks.

1. Formal Dress Code

- 1.1. The Company expects its members to wear a plain black graduate gown (without a hood) over dress appropriate to the event (see below) at all Statutory events (Court meetings) as well as formal receptions and dinners. If the room is particularly hot, the Master (or other officiating Officer) may, at his or her absolute discretion, invite members to remove their gowns.
- 1.2. Liverymen wear gowns with a replica of the Guild badge now called the Livery pin to distinguish them from Freeman.
- 1.3. All members are issued with name badges on joining the Company. These are to aid in identification by name rather than indicating office or status. It is recommended that these are worn at all events.
- 1.4. The Master, Wardens, Past Masters and Court Assistants should wear their Badges of Office on all formal Company occasions as well as when representing the Company at other Livery events.
- 1.5. Gowns are not required at Educator seminars or social events nor other Livery events
- 1.6. At all Company events, other than formal dinners and Social Committee events, members are expected to wear day dress which means dark, modest & conservative for men; the latter two for ladies.
- 1.7. Black tie means a black dinner suit and black bow tie for gentlemen with a white dress shirt with fold down collar and dress shoes. Ladies should wear dresses with a hemline below the knee or evening trousers. Court shoes rather than sandals are recommended. Please note that it is the City custom that gentlemen do not wear white dinner jackets or coloured shirts or ties.
- 1.8. White tie means a black evening (tail) coat with white waistcoat and white bow tie for gentlemen with long dresses for ladies who must have their shoulders covered.

To some extent this is unnecessary for members who wear their gowns over a dress but it is a message to be passed on to women guests. Where it is so stated, a black dinner jacket is acceptable in place of an evening coat.

1.9. Morning dress means a morning (tail) coat, black waistcoat, striped trousers, and appropriate tie and pocket square for gentlemen with formal day dresses or suits with hats for ladies.

1.10. Hats should be worn by ladies in church before 6pm. Gentlemen might wear hats at the Remembrance Service at St Pauls and the Buckingham Palace Garden Party. Most people don't take a hat to the latter, but it should be a black top hat if you do.

1.11. Where decorations are stated, holders should wear their civil, military or academic medals — preferably as miniatures.

2. *Formal Dinners*

2.1. It is not considered good practice to take a glass of wine from the Reception to the dining table.

2.2. Members are advised that they should aim to attend all Statutory meetings ten minutes before the advertised time to ensure that they are comfortably seated to await the Master's Procession, which begins every meeting.

2.3. On entering the dining hall please stand and wait for the Master, Wardens, Clerk and guests to process in. You are asked to clap slowly as they enter and walk to their places.

2.4. Taking of wine - The Master will often take wine with those present depending on the event. New Freeman and Liverymen will be named and asked to stand whereupon those present will toast them as a welcome. If the Master takes wine with everyone else they may be asked to remain seated.

2.5. Leaving the table – It is not good practice to leave one's place at the dining table, whatever the reason, before the Loyal Toast. In circumstances of the most extreme need, a trip to the bathroom may be taken before the Loyal Toast, but great care should be taken to minimise inconvenience to others present. Whenever leaving it is suggested that a slight bow to the Master is made, especially if nearby.

- 2.1. Mobile telephones must be switched off or set to silent during Company events, and photographs should not be taken without permission. Tweeting is allowed if done discreetly.
- 2.2. When a declaration and/or clothing ceremony precedes a dinner new members will be asked to stand during the dinner and be toasted by the Company.
- 2.3. Guests should be advised in advance that grace after dinner is the sung *Laudi Spirituali* whose words are printed on the menu and shown below for information.

*For these and all Thy Mercies given,
We bless and praise Thy Name O Lord.
May we receive them with thanksgiving,
Ever trusting in Thy Word.
To Thee alone be honour, glory,
Now and henceforth for ever more.
Amen.*

- 2.4. The Loyal toast to The Queen but, for the second toast to The Royal Family, the only the tune of the first half of the verse is played with everyone standing.
- 2.5. Before any toast note that ones glass should not be touched or picked up until after the National Anthem is finished and the toast made
- 2.6. Toasts
 - 2.6.1. Loyal toast 1 – “The Queen”; is preceded by everyone standing to sing the first verse of the National Anthem response “The Queen”
 - 2.6.2. Loyal Toast 2 – “...and other members of the Royal Family”; preceded by music of the first half of the National Anthem with everyone standing and no one singing response “The Royal Family”
 - 2.6.3. Loyal Toast 3 - “The Lord Mayor and City of London Corporation”; response “The Lord Mayor” If a Sheriff is present this becomes “The Lord Mayor, the City of London Corporation & the Sheriffs”; response “The Lord Mayor & the Sheriffs”.
- 2.7. Where the Ceremony of the Loving Cup is followed, instructions are given on the menu card.

Formal address

It would be normal for the Master to be addressed as “Master” on first meeting each day, or in a formal situation/receiving line etc., and then by first name if they are known to you. Likewise the Lord Mayor should be addressed as “My Lord Mayor” on first meeting – the Sheriffs would always do so! – and then first name [Lady Mayoress should also be addressed as such]. Likewise, the Sheriffs should initially be addressed as “Sheriff”.

3. *Booking Events*

- 3.1. Invitations to events will be emailed about six weeks in advance. Prompt responses with remittance to invitations are requested to aid the Clerk in ordering food and wine and to reserve a place where numbers may be limited.
- 3.2. Cancellations must be notified to the Clerk at least a week before the event, otherwise refunds cannot be made because the orders for food and wine will have been placed and must be paid for by the Company. Late cancellations also result in embarrassingly empty places which might have been filled by someone else had there been earlier notification,
- 3.3. Guests are always welcome, and can be more than one in number, simply ensure their full name and dietary requirements are included on the booking form
- 3.4. Pour memoire cards are issued by email, once booking for an event has closed, usually about one week before the event. You are asked to pass this on to any guests.

4. *Communications*

- 4.1. Call notices for Committee and Court meetings will be sent by email as far in advance of the meeting as possible.
- 4.2. The Educator goes out two or three times a year and is normally sent by post although electronic copies can be found on the web site.