

Court of Common Council
Guildhall
Thursday 25th April 2024

Thank you, Town Clerk.

Good afternoon, everyone.

In March, Sheriff Bronek Masojada and I visited Hong Kong and mainland China, promoting the UK as a global financial and professional services hub, with a special focus on sustainable finance.

We discussed the role of the City in financing a just transition to Net Zero and took part in meetings of the UK China Green Finance Taskforce, chaired by Alderman Sir William Russell.

We also promoted the UK as an investment centre, as part of the City's Global Investment Futures Campaign.

This month, I visited Italy – a very special mayoral visit for me – meeting counterparts in Milan, Genoa and Rome, to promote Italy-UK connections and Connect to Prosper initiatives.

In Milan, I met Italian fintech firms as well as meeting with representatives from the space industry to discuss the initiative for Space Debris Removal Insurance Bonds.

In Genoa, I was delighted to speak at an international shipping conference and highlight London's role as a centre for maritime insurance and services.

In Rome, I met Italy's Deputy Minister of Enterprise and senior officials at the Banca d'Italia to discuss how we can collaborate further in tech and sustainability, and – with the UK being the largest non-EU investor in Italy – how we can open up further investment flows between our two countries.

Here in the UK, we were delighted to host representatives from the Testing, Inspection and Certification sector at Mansion House for a conference on standards in AI.

Participants committed to developing the Walbrook AI Accord for a rigorous global quality infrastructure of assurance for AI.

This will be codified at the TIC Council AI Summit next month.

The City of London became the world's curry house when we welcomed Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal here at Guildhall for the Lord Mayor's Big

Curry Lunch, with a special curry sauce made by Cyrus Todiwala, raising money for Navy, Army and Air Force charities.

On Monday night, I was delighted to speak at the City of London Eid reception, attended by guests from across the City and beyond.

This month also saw the biggest event in the mayoral calendar: the Lord Mayor's Children's Fancy Dress Party, which went off with the bang of many balloons.

This was one of the few occasions where the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs were comprehensively outdressed.

Finally, may I wish good luck to everyone who has put themselves forward for committees today – we need you.

Thank you.