

Court of Common Council
Guildhall
Thursday 7th December 2023
The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of London
Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli

Good afternoon, everyone.

I am delighted to be presiding over my first Court as Lord Mayor.

To begin, I would like to thank my predecessor, the 694th Lord Mayor, Alderman Nicholas Lyons, not just for his leadership, but also for the kindness and words of wisdom he and Felicity have offered Elisabeth and me.

My thanks, too, to all honourable Members here for your support.

It is an enormous honour to represent our City – the world’s oldest democratic workers’ and residents’ cooperative – and I am delighted that we are joined today by the presumptive masters of around 30 livery companies.

While the title of these meetings is often abbreviated to CoCo, as you will all know by now, I’m more of a fan of coffee...

Connecting Our Futures For Everyone Everywhere.

Which is why my theme for the year is *Connect to Prosper* – celebrating the many Knowledge Miles of our Square Mile and reviving our proud coffee house tradition...

...promoting the City as the *world’s “coffee house”* – a place where people come together, from across the globe, to find solutions.

Because when our City connects, everyone, everywhere, prospers.

I am pleased to say that from the very first day of my mayoralty, we’ve been connecting.

On day 1, we brought commerce, community, and charity together on the streets of the Square Mile in the form of the Lord Mayor’s Show, connecting with 250,000 residents and tourists, and more than two million more viewers at home...

...and that evening, connecting with 8 overseas cities at a dinner at Mansion House to celebrate their involvement in the procession – including Lagos, the first ever African city to take part in the Lord Mayor’s Show.

On day 3, we welcomed the Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor, Archbishop of Canterbury, and other esteemed guests to Guildhall for the Lord Mayor’s Banquet...

...reaffirming the ancient and enduring connections between the City, the Government, the judiciary, and the Church...

...swiftly followed on day 12 with the state visit of the President of the Republic of Korea, with a dinner in this magnificent hall marking the blossoming relationship between our two nations.

On day 18, I made a new connection with the Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, who that morning had opened trading at the London Stock Exchange...

...while in the evening we had the pleasure of hosting the Prime Minister of Samoa, High Commissioners, and Ministers from across the Commonwealth at the annual High Commissioners’ Banquet, once again demonstrating our City’s unique convening power.

I would like to thank everyone at the Corporation whose hard work made those engagements such a success.

And here we are, on day 27, where I am pleased to be connecting with all of you.

Of course, those fruitful connections have also been taking place away from the Square Mile.

A fortnight ago, I was delighted to embark on the first trip of my mayoralty, where in Northern Ireland I discussed everything from autonomous boats to the triangular potential of London, Belfast, and Dublin in the financial services sector.

And just yesterday, the Policy Chairman and I returned from COP28 in Dubai where we were promoting the City’s status as a leading centre in green finance, using the opportunity to announce that Mansion House will be hosting the next Net Zero Delivery Summit in June 2024.

This weekend, we’ll both be heading to the US to open the Corporation’s new offices in New York and Washington DC, bolstering the extremely strong connections we already enjoy with our American friends.

And finally, through our online lecture series, “Coffee Colloquies”, programme of experiments, and the wider *Connect to Prosper* initiatives that are well underway, we’re connecting the Livery, academics, businesses, charities, and think tanks – not just with each other, but with a wider public too.

Our Ethical AI Initiative, for example, already has students from 28 countries registered, with around 1,000 financial and professional services professionals expected to have enrolled in its ethics courses by the end of the year.

The multitalented Johann Wolfgang von Goethe once wrote:

“In nature, we never see anything isolated, but everything in connection with something else which is before it, beside it, under it, and over it.”

Together, over the coming eleven months, I hope we can continue to demonstrate the power of the positive connections that every day, and all around us, are made in *this* Square Mile – to the benefit of the City, the UK, and people across the world.

Thank you for your support in my first few weeks in office, and allow me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Thank you.