



THE GUILD  
*of* ENTREPRENEURS

CUSTOMS  
AND  
GUIDELINES

# Customs of the Guild

Freemen, especially those new to the Guilds and Livery, occasionally have questions about customs and procedure. That is natural as some things are unique to the City and/or the Guilds and Livery. We welcome these questions so do please contact Fiona Taylor on our Fellowship Committee, who will be keeping this document up to date, or the Clerk.

The guidance below has been produced by asking new Freemen what they would like to know and looking at the guidance produced by a number of Livery companies as well as taking advice from a number of Clerks. It is frequently not about right and wrong but about how City of London organisations like ours choose to conduct ourselves when meeting and dining. So please take the observations in that spirit and enjoy the many and varied events you will attend in the coming years.

## Data Protection

The full contact details of all Freemen are maintained on a hard disk by the Clerk and are used for direct contact purposes only. An online Members' Directory provides logged-in Freemen with visibility of the email addresses, photograph and about-me of all other Freemen.

The Guild will only ever use images from Guild events in context, and Freemen (and their guests) must reasonably assume that they may be photographed at Guild events, and that those images may be used in promoting the Guild and beautifying the website, social media, Clerk's Notices and the magazine.

If you wish to retain editorial control of images of yourself or your guests, please make the photographer aware of this, and follow up with an email to the Clerk.

## Communications

Flyers for events will be emailed about six weeks in advance. News and notices are emailed to all Freemen from time to time. Clerk's Notices (a digest of forthcoming Guild and City events, standing notices and other useful information) is published and circulated by email to Freemen on the first Tuesday in the month. The deadline for inclusion in Clerk's Notices is the last Tuesday in the month.

Prompt responses to invitations are requested to aid the event organizer and the Clerk in ordering food and wine and to reserve a place where numbers may be limited.

Cancellations must be notified to the Clerk at least a week before the event, or by the cancellation deadline, whichever is soonest, otherwise refunds cannot be made because the orders for food and wine will have been placed and must be paid for by the Guild. Late cancellations also result in embarrassingly empty places next to diners, and with earlier notification the place might have been filled by someone on the waiting list.

Guests are welcome where stated on the flyer but their details must be specified and paid for with the application form. The Spring Breakfast is an annual event at which it is usual to invite business guests and potential members rather than spouses and social guests.

Pour memoire cards will only be issued for the more formal events and will be posted at least a week in advance. It may be necessary for some events (especially at Mansion House, Guildhall and larger City venues) to bring the physical invitation in order to be permitted access.

Requests for papers for Committee and Court meetings will be sent three weeks before, with a deadline for submission two weeks before the meeting. The collated papers (the Bundle) will normally be sent by email (unless a request is made for a paper copy) one week in advance of the meeting.

# Customs of the Guild

## Dining

**Please note that it is the host's responsibility to ensure that their guests understand the protocols and dress codes of Guild Dinners. The Guild is very proud of its City heritage and all Freeman must work hard to ensure that they are preserved.**

*Freeman and guests must never:*

- Leave their place at the dining table at any time during the dinner before the Loyal Toast (a comfort break will often be provided after the toasts).
- Get up from their seat and to go and talk to people in other parts of the Hall at any point in the dinner.
- Use mobile phones or camera phones/cameras at formal dinners. Not only is this against the tone of the occasion it can often infringe copyright. An official photographer is arranged by the Guild who will make pictures available via the Clerk.

*It is not considered good practice to:*

- Overtly exchange business cards at the table. However, it is accepted that in practice this is done, it should though be managed discreetly.
- Take a glass of wine or champagne from the Reception to the dining table.

Please note that anyone not at their seat prior to the commencement of speeches or entertainment will not be readmitted until these are completed.

Guests should be advised in advance that **Grace** after dinner is sometimes the sung *Laudi Spirituali* whose words (in English) are printed on the menu and a link to a YouTube rendition of this and the music can be obtained from the Clerk.

On formal occasions the **Loyal Toast** ("The Queen") is preceded by everyone standing. On some formal occasions, the first verse of the National Anthem is sung before the proposal is repeated and then drunk. For the second toast, to The Royal Family, on formal occasions the tune only of half of the first verse is played with everyone standing. Glasses remain on the table until the Anthem is sung/played and the toast is proposed, then they are raised, but never 'clinked'.

No music accompanies the third toast to the Lord Mayor and the City of London Corporation (and the Sheriffs are included if any are present).

Other toasts may be proposed and the responses are usually clear from the proposal. In all cases, glasses should remain on the table until the toast is proposed.

If there is **port** served at an event from a decanter, this is always passed to the left and never left on the table even if the person who last had it passed to them does not partake - it should be kept moving until empty.

The **Ceremony of the Rose Bowl** will have instructions printed on the menu card but essentially you take your napkin and dip the corner in the rose water and delicately dab it behind each ear. The Rose Bowl is usually moved on by a waiter. This is believed to aid digestion and is surprisingly refreshing.

Where the **Ceremony of the Loving Cup** is followed, instructions are given on the menu card. Do note the origin of the Ceremony as new guests will be fascinated by the history.

This is a piece of theatre and is conducted as follows. As the person next to you (who is holding the Loving Cup) turns to you, you rise; you bow; you raise the lid in your right hand with a flourish, hold it at arm's length and wait while they drink. They then wipe the rim with the cloth and you replace the lid and take the cup by its handles. You then bow; you turn to the next person who rises, bows, raise the lid and the process is repeated. When you have handed the cup over, and the recipient has turned away from you, you then turn round and guard their back and make sure that the person who was guarding your back is sitting down (this can be done with a tap on shoulder) . When the cup is again handed on, your job is done and you sit down.

# Customs of the Guild

## Dress

At **Court Meetings** business dress should be worn (unless the dress code for an event immediately afterwards is more formal). Gentlemen should wear a tie.

For gentlemen **Black Tie** means a black dinner suit, white dress shirt (not wing collar) and black bow tie and black cummerbund (certain military exceptions apply). Gentlemen should not wear white dinner jackets, coloured shirts, waistcoats or bow ties.

For gentlemen **White Tie** (“evening dress”) means a black evening tailcoat suit, white dress shirt with wing collar, white waistcoat and white bow tie.

For ladies **Black Tie** means a cocktail dress, but a long dress, smart dark plain trousers, national dress or uniform are permissible.

For ladies **White Tie** means a long dress or gown, national dress or uniform. The neckline of the dress should be modestly cut and shoulders should be covered (in practice this means wearing a light shawl).

**Hats** may be worn by ladies at lunch but never at dinner.

The Master and Wardens wear their **Badges of Office** on all Guild occasions and when representing the Guild at other Livery events. Court Assistants wear their badges of office at dinners and internal business events. No officer wears a Guild badge of office at external or other Guild/Livery company events unless invited as an official guest or invited to do so in the invitation.

It is expected that members and guests with honours will already be familiar with the proper conventions for the wearing of their insignia.

If there is every any doubt in a general context, the recipients of honours may obtain definitive advice from the Insignia Clerk at the Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood. Spink's *“A Manual for the Wearing of Orders, Decorations and Medals”* ISBN 1-902040-60-0 is a very useful illustrated guidebook of such matters and the one to which the Clerk's Office refers.

The Clerk's Office can also guide members and guests on the wearing of Guild and Livery badges, if this is unclear from the event flyer. Generally, however, Guild/Livery badges may only be worn if the wearer has been invited in their official Guild/Livery (as opposed to personal) capacity.

Freemen are responsible for ensuring that their guests are properly attired.

## Forms and Address

It is considered polite to address the Master and Wardens by their Guild title at all formal events and in committees. Even those who may know the Master of the day well would enjoy acknowledging the office of Master with a “Good evening, Master” and so on, as a sign of respect for the office they hold. Such formality may be overlooked at casual and informal events such as a walk, picnic or holiday.

Committees of the Guild observe established committee procedures and all comments and questions are addressed via the Chair and not addressed to other committee members.

## Timing

Members are advised that they should aim to attend all Court and other formal meetings at least fifteen minutes before the advertised time to ensure that they are comfortably seated to await the Master/Chair.

## Referring to your membership of the Guild

You are a (for those who are admitted before May 2015, Founder) Freeman of the Guild of Entrepreneurs, but if it sounds better in certain situations you can simply say that you are a member of the Guild (the Freeman's lapel badge simply says “Member” for this reason). The initial steering committee are the Founding Members.

# Customs of the Guild

## Freedom of the City of London

The Guild cannot yet propose you corporately for the Freedom of the City of London. However, many of the Guild's members are Liverymen in Livery Companies and qualify to nominate you personally. Please ask the Clerk if you do not already know two Liverymen members yet, and an introduction may be arranged.

## Introducing potential members

You are encouraged to introduce potential members. Please remind yourself of the criteria on our website <http://www.guildofentrepreneurs.org/join-the-guild/> and if you have any queries contact the current Chair of the Membership Committee, Court Assistant Lars Andersen [membership@guildofentrepreneurs.org](mailto:membership@guildofentrepreneurs.org), to whom all applications should be addressed. A blank application form is available to download from the website link shown above. Ideally your candidates should attend a Guild event before applying and secure a seconder from those they meet at an event.

On the second Tuesday of each month the Guild normally meets for informal drinks, usually at the London Capital Club from 6pm. This is a great opportunity for your potential applicants to meet and chat to existing Freemen in a relaxed and informal setting. Alternatively, you can invite them to one of our formal, business or social events. You must pay for them as they are non-members but you are perfectly at liberty to ask them to pay you back or direct them to our online booking site where they will be able to note that they are your guest.

## Can members network?

While people do not join the Guild overtly to network Freemen do of course all build relationships and in many cases lifelong friendships. There are no rules against such links other than any officer/committee member would be expected to declare any conflict of interest should one arise. Our members' details must never be disclosed outside of the Guild and the Member Directory must never be used for unsolicited mailing.