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**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

I am very pleased to present our Annual Report 2014-15. To begin with, I should like to restate the objectives of Livery Schools Link:

**OBJECTIVES**

**Livery Schools Link**

* maintains links with the educational community through direct contact with schools, their heads and staff, other educational establishments and the Education Business Partnership Schemes
* through these contacts, enables members of Livery Companies to undertake voluntary activities designed to support young people in their education and personal development and develop their understanding of the world of work in preparation for their adult lives
* provides a forum for an exchange of ideas and best practice in primary and secondary schools
* co-ordinates, where requested, strands of educational involvement across Livery Companies who are members of LSL
* provides a central point for information where individual Livery Company members may register an interest in becoming a volunteer or where schools may identify a need which may be met by voluntary activity from individual Livery Company members
* seeks to maximise the impact of volunteer activity
* raises the profile of the Livery across London both inside and beyond the limits of the City
* co-ordinates responses to the needs of schools and their students through the Education Business Partnerships and other organisations.
* helps students understand business and the world of work and make informed career choices
* promotes Livery Companies in the educational arena
* supports members of Livery Companies in giving something back to the community by inspiring students and helping schools

**Overview of the year 2014-2015**

It has been a very busy year for Livery Schools Link, the highlights being the third Showcase Event and the second Education Conference for head teachers. Most importantly, we have made significant progress in plans to set up the LSL online volunteering platform, and completed a huge amount of work in gathering information about the educational involvement of Livery Companies. This information gathering confirms the enormous amount that is being done in education and training by the livery and revealed an appetite for much more.

**Online database**

A great deal of work has been done this year, with the invaluable assistance of the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists, to develop an online database for Livery Schools Link. In particular, Phil Jones and David Barker have given generously of their time and expertise.

One of our key aims is to help as many members of Livery Companies as possible to volunteer in schools. In order to provide more information about volunteering opportunities and to make more connections between volunteers and schools, the Committee has been developing an interactive online volunteering platform. This will be accessed via a new website and both the platform and the website are being designed by David Barker who is an Information Technologist and the new LSL rep for the Company. We expect the new website to be live towards the end of this year, subject to our ability to complete all the necessary preparation, and we aim to run a pilot programme in Greater London to encourage members of Livery Companies, schools and educational organisations to make best use of this important resource.

**Livery Schools Link Showcase 2015**

After the success of the first two Showcase Events in 2012 and 2014, LSL responded to calls for an annual event and a third Showcase Event was held on Wednesday 4 March 2015 at Barber Surgeons’ Hall. The Management Committee were hugely grateful to the Barbers for the use of their Hall and the tremendous support their staff gave us on the day. Thirty Livery Companies took stands at the event and we welcomed around 300 students with their staff. The event was opened by the Lord Mayor, who attended with his Sheriffs and who thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to meet students visiting the Livery Company stalls. The aim of the event was, as before, to demonstrate the skills, trades and professions represented by the Livery, illustrating the role Livery Companies play in the modern world and inform students of career choices. A private view and reception in the afternoon was very well attended, particularly by Masters and Clerks. There was also a splendid exhibition by artist Jane Churchill and Mulberry School for Girls, the outcome of the first Livery WW1 Commemoration Project. Their art work explored the role of boot makers in WW1, in collaboration with the Worshipful Company of Pattenmakers, and also encouraged students to consider how separation and loss in the war affected individuals and families.

**Livery Education Conference for Head Teachers 2014**

The first Education Conference was held at Staple Inn last June bringing together liverymen and head teachers to discuss ways in which livery support for education might best be targeted. The aim of the conference was to open a dialogue between head teachers and liverymen about support for schools with a focus on the importance of the teaching of maths. It was well attended and delegates agreed a number of areas for development such as mentoring of students to prepare them for employment and the need for more opportunities for face to face discussion. A second conference was organised for June 2015.

**Membership**

We formally report that at the end of the last financial year membership of Livery Schools Link stood at 60. Membership has been steadily rising over the past five years and while some Companies are only members for a short while, for example because they take part in the Showcase Event, there is a solid core of long term members. We are confident that the introduction of our online volunteering platform will attract more Companies, both as new members and as returning members. Livery Schools Link believes that it provides a valuable forum for the exchange of information and support for those who wish to be involved in voluntary capacity in education, while respecting the independence and autonomy of each Company. Many have well-established links with the education community and some are closely involved with their own schools. Nevertheless, there are other Companies and individual members who are assisted by having access to information and whom we can introduce to schools.

**The City of London Corporation and the Livery Committee**

Paul Herbage is the Livery Committee’s representative on the LSL Management Committee and has regularly attended meetings throughout the year. We greatly value the support of the Livery Committee. LSL will ensure that the Livery Committee is kept up to date with developments during the year in the Livery Education consultation process and from liaising with the newly formed City Education Board.

The Management Committee is very grateful to Liz Skelcher, the LSL representative from the City of London Corporation for her support again this year. Warm thanks are due also to the City Education Board Chairman, Deputy Catherine McGuiness, who has liaised with us as both the City and the Livery Companies work to maintain and further develop their involvement in education.

**Expressions of thanks**

Livery Schools Link has benefited from the valuable contribution made by Phil Jones (WCIT), Simon O’Leary (Barbers) and Past Chairman Simon Underwood (Arbitrators) over the years, They have each worked hard and cheerfully for LSL and I would like to thank them most sincerely for all the work they have done and for their wise counsel. We are also grateful to our volunteer assistant, Eleanor Mankiewitz, for her hard work over six months, supporting the organisation of the Showcase Event and the Livery Education Conference.

The Merchant Taylors’ Company are thanked for their contribution to the Food Journey programme, which ran successfully in 2014 with Old Palace School. There are two further primary schools who are hoping to participate in a similar project in 2016 with support from the Worshipful Company of Tin Plate Workers.

I would also like to thank the Worshipful Company of Educators for their continuing support. In particular this year, they have offered our administrator office space, which has been most helpful.

LSL is grateful to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, who made a generous donation to sponsor the cost of printing the booklet “Livery in Education 2014”, and the Worshipful Company of Marketors, who helped with the design. This has proved to be a most useful publication, which will be reprinted in time for the second Education Conference in June, generously sponsored this year by the Worshipful Company of Stationers with support from the Worshipful Company of Insurers.

As Chairman, I would like to offer personal thanks to our Director, Alison Truphet, who is vital to LSL’s success. Alison works tremendously hard to ensure that LSL is able to play its part in improving education and prospects for young people.

**Livery Education Review**

At the time of this report, a review is being undertaken to identify the future aspirations of Livery Companies in education and the support that might be welcomed in helping them achieve their objectives. The initial review, conducted by Livery Companies for Livery Companies and led by the Educators, has been assisted by funding from the City Education Board, for which LSL is most grateful. Initial soundings will be followed by examination of options for consideration by Livery Companies for possible changes to the organisation and function of Livery Schools Link. This process has our full support. Subject to the views of the Companies, it may provide the basis for some form of central resource built around the new interactive volunteering platform.

Livery Companies who have subscribed in 2014 - 15 are listed at Annex A

The Management Committee for 2014 - 15 is listed at Annex B

**David Steward**

Chairman, Livery Schools Link, 31st March 2015