



# Lord Mayor's Banquet

Guildhall

14<sup>th</sup> November 2011

The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of London

Alderman David Wootton

**My Late Lord Mayor, Your Grace, My Lord Chancellor, Prime Minister, Mr Speaker, Your Excellencies, My Lords, Aldermen, Sheriffs, Chief Commoner, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**It has been quite a weekend. And early – very early – on Saturday, I saw a sign of things to come; a road sign on London Bridge, which read: Beware. Avoid the City. Lord Mayor's Show. That was advice I thought it best this Lord Mayor did not take.**

**Welcome to you all, from our two Sheriffs, Alan Yarrow and Wendy Mead, and Gilly and Robert, as well as the Lady Mayoress and me, to Guildhall.**

**A very special welcome to you, Prime Minister, for this, your second Lord Mayor's Banquet.**

**Much has happened since you spoke on Britain's place in the world last year – a year of extraordinary change and challenge – for the country, for the world and for the City.**

**As you said last week, this is an alarming time for the global economy. The situation in the Eurozone creates new difficulties for our own economy - and the UK and the City must play their parts in meeting these challenges.**

**Prime Minister, I applaud your focus on the potential of the emerging economies for British exports – markets I will visit over the next year, promoting British business.**

**My second duty is to congratulate the late Lord Mayor – Michael Bear - on a year of great progress and achievement. He has given a sharper business focus to a demanding round of overseas visits – an increasingly important part of the Mayoralty. Looking for high value opportunities for British business – opportunities, not just for financial services, but for industry as well.**

**He has been an imaginative champion of the City, from Lagos to Leeds, and made the case for the City's role in creating jobs and growth in the wider economy, with a passion born of a lifetime's experience in business.**

**In all this, he has been supported by his wife, Barbara, who has carried out her own duties with charm, energy and artistic flair.**

**Tonight we honour a fine Mayoralty. And congratulate Michael and Barbara on a job very well done.**

**The late Lord Mayor always set out a positive vision for the City. I share that vision.**

**As the procession passed me at Mansion House on Saturday, I realised the great strength of the City's own vibrant and diverse community. It may be the Lord Mayor's Show. But it was not about me. I was just one person, making his own contribution – alongside the many thousands in the Show, from the very young to the very old, from some of our great Olympians to the smallest charity. This army of volunteers gave generously of their time, energy and expertise, and came together to create a fantastic spectacle. I was just one person alongside more than half a million, who thronged the City streets. Everyone at the Show on Saturday is part of the City – and part of the City community.**

**Prime Minister, we are in the midst of a public debate: about the structure of our economy and the distribution of its benefits and burdens. This debate includes, but is not just about, the City: what it is for; how it serves London, the wider**

**economy and our communities – and about how it supports jobs and growth.**

**I welcome that debate, because, as Lord Mayor, I have a unique opportunity to shine a light on these issues – complex problems appear to have simple and easy to understand solutions – which are always wrong. Rather we must see what works in the interests of all.**

**Prime Minister, the City will be at the service of the nation. It has a vital role to play in creating a better future. We will support the Government in creating jobs and growth in Britain, in Europe and across the world.**

**My Mayoralty will contribute to that future, which is why it will be called: Fit for the Future.**

**The City must be fit for the future. The City must be trusted and valued. So where we have got things wrong, we will put them right – and be seen to put them right. And I also want to see the City's important connections and contribution recognised and renewed.**

**So I will highlight the City's importance as an economic force. We need to do far more to communicate that importance to the prosperity of the UK as a whole. In creating and supporting economic growth; and in providing stable and secure jobs - not just for the more than one million people**

**working in financial services across the country, but, through its connections, to millions more.**

**I will highlight the connections and contribution of the City's economic footprint. Because for every job created in financial services, at least one more is created elsewhere.**

**And its importance in helping to build the architecture of our everyday lives. By providing the products that help us buy our homes, insure our treasured possessions and by investing funds to give us pensions in our retirement.**

**I will reaffirm the City's connection with Britain's manufacturing base, something which resonates deeply with me, as a Yorkshireman, from the heartlands of our textile industry in the West Riding, and with strong connections with Stoke-on-Trent – the Potteries. And I am delighted that, as well as the Lord Mayor of Westminster, we have with us tonight the Lord Mayors of Bradford – my home town - and Stoke on Trent – where my father comes from. I will champion the crucial role manufacturing has to play: Britain's manufacturing industry provides hundreds of thousands of jobs, and makes products which are prized for their enterprise, innovation and quality, the world over.**

**I will highlight the City's support for our innovative, high tech industries – concentrated near the City, as Tech City stretches from Shoreditch to Stratford. We must strengthen our**

**connection and investment in these industries – especially by increasing the number of Business Angels supporting these cutting-edge enterprises.**

**New connections, for new industries.**

**I will deepen the City's connections as the world's leading global financial centre, uniquely competitive, and uniquely equipped with the skills and expertise to meet the challenge from the emerging economies:**

- in the high quality services we provide – not least in my own legal services industry;**
- in the infrastructure we offer – a very physical connection;**
- and in the City's extraordinarily diverse pool of people - with connections across different industries, different sectors and across the world.**

**I want to deepen the thousands of personal connections between the City, and those on the margins of our communities.**

**Expanding horizons; supporting people when they are most in need of a hand; and strengthening our connections with the wider community in practical, personal ways.**

**Through schemes which create opportunities for young people, by providing training in City firms, or which widen**

**access for bright young people from our neighbouring boroughs.**

**Or by creating partnerships between city firms and local schools. Such as the initiative by my own firm – Allen & Overy. Our inspiring Artbeat programme works with students from Bethnal Green Technology College, who have produced fantastic murals – some of which featured in Saturday's Show. And may I draw your attention to Exhibit A - this t-shirt, created by those students themselves. Only my duties as Lord Mayor stop me wearing it tonight.**

**I will also set out the connections and contribution made by the civic City. For example, through the City Corporation's own charitable arm – the City Bridge Trust – which over the last decade has given over a quarter of a billion pounds to help meet the needs of Londoners, to help them realise their potential. And we are at the vanguard of developing the market in social investment, on which we will be working with the Cabinet Office. New forms of finance, for new forms of enterprise. New connections.**

**Also through our livery companies, and the whole network of churches, clubs and charities across the Square Mile – which do such marvellous work for Londoners and the nation. They use their expertise, goodwill and money to support schools colleges award schemes and new apprenticeships. The bedrock of our communities.**

**Like the support my mother livery company, the Fletchers, gives to British Paralympian archers.**

**Or the 216 affiliations the livery companies have forged with reservists, cadet units and our matchless armed forces – building up links, supporting those young men and women to whom we owe so much.**

**Or the academy opened in Hammersmith only two months ago, sponsored through a connection between one of our oldest and one of our youngest livery companies – the Mercers and the Information Technologists.**

**This is an investment in our future, rooted in the great traditions of the City's past. And one which will help us meet new challenges.**

**I am immensely proud of the Goldsmiths' exciting new venture - the Goldsmiths' Centre and Institute in Clerkenwell. And just as proud that it will open during my Mayoralty.**

**It will be a centre for excellence, rejuvenating jewellery, silver and goldsmithing for many years to come. This is priceless and one with a very special connection for me – because my parents met as students at Goldsmiths' College.**

**My own Appeal will help us be fit for the future – in a very literal sense.**

**It is a privilege to be an Olympic Lord Mayor – although my chances of a gold medal are, alas, now slim. But I want to help people across London and across the whole country to be energised and inspired by this great event.**

**That is why my Appeal will support:**

- **Better medical facilities for those who need top class and immediate medical attention, through the Trauma Centre at our local general hospital, the Royal London;**
- **Better health opportunities, through two rowing charities, London Youth Rowing and the Rowing Foundation. Because rowing has been a passion of mine since I was a teenager – and I want others to enjoy it as much as I do;**
- **Better lives and better opportunities for children the world over through Futures for Kids;**
- **Better access to open spaces and sporting facilities through Fields in Trust, which is committed to securing the future of two thousand and twelve outdoor spaces – a wonderful permanent legacy for London 2012 and Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee.**

**And what a privilege it is to serve as Lord Mayor in such a very special year – the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen.**

**A life of duty and dignity, of service and goodness – connecting the ancient institution of the Monarchy, with the**

**demands of an ever-changing world. We all owe Her Majesty a huge debt of gratitude.**

**A man whose bicentenary we will celebrate in 2012 is Charles Dickens.**

**This lawyer of 35 years standing respectfully disagrees with his view that, if there were no bad people, there would be no good lawyers.**

**But one of his central themes is connection between every member and every level of society - especially the responsibility of the haves to the have nots.**

**His message is just as important today. Times have changed, but we in the City know our responsibilities and our vital connections – to industry, to those in need and to our nation. We cherish this role – and I, as Lord Mayor, will do everything I can to strengthen it – and work with you, Prime Minister, and the Government, for a better, more prosperous future – for all.**

**And so, may I now please ask you to stand for the toast.**

**The toast is:**

**Her Majesty's Ministers.**