

Needlemakers Progress

The route is relatively simple to set out – with much information available on the website - in essence, the route to Master follows two main steps: *involvement* and *aspiration*.

Involvement, the first step, entails being participative within the Livery. By this I mean not just attending functions, but joining into the spirit and showing interest. Each year we ask for volunteers to be appointed to one of the Committees. At some stage, these volunteers are then likely to be asked to serve on one of our committees. The normal term of service is three years.

Aspirations, the next stage would then be a conversation precipitated by the current Master, or a Past Master, to enquire whether the Liveryman has further ambitions to progress within the Company. In turn, these conversations could lead to an interview to go on the Court as an Assistant. This is a 5 year role, after which former Assistants become part of the “pool” of potential candidates, from whom the Junior Warden-elect is chosen.

The Nominations Committee goes through the process of looking at candidates for Committees and other offices within the Company, interviewing candidates as and when necessary, before placing their recommendations to the July Court for a decision.

Whilst it is usual for the Junior Warden-elect to progress to Senior Warden and then Master; this is not an absolute given and is subject to an annual election by the Court at each level.

I can say, without a shadow of a doubt, that my journey has been most rewarding. My path, from joining the Charity Committee, then the Finance & General Purposes, before becoming an Assistant has enabled me to get to know many Liverymen over the years, who I am sure I would not have had the pleasure nor the privilege to get to know so well otherwise. It has also been a steep learning curve to get to grips with the way we are organised and the intricate dovetailing of the various roles within the Company, which ensures that we run a smooth and efficient Livery. During this whole process, I, and indeed, all Assistants and Wardens have been able to call upon the advice and guidance of the Past Masters, who have served the Company so well and continue to positively support us.

Finally, I wish to give due credit to the behind the scenes role of the Clerk, who provides constant sound advice and guidance when requested – and, quite correctly, sometimes even if not asked! Not easy when the Master changes every year and has their own way of doing things. Nonetheless, we are a team, which continues to evolve and strives to enable our Company to continue today, tomorrow, and for very many years to follow.

If any liveryman wishes to discuss any part of this article, please do contact the Master or our Clerk, Fiona, in confidence should you wish. We look forward to speaking with you and supporting your progress as a Needlemaker.

ANDREW WHITTON

Master

June 2020