



The Furniture Makers' Company
the furnishing industry's charity

YORKSHIRE REGION GROUP

NEWS LETTER



Welcome to the first Furniture Makers' Company Yorkshire region newsletter.

Ok, I hear you say – but 'What is The Furniture Makers' Company and its Yorkshire Region and why should I be interested?' Let me explain.

The Furniture Makers' Company is the City of London livery company and charity for the furnishing industry. Our vision is for a thriving British furnishing industry with a talented workforce delivering high-quality products, which supports those in need from within its ranks and those who have served it in the past. We achieve this through three pillars of activity.

EDUCATION: We have developed a comprehensive education programme to develop, steward and inspire the next generation of industry colleagues.

EXCELLENCE: We recognise excellence in design and production through our coveted – the Bespoke Guild Mark, Design Guild Mark and Manufacturing Guild Mark.

WELFARE: Our charity has been supporting the welfare of employees in the UK furnishing industry for more than 100 years, through good economic times and bad. We are here to help anyone from the industry, past or present, who has fallen on tough times by awarding financial grants.

The bit that always confuses people is the City of London livery bit. What's that all about?

City of London livery companies comprise London's ancient and modern trade associations and guilds. The earliest guilds date back to the 12th century when people working in the same craft in London grouped together to regulate competition within their trade and maintain high standards. The term livery company was introduced when guilds started introducing their own clothing and regalia – or livery – to distinguish their members from other guilds.

Today, there are 110 livery companies that support matters of trade, education, charity and fellowship within their sector – and not just in London anymore of course – although the livery companies also play an integral part in the City's governance.

The Furniture Makers' Company was founded as a guild in 1951 and granted livery status in 1963, becoming the 83rd livery company of the City of London and only the sixth to be formed since the reign of Queen Anne ended in 1714. It was incorporated by Royal Charter in 2013.

And what about the Yorkshire Region?

It's easy to think that The Furniture Makers' Company must be just London focused and therefore not that relevant if you happen to live and work in Yorkshire – or Cornwall; or Cardiff.

But, although the event side of things is often London-based, all its activity is very much aimed at everyone in the UK. That's why in the past few years, we've developed several regional committees to increase awareness of all the wonderful things it's doing, as well as engagement with the Company at a regional level.

Here in Yorkshire so far we have assembled a group of six intrepid volunteers, who are doing their best to put on events where you can network with companies and colleagues within the region – there are plenty of us. Of course, we also do our fair share of fundraising – it's a charity after all! And to recruit supporters to join us either as individuals or businesses.



Chairman
Fara Butt

Manufacturers, Dealers, Resellers, Designer / Makers, Retailers, Sales Professionals, Interior Designers, Architects & Specifiers across the full spectrum of the furnishing industry – **join us!**

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Do your HR department/ your staff know about the welfare grants we offer?

We can help with posters, leaflets, regular updates or we can set up a webinar or visit and facilitate a Q & A session.

Sue Dean, welfare officer:

sue@furnituremakers.org.uk

Supporting future industry leaders

Do you have any promising young leaders of the future that could benefit from our unique Young Professional's Industry Experience?

Education manager:

grantsandeducation@furnituremakers.org.uk

Enhance your credentials by applying for a Guild Mark

Our Bespoke, Design and Manufacturing Guild Marks recognise excellence and provide marketing tools to shout about you and your business.

Meera Samani, guild marks manager:

meera@furnituremakers.org.uk

JOIN US!

Interested in getting more involved with the industry charity and/or the livery company?

There are several ways you can support our work and/or get more involved in livery life, either individually or as a business.

For individuals

- Become a regional associate
- Start your journey to full livery involvement by becoming a freeman

For businesses

- Become a Corporate Member. Join 38 leading industry players as a corporate member (ideal for medium to larger businesses).
- Become a Corporate Supporter. Designed for the many smaller organisations in our industry to show their support and get involved.

For more information, contact
regional@furnituremakers.org.uk

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

We are developing a programme of events which will be part fundraising and part just fun networking. We hope many of you will come along to as many of these as possible to support us.



WEDNESDAY 2 MARCH

Yorkshire Region Curry Night

With special guest speaker:

Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire

We're delighted to be holding this popular networking evening once again after a two-year gap.

We've a new venue this year: the award-winning Aagrah Midpoint in Pudsey (midway between Leeds and Bradford!), which is well known for its delicious Indian food.

We're thrilled that West Yorkshire Mayor Tracy Brabin has agreed to join us for the evening. Elected in May 2021, Ms Brabin will discuss her work to date and plans to come as head of this new mayoralty, which has powers over transport, crime and planning in this region of 2.3

million people, incorporating the cities of Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield.

More than that, it's a chance for you and your work colleagues, customers and suppliers to do a bit of networking with fellow furniture industry businesses based here in Yorkshire.

We hope that many of our region's businesses will take a table (or two or three!) and join us for what promises to be a great night.

<https://bit.ly/YorkshireCurryNight2022>

MEET YOUR YORKSHIRE COMMITTEE



Fara Butt

Marketing Director of Shire Beds.
Chairman and education ambassador.

Shire Beds was established by Fara's father 25 years ago and she has been actively involved in the business for the past 15 years. Fara, now a liveryman, joined the company seven years ago. "It's the Furniture Makers' charity work that inspired me to become active, particularly setting up the Yorkshire Region Committee. I love the opportunities it provides to network and also how the livery company can influence the direction of travel of the industry as a whole."



Jessica Alexander

Executive Director of the National Bed Federation. *Deputy chairman and communications ambassador*

Jessica has been involved in the furniture industry all her working life – starting as a journalist on Cabinet Maker magazine back in 1979. She joined the Company in 2002 and has been on the Court (governing council) since 2015. "The Furniture Makers' Company brings all strands of our industry together to support, collaborate and inspire. I'm involved for all those reasons and to give something back to the industry I've worked with for so long."



Alan Williams

CEO, Camira Group.
Education ambassador

Now in his 18th year involved with the furniture industry, corporate liveryman Alan has been active with the charity for only a year – Camira has been a corporate member since 2018. "The Furniture Makers is an excellent charity which supports the industry and in particular has supported some of our staff over the past couple of years. It is great to get involved and support them. It is also a great networking opportunity."



Peter Hewitt

Director,
Litmus Furniture.
Fundraising and events ambassador.

Liveryman Peter joined the bed sector of the industry in 1999, until he formed Litmus Furniture in 2005. "On (semi) retiring, the time was right to put something back into the industry which gave me so much. I am hugely impressed that the Company can help so many people in need and meet like-minded people. I strongly believe the future is more in the regions and delighted to join an enthusiastic and progressive Yorkshire Committee."



Ruairi Giles

Commercial Director,
Harrison Spinks Beds.
Fundraising and events ambassador.

Ruairi has been with Harrison Spinks for 14 years and has been a corporate liveryman for the past four (Harrison Spinks became a corporate member in 2018). "The Furniture Makers' Company does such incredible work in the fields of education, welfare and excellence within our industry. The regions and local committees are essential to both drive engagement and awareness locally and I'm very proud to be a part of the Yorkshire Committee."



Rob Livingstone

Operations Director,
Jay-Be Beds.
Membership ambassador.

Rob has been involved in the UK bed industry since 2011, working for Hypnos and Silentnight prior to gravitating to our region and Jay-Be at the end of 2020. Rob became a freeman in 2019 and is honoured to become a liveryman in March 2022. "Being a part of The Furniture Makers Company allows us to collaborate with an entire host of industry professionals, it's fantastic to be a part of the Yorkshire Committee, raising awareness of the company."