

As current Chairman of the Freeman's Committee I would like to introduce myself and say a few words about the importance of our Freeman of the Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire. I am Rachel Abbott and have been Chairman of your Freeman's Committee for 3 years, with the term having been extended for a further year in line with the Master's extra year due to the Covid-19 situation.

My own companies, Cobra Sport Exhausts and JP Exhausts are specialist manufacturers of stainless steel exhausts for the performance, classic and motorsport industries, with our motorsport team Cobra Sport AmD being crowned Independent Team Champions in the British Touring Car Championships 2019.

During my term as Chairman of the Freeman's Committee I am proud to have introduced company visits to Freeman's companies to coincide with our Committee Meetings. I have always enjoyed factory visits and tours of other companies and have found them invaluable in our continuous improvement strategy (I am also a nose Yorkshire woman!). I also think that these visits are so important to maintain links with the active companies of our Freeman and also to gain a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities which our Freeman face and to see how the Company may be able to support our Freeman better. We will be recommencing these visits once the current situation has eased.



**Rachel Abbott,
Chair of the
Freemen's
Committee**

It was also my intention to begin networking events at the Hall in addition to the annual dinners. The purpose of this would be to meet in a less formal setting than our main dinner events and provide business support and advice relevant to Freeman and their companies. Obviously, we have not been able to push forwards this year with these as planned, but will shortly be announcing something with the anticipation of getting a quarterly event launched next year.

As Freeman are the lifeblood of the Company it is so important to me to make you feel part of the Company and make your voice heard. Therefore, we are reinstating our Company Newsletter which will be now issued bi-monthly and I ask that you send any interesting news about yourself or your companies to Marion Unwin (pressofficer@cutlers-hallamshire.org.uk) for inclusion in the Newsletter, which will be circulated to all Freeman and available on the Company website. There is plenty of success to celebrate in our manufacturing and engineering companies from our region and we all need to be highlighting our achievements more.

I would also like to mention that we need to increase our numbers of Freeman in the Company and would ask all of you to be on the look out for potential new Freeman. It has been very difficult to recruit this year due to very little networking and other business events being held, which are very useful in our recruitment. Therefore, I ask that you all assist us with a determined recruitment drive going forwards, please also remember that senior managers or other directors from your own companies would also be eligible under the revised criteria for Freedom.

Please contact our Chief Executive, Phil Bates, in the first instance should you have anyone that you would like to put forward for Freedom and Phil will also be happy to answer any questions which you may have around the eligibility requirements.