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**Final – Press Release. Embargoed: 7am Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July**

**Kate Humble Announced as Celebrity Guest of 2022 Annual Sheep Drive and Livery Fair in the City of London**



The Worshipful Company of Woolmen is delighted to announce that farmer, best-selling author and one of the UK’s most-loved broadcasters, Kate Humble will be bringing her passion for nature to the City of London, in support of the Woolmen’s 2022 charity Sheep Drive & Livery Fair, taking place on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September.

Kate will be coming from her Wye Valley farm to join The Lord Mayor of London, The Rt Hon Vincent Keaveny, in leading Freemen of the City of London in a *Ewe-nique* annual livery event re-enacting a Freeman’s ancient right to herd sheep to market over London Bridge, toll-free. Now celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year, Freemen of the City of London flock to book their places on what is always a sell-out event - with 2022 being no exception. Funds raised support the Woolmen’s Charity and Lord Mayor’s Appeal.

Kate will also be attending the open-to-all and free Livery Fair, taking place nearby on the piazza at The Monument. Fascinating displays of traditional Livery Company and wool trades and crafts, including sheep shearing, will take place throughout the day. The Livery Fair is a fantastic day out for all the family and a fun reminder of the abiding and vital connection between city and nature.

**About Kate Humble**

Kate Humble is renowned for her love of nature and the countryside and became familiar to many as a presenter on BBC *Countryfile*, *Lambing Live* and *Springwatch* programmes. Kate and husband Ludo moved from London and purchased a smallholding in the Wye Valley, Wales. Over the last 10 years, they have transformed a small working farm into *Humble by Nature*, a thriving rural skills and animal husbandry centre. At Humble by Nature visitors come from all over the country and learn how to start their own smallholdings, keep traditional rural crafts and skills alive, and re-connect with the land. Kate has shared the joys and challenges of a farming life through Channel Five’s, *Escape to The Farm* and inspired by the popularity of her cooking on *Escape to the Farm*, Kate recently published her debut cookbook; *Home Cooked* - a celebration of simple, seasonal home cooking, full of flavour, comfort and joy.

**About the Woolmen’s Sheep Drive on London Bridge**

Over 1,000 pre-booked Freemen and their friends, in groups of 10, are expected to take part in the charity event, re-enacting their ancient right to drive sheep to market toll-free over the Thames. Small flocks of specially trained North of England Mules provided by Bedfordshire farmers David and Barbara Seamark are expertly shepherded by the Seamarks throughout the day, supported by young farmers, including from City Farms. The sheep have plenty of R&R, food and water in straw-lined pens, to ensure they too can relax and “chew the cud” on their special day out to the City.

**About the Livery Fair at The Monument. 10AM to 4PM – Free and open to all**

Join us at the wonderful Livery Fair, located on the piazza at The Monument, one of the City’s most-loved visitor attractions. The Livery Fair is open to all and free to enter, and is where livery and specialist wool companies will be celebrating their crafts and trades with interactive displays and the sale of their wares. Other fun activities will include expert blade shearing and some wonderful rare breed sheep. Food and beverages stalls round off what is sure to be a wonderful family day out in the heart of the City of London. Find out more at: [sheepdrive.london](http://sheepdrive.london)

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**Peter Hullah, Master of The Worshipful Company of Woolmen said:**

“We are delighted to welcome Kate Humble as our special celebrity guest for the 2022 Sheep Drive and Livery Fair. Kate’s passion for the countryside, traditional crafts and skills – and all things wool! - embodies the very essence of this eagerly-anticipated charity event in the City of London livery calendar.

We look forward to a very special 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary Sheep Drive with Sheep driving taking place in the heart of the City on London Bridge. We will celebrate with what is sure to be a vibrant and fun Livery Fair taking place at The Monument; a chance to delve into the fascinating history of the livery trades, alongside wonderful wool stalls and even a few sheep... a fantastic family day out.”

[www.woolmen.com](http://www.woolmen.com)

**Kate Humble said:**

“I’m hugely honoured to participate in this year’s Sheep Drive and Livery Fair. An incredible spectacle that commemorates London’s connection to the countryside, celebrates the many uses of wool and its natural complement to modern living.”

[www.katehumble.com](http://www.katehumble.com)

**Peter Ackroyd MBE, COO, The Campaign for Wool – Headline Sponsor:**

“Kate Humble is a wonderful advocate for nature and living naturally. The Campaign for Wool is delighted Kate is supporting this year’s Sheep Drive and Livery Fair, helping spread the word about wool and its unassailable environmental credentials; widely recognised as one of the most sustainable and versatile fibres in the world and as relevant to the very fabric of society today as it has ever been - whether for personal attire, in the home, or for its many fascinating 21<sup>st</sup> Century industrial uses.”

[www.campaignforwool.org](http://www.campaignforwool.org)

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## Additional Notes for Editors:

### About Kate Humble:

#### **In the beginning:**

- Kate Humble was born in 1968 and grew up in rural Berkshire in a house next to a farm. She had what she describes as a 'proper childhood' – building camps, racing snails, climbing trees, interspersed with trips to A&E to patch up things when they broke. At the neighbouring farm she learnt to ride horses and developed a lifelong passion for mucking out.

#### **Starting out:**

- At 18 she left school and home, and worked odd jobs for a year to fund a year travelling in Africa, which, she says, taught her far more than she would ever have learnt at university. On her return to the UK Kate got her first job in television as a runner and met Producer/Director Ludo Graham who she married in 1992.

#### **A Love of travel:**

- Kate travelled whenever she had the opportunity and in 1996 had her first travel article published by 'The Telegraph'. That same year she got her first job at the BBC as a researcher on 'Animal Hospital' and then 'The Holiday Programme'. It was on her second day in the Holiday office when she was asked by the programme's editor if she had ever presented before. 'No,' she said 'and nor do I want to.' Kate has been presenting programmes and writing articles and books for the last 20 years.

#### **Humble by nature:**

- In 2007 Kate and Ludo moved to a smallholding in Wales and in 2011 set up 'Humble by Nature' a rural skills school on a working farm in the Wye Valley. They live with a variety of feathered and furry livestock and dogs.

[www.katehumble.com](http://www.katehumble.com)

### About The Worshipful Company of Woolmen:

- The Worshipful Company of Woolmen is one of the oldest of the Livery Companies of the City of London, tracing its roots to 1180.
- Originally it was the body that oversaw woolpackers and wool merchants to ensure consistent standards for wool producers and wool merchants throughout the wool industry. It now combines its ancient history and traditions with an active role with the \$80bn Global Wool Pipeline Industries through its City Wool Project linking the City of London financial and professional sectors with the global industry.
- Equally importantly through its charitable trust it supports research into appropriate wool-related procedures and practices; provides bursaries for students of wool, textile, design, wool marketing and retailing and awards prizes and medals for sheep shearing at the major agricultural shows. The majority of funds raised go towards education and training, working towards a more sustainable future. It works closely with its three strategic wool industry partners; **The Campaign for Wool**, which has His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales as Patron, **British Wool**, **The Canadian Wool Board** and the **Australian Woolmark Company**.
- Over 800 years the Woolmen's Company has maintained its unique traditions and close affiliations with a modern, vibrant and environmentally-friendly fibre.
- **Further information about the Worshipful Company of Woolmen:** <https://www.woolmen.com/about/history/>

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### About London's Livery Companies and Freemen of the City of London:

- London's Livery Companies originate from the medieval guilds, which were responsible for the regulation of their given trade. Guilds controlled wages and labour conditions, as well as setting standards, and had effective monopolies on trade within the City of London until Victorian times.
- To join a guild a prospective member had first to be "free" of a feudal overlord. From 1237, tradesmen could buy the right to their freedom – effectively gaining a licence to make money as a trader.
- The Victorians abolished many of the guilds' trading monopolies, which meant people lost interest in the freedom; it was no longer a necessity. Instead, many of the Livery Companies became charitable organisations and focused on promoting standards.
- Today, the names of new Freemen are still entered into a sheepskin register, once allegiance has been pledged to the Queen and The Lord Mayor.
- Other privileges associated with holding the Freedom of the City include:
  - If a Freeman was convicted of a felony and sentenced to death by hanging, he could choose a noose made of silk rather than rope
  - If found to be 'drunk and incapable' by the City of London Police, a Freeman would be escorted home rather than spend a night in the cells
- Wool played a vital role in the English economy in the Middle Ages, providing a healthy tax income.
- Today, Livery Companies raise over £71M for charities annually.

### Contacts:

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Sheep Drive Bookings: <https://sheepdrive.london>

Livery Fair Stall bookings: [Kirsten@squareevents.co.uk](mailto:Kirsten@squareevents.co.uk) 07837 231865

### Social Media:

**Twitter:** @SheepDriveLDN **Instagram:** @SheepDriveLondon **Facebook:** WorshipfulCompanyofWoolmen  
**Kate Humble: Twitter:** @farmerhumble **Instagram** @farmerhumble **Facebook:** @HumbleByNature  
 #SheepInTheCity #DestinationCity #SquareSmile #ChooseWool #Wool #KateHumble #KateHumblesFarm #Sheep  
 #SheepDrive #LiveryFair #VisitTheMonument #Charity #TheLordMayorsAppeal @LMAppeal @TheWoolmen

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