



# The Provincial Grand Lodge of Hampshire and Isle of Wight

## CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC – Guidelines

Brethren these Guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive only intended to assist you and our lodges in this current situation. We are very much in uncharted waters and the challenges which we face are unprecedented. Some Lodges routinely practice much of what is in the Guidelines but now is the time for all Lodges to consider how best they can ensure that the brethren and their families are looked after. A number of Lodges/brethren have already taken action to deal with the challenges and where appropriate we have adopted those in these Guidelines. Any suggestions to improve the Guidelines are welcome. Our Provincial Grand Secretary will be issuing a regular Coronavirus Bulletin to all Lodge Secretaries for onward distribution to their members. In addition, he will collate the Q&As on the Provincial website which be updated regularly – brethren will understand that we do not currently have the answers to all questions which might arise in the coming months, but we will do our best on the information available.

### 1. Communications/keeping in touch:

- a) Lodge Secretaries should ensure that all members have an up-to-date list of members with full contact details, current Lodge Office, period of membership, and age. Some Lodges have already established a contact system, by phone, whereby each member contacts the next member on the membership list. Each member takes the responsibility of phoning each week and reporting back to the Almoner or Assistant Almoner as required.
- b) Another method of contact could be through a Group system. The Master in conjunction with the Almoner, Mentor, and Membership Officer should divide the membership into Groups – say 6/8 brethren of variable age, and length of service, in each Group.
- c) The intention is that members of the Group will keep in touch, and support each other as necessary
- d) Each Group should have a Lead Member to co-ordinate contact, receive Feedback, and provide that Feedback to the Lodge Secretary and Master with a view to a short Bulletin/Newsletter being prepared for circulation to the membership.
- e) This is where our younger members can shine! There will be members in each Group familiar with modern means of communication – WhatsApp, Facetime, Twitter, Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, Skype, and the like. There will be others who could benefit if only they had some guidance. We encourage all members to use these means of keeping in touch and if a member of the Group doesn't know where to start (!) – help him.

### 2. Focus on Caring:

- a) The Provincial Almoner has issued Guidance to Area and Lodge Almoners to ensure that our elderly, infirm, and vulnerable brethren are looked after. Many brethren will be self-isolating and the impact of this should not be underestimated.

- b) Please do not exclude brethren who have not been to Lodge for some time. They remain members and should be contacted and cared for during this very difficult period.
  - c) The Provincial Mentor will ensure that Lodge Mentors and Personal Mentors keep in close contact with our newer brethren – particularly Initiates, Fellowcrafts, newly raised MMs, and those recently appointed to office. It is vital that we maintain the interest of those relatively new to our organisation.
  - d) The Provincial Membership Officer has issued guidance to Lodge Membership Officers to keep in touch with those men awaiting initiation, or who were in the process of assessment.
- 3. Masonic Centres, staff, and caterers**
- a) This is a primary concern and some brethren have come up with ideas for supporting Centres and all those involved in managing and catering.
  - b) This is a specialist area and Government have introduced a number of measures to mitigate the impact on businesses having serious difficulties. This should be the first port of call and the ProvGSuptWks has issued Guidance to All Centres and this is being followed up by AreaSuptWks.
  - c) The Grand Superintendent of Works and his team at Grand Lodge are in close contact with our Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works to ensure that we take full advantage of the benefits which are now available.
  - d) All Centres, staff, and caterers will be guided by the ProvGSuptWks and his team in the Areas. Any legal issues will be covered by the ProvGReg. In the event of serious issues being experienced notwithstanding the Government initiatives, the ProvGSuptWks will refer the issue to Cabinet to decide whether further assistance might be available.
- 4. Amity Clubs** – detailed guidance had been issued by the ProvGAlmoner.
- 5. Generally:** Brethren, these guidelines if followed, adapted where appropriate and implemented, enable us to practise out of the lodge all those lessons that we have been taught within it. We must ensure that Brethren are not only contacted, but continue to be contacted throughout this difficult period. The way we look after each other now will be remembered for the future and failure to do so will result in disenchanting brethren, who may later leave. Conversely, if we do a great job now in caring for all brethren, then we may re-energise many brethren when our meetings reopen. If you have any questions from any of the above, then please contact the Provincial Grand Secretary at [frank.milner@hantsmason.org](mailto:frank.milner@hantsmason.org)

Thank you brethren.

Stay safe and well.



Mike Wilks