



PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE
OF HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT

Coronavirus Bulletin 5

2020

Dear Bro Secretary,

I trust you and your family are coping well and keeping safe. I'd be grateful if you will please note the following and distribute the information to your members:

1. Payments to Charities

There has been a lot of discussion regarding the authorisation of lodge payments to charities. The model by-laws state: *'Payment of any sum may be made only by resolution of the Lodge, of which notice has been given on the summons, except in a case of emergency when such payment may be authorised by the Master and reported to the Lodge at the next regular meeting'* (your lodge may have different wording so it would be prudent to check this item).

This begs the question 'what is an emergency?' - This is the Worshipful Masters decision but it is recommended that he gains the consensus of lodge members (i.e. the agreement of the majority, contacted by email) before a final decision is made.

UGLE have confirmed that any payment to the UGLE Covid-19 Relief Chest will be regarded as an emergency.

Please call me on 02380 261555 if you have any specific questions in this area.

2. Zoom Lodge Meetings

Several Lodges have undertaken, or are planning 'Zoom' Lodge Meetings as suggested in the previous bulletin; as examples, my own mother lodge, 'Taverners', held an unstructured video meeting on Friday evening on what would have been the regular lodge meeting date. 15 members attended and we had an enjoyable catch-up, toasting absent brethren at 9 o'clock.

- Southampton University Lodge are planning their first Zoom meeting with a structured agenda to coincide with their regular meeting date on 6th June. Members are requested to wear white shirt and provincial tie, to give the video meeting an air of formality.
- The Lodge of Hengist are organising their first Zoom Lodge meeting on 7th May with the following agenda:
 1. Welcome by the Worshipful Master W Bro Tom Hilton
 2. Update on the contact being maintained with all brethren
 3. Discussion on emergency donations from the Lodge Masonic Charities Association.
 4. Discussion on the possible Programme for the rest of the year if we should start back in September.
 5. Toast to Absent Brethren
 6. Close the Meeting

If you are planning your own Zoom meeting it's important to note that those using tablets or smartphones should download the Zoom app first, whilst those using a PC simply need to click on the invitation link. The invitation itself should be edited in order to make it simpler and not turn some brethren off: i.e. delete the superfluous American telephone numbers to leave only the link, meeting ID and password.

3. A Report from the Provincial Grand Almoner

Since the end of March and the introduction of the 'lockdown' period, there has been an increased demand on both our national charity, the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) and our Provincial Charity, the Masonic Charitable Trust (MCT). In both instances, as well as catering for the demand brought about by the Covid-19 epidemic, regular access for Health, Medical or Financial support has remained available to all.

For both the MCF and MCT, all applications are received and telephone conversations held to collect the necessary data in order to evaluate what support can be provided. At present, the primary need is to provide financial support to those affected by loss of income through either being self-employed and individuals work therefore 'drying up' or, on the other hand, people's income dropping as a result of being furloughed. With the MCT focussing on providing rapid, short term responses to financial need our turnaround is measured in a matter of days, and at times, hours for the release of funds to the applicant. The longer-term financial needs, are addressed by the MCF.

As at the 30th April, the following is a summary of the awards processed through the Provincial Charity:

• Year to date awards (from January 1 st)	24
• Awards since the introduction of lockdown	17
• Value of awards, year to date	£28.5k
• Value of awards, Covid-19 specific	£14.9k

At present the MCF figures cannot be broken down into this comparison, but over the past twelve months, the figure for the Province, for all MCF grants is over £500k.

With the revised operating procedures now in place, with all staff working from home, there has been a great amount of teamwork involved to meet the needs of our Brethren and their families, including our Lodge and Area Almoners, our Treasurers, our MCT Trustees and our MCF representatives. We keep in touch with twice weekly or weekly conference calls and telephone conversations to keep abreast of any developments. The teams are here to help, so if you need support, the process is outlined in the previously issued Q&A and also available on the Welfare section of the Provincial Website.

Keep safe!

Fraternal Regards
Frank Milner
Provincial Grand Secretary