



PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF EAST LANCASHIRE

Briefing and Reference Notes for Craft Installation Representatives for the Masonic Season 2019/2020

1. Vision of RWPGM

- a. Masonry should be fun and enjoyable – it's a hobby and we are all volunteers!
- b. The principles of the Marketing, Recruitment and Retention Strategy, launched in February 2012 by the RWPGM at his Installation are still relevant and are now being addressed through the introduction of the Members Pathway. The RWPGM hopes that every Lodge will adopt at least some aspects of this initiative.
- c. The key words continue to be; Tolerance, Integrity, Kindness and Belonging. Brethren need to appreciate what that means to them and to demonstrate those values.
- d. Encourage Brethren to speak more openly about being a Freemason outside the Lodge and in the community. To be "Ambassadors for the Craft" and to include, wherever possible, more non-Masons in our social activities.
- e. Never lose sight of the need to involve our newer members and recommend to the Provincial website and Freemasonry Today for facts, information and key messages.
- f. All new members need to be fully informed about the importance of the Holy Royal Arch in completing their Masonic journey and the wish of the RWPGM that they seriously consider joining **when the time is right for them**.
- g. The Province needs to be properly prepared for the introduction of the new Festival in 2021.

2. Recruitment and Retention

- a. Encourage the Lodge to adopt at least some aspects of the Members Pathway to attract and retain 'quality' candidates. Quality candidates result in quality Masons, good ritual, added enjoyment, improved retention and increased recruitment.
- b. The Members Pathway has been rolled out in each District across the Province and Lodges are encouraged to adopt the Pathway to ensure the long-term sustainability of their Lodge.
- c. Lodges will be supported in the Pathway by the District Membership Officer and their local hub and the Provincial Membership Officer when ever assistance is required.
- d. Emphasise the role of the Provincial Grand Mentor, WBro Joe Glass and his continuing work as part of the Recruitment and Membership Strategy Group.
- e. Suggest that (providing he has something useful to say) the Lodge Mentor should consider regular reports/updates in Open Lodge.
- f. Refer to the fact that Mentoring booklets are still available and should be issued to new members of the Craft and that every new member should be aware of, and be active with, his own Personal Mentor (normally, his proposer).
- g. It is still appropriate to emphasise the importance of new and existing members and their families 'belonging' within the fraternity. This is a key theme of Mentoring and supports our approach to being more open and proud of our membership; retaining our members and attracting new ones.
- h. Refer to the work of the Learning and Development Committee, the introduction of Solomon and the materials that are available on line to make meetings interesting and enjoyable. Encourage the use of "nuggets" to enhance Lodge meetings
- i. The importance of the Holy Royal Arch continues to be a theme which should be highlighted. It is important that the Lodge Royal Arch Representative does all he can to encourage the Brethren to become Companions at **the appropriate time**.

- j. It is vital that the appointment of a Lodge RA Rep' is something which is given considerable thought so that the individual appointed is appropriate for the task, is supported by all his members and is enthusiastic AND proactive in his work.
- k. Lastly, Freemasonry is fun! Every aspect of it should be towards that aim. Masonry is also a family and every member of that family (including our extended family members) should feel valued, respected and able to influence decisions which affect their membership and their full enjoyment of it. Be proud, be inspired and tell others about it.

3. The Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF)

- a. Inform Brethren that the Province will launch its new Festival for the **Masonic Charitable Foundation** in 2021, and that the four national charities are now amalgamated into the MCF.
- b. In preparation for the Festival a structure and arrangements are currently being put in place. Look out for further information which will be distributed to all members in the coming months.
- c. This amalgamation of the charities affects the way in which applications for assistance are managed. Importantly the MCF now provides one unified face for Masonic assistance and our giving nationally.
- d. Our dedicated team of 'Provincial Welfare Officers' facilitate the application process but this does not reduce the important role of Lodge Almoners and the vital work they undertake in looking after the pastoral care of their Brethren.
- e. Representatives might refer to the MCF publication '*Better Lives*'. It contains some excellent examples and case studies of work undertaken which illustrate Freemasonry in action. You may wish to consider using this document to make a point.
- f. Members are strongly urged to keep abreast of the work of the MCF via Freemasonry Today and also their website at - mcf.org.uk

4. The ELMC

- a. The ELMC remains a key part of the work of the Province and in advance of the Festival Lodges should consider it as its first priority for any charitable giving they are able to provide.
- b. The ELMC is rapidly evolving to meet the changing society we live in and the needs of our members. It currently supports upwards of 750 beneficiaries.
- c. Advise that a major £1.8 million development, funded via a legacy, is underway at Hewlett Court, our own residential home, that will provide up to date accommodation and facilities. This will be completed by May 2020.
- d. The vital work undertaken at Hewlett Court, including the dedicated service of all our staff, provides a fantastic environment for many members of our extended Masonic family. Brethren might consider arranging a visit to Hewlett Court to familiarise themselves with that work and to meet the residents.
- e. The ELMC website provides a wealth of up to date information. View it regularly - after all, it is **OUR CHARITY!**
- f. If they have not already doing so, Brethren should consider joining those other members of the Province who give regularly and who are **Friends of the ELMC**. The present number is very disappointing – only around 400 out of C4000 members of the Province. It is the express wish of the RWPGM that this figure is increased.
The ELMC website explains how to do this at: www.elmc.co.uk

5. Donations to Charity

- a. In recent years UGLE have requested information about donations made to charity across the Province – **not by individual Lodges** but aggregated. Please advise Brethren and seek their assistance but also reassure the Brethren about this. **It is not a competition!**
- b. You will all appreciate that such information is difficult to obtain.
- c. In order to try to provide an accurate figure Representatives are requested to establish as many details as possible at the Installation meeting and to communicate this information to the Provincial Grand Charity Steward – elpgcs@gmail.com

- d. To try to assist you Lodges are being asked to provide details of donations made during the year on the Craft Installation Worksheet / Report that is completed and handed to you in advance of the Installation meeting.
- e. You may also wish to include reference to this information in your Installation Report that is submitted to the Assistant Provincial Grand Master.

6. The importance of the Province

- a. The Province is there to help and support Lodges. If your District Officers cannot assist please first try the Provincial Website and if that route is unsuccessful contact the Provincial Office.
- b. Advise the Worshipful Master and Wardens and the other Brethren of the date of the Annual Meeting at Blackburn which is the 21st November 2019 (and 19th November 2020)
- c. Remind the Master and Wardens that they should be making every effort to attend as they have a commitment, indeed an obligation to represent their Lodge on that important occasion. Also, reinforce that Master Masons are welcome at that meeting.
- d. The Annual Meeting is an important day in the Provincial calendar and it gives all our members the chance to enjoy a superb day, make new friends and see East Lancashire at its best - particularly if they conclude the day by attending the banquet.

In Conclusion

- a. Personalise your response to the individual Lodge and Brethren.
- b. Where possible use examples to illustrate your points. *Freemasonry Today and Better Lives* often provide excellent references and key issues which you may be of use to support any comments that you wish to make.
- c. Do not attempt to cover all the items contained within these Briefing Notes.
- d. Aim to cover everything you wish to say in no more than 10 minutes by selecting three or four key messages, having regard to the needs and interests of all those in attendance.
- e. Remember that these are briefing notes, and not a script!

VWBro John Farrington, PGSwdB, DepPGM (August 2019)