



PROVINCE OF EAST LANCASHIRE



Provincial Circular No 198

To: Lodge Secretaries & Chapter Scribes E
cc: Cabinet (Craft & RA), Grand and District Officers

11 March 2020

Dear Lodge Secretary / Companion Scribe E,

Coronavirus update and Provincial Grand Chapter

Following yet further enquiries from our members, we felt it important to write to you again concerning the Coronavirus and its impact on our Meetings.

At this moment in time, the collective advice and guidance from Government is 'business as usual' but with certain key, common-sense conditions attached.

For the sake of clarity and out of completeness, the current guidance for our members in relation to our Meetings is set out below and includes some additional observations:

- If you have travelled to any parts of the world affected by the outbreak, follow the guidance provided
- If you or a family member are showing signs of illness, please do not attend your Lodge or Chapter Meeting and follow the guidance provided by health care professionals. Do not take chances with the health and wellbeing of others
- Minimise mass shared transport (i.e. coaches) to Meetings
- If you have any underlying medical conditions which place you at a higher risk and you do not feel confident or comfortable in attending a Meeting, please make an informed decision, subject to any medical treatment or advice you are/may receive, as to whether you should attend or not
- UGLE advised that members should refrain from physical contact during Ceremonies and Meetings. Please do not feel embarrassed or uncomfortable or, moreover, make others feel so for following it. Avoiding shaking hands with a Brother or Companion should not be considered as ignorant or 'over the top', it is common sense. Please respect it and the wishes of others
- Washing your hands before and after Meetings or at any time you feel appropriate because of contact/circumstances should be considered as the norm and not the exception

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Overarching all of this, we must all accept that this is a constantly changing and evolving situation and public health/medical advice and instructions **must** take primacy.

In considering the situation, we would finally add that we must also balance it by maintaining trust and supporting public confidence; we need to stay safe but in a proportionate manner to the prevailing conditions.

With all of this in mind, the annual Meeting of Provincial Grand Chapter, at this time, **will** still take place on Thursday 19 March, subject of course to any further developments in the meantime. Your attendance or otherwise is therefore a personal decision. This is the approach taken by United Grand Lodge for the March Quarterly Communication on Wednesday of this week and there is no reason why we should not follow their lead, at this time. If, for any reason, due to underlying health, or any other concerns, you do not feel confident or comfortable attending Provincial Grand Chapter, there is absolutely no problem. In short, **if in doubt, don't.**

Assuming circumstances do not change, additional guidance for attendees to Provincial Grand Chapter *may* be issued prior to the day. Please follow it and any additional instructions given on the day.

All circulars issued, can be downloaded from the Provincial Secretariat's website, [here](#).

Yours fraternally,

Martin P Roche
Provincial Grand Secretary

Andrew Holland
Provincial Grand Scribe E