



Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Warwickshire



GUIDANCE FOR LODGE DIRECTORS OF CEREMONIES

INTRODUCTION

These Guidance Notes have been prepared to assist Directors of Ceremonies and Mark Lodges in Warwickshire in preparing for our ceremonies and proceedings in the anticipation that they can be conducted and delivered to the highest possible standards.

It is hoped that they will enhance confidence in and enjoyment of our Ritual, but it is emphasised that what they contain is designed to COMPLEMENT lodge traditions and not to replace them.

The smooth and efficient working of our proceedings and ceremonies depends mostly on the supervision and guidance which the DC and his Assistant can exercise. Their assistance to the Principal Officers can be invaluable.

The Provincial Grand Secretary and the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies (together with their teams) are always ready and willing to advise and guide Lodges on any matters of ritual and procedure, particularly where special circumstances or events may arise. Lodges are encouraged to contact them for advice and guidance. Their contact details can be found in the current Masonic Year Book.

As Directors of Ceremonies we always need to remember that we are here to have fun, to add enjoyment to the proceedings and at the end of each meeting we should only congratulate ourselves if we had added to the fun and enjoyment of all the members at the meeting. We are never properly dressed without smile, except of course when solemnity and dignity is called for. The D.C.'s expression may reassure a nervous Officer; calm an flustered or embarrassed latecomer (who you should escort to their place), and be the face of calm when dealing with a Brother who has been taken unwell, or helping to take control when restarting proceedings after an unforeseen interruption

The DC needs to be fully conversant with the ritual and the Warwickshire variations from the standard: if you are not, consider attending the Provincial Lodge of Instruction, or invite a preceptor to check the work of the lodge. The Mark DC also differs from the Craft practice of DCs "floating" their wands above the ground - in Mark we ground them more often.



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BEFORE THE FESTIVE BOARD, THE FESTIVE BOARD, WINE TAKING &
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Preparing the Lodge

You will need to liaise with the Worshipful Master and Secretary, not fewer than 3 days before a meeting to check that all the Lodge officers are available to attend the meeting. A further check the day before would be useful to enable you to find replacements for any officers unable to attend. No doubt you will encounter last minute illnesses or work commitments preventing an officer attending.

You will need to obtain a list of those attending from the Secretary to plan the salutes to be given at the meeting.

While your Tyler is entrusted to prepare the Lodge, it is the duty of the Director of Ceremonies to ensure that it has been laid out correctly. Frequently lodges do not have Tylers and the DC should encourage all members to help to set up the lodge under his direction.

General Equipment Required:

Warrant
Tracing Board
Wands and stands for DC & Deacons
Officers Collars
Banner
Ballot Box & Balls

Masters Pedestal

Gavel
VSL & Cushion
Mallet & Chisel
Keystone Working plan
BOC Provincial Bylaws, Lodge Bylaws.
Arch & Keystone
Craft Equipment removed
Candle Checked
Chant book

Senior Wardens Pedestal

Gavel
Wickets
Craft Equipment removed
Candle Checked
Chant book



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Junior Wardens Pedestal

Gavel & Axe
Craft Equipment removed
Candle Checked
Chant book

Overseers Pedestals

Working plans Square & Mallet
Chant books

Additional Equipment Required for Advancement

Square and Oblong stones
Mark Prepared for Registrar of Marks.
Token
BOC, Provincial and Lodge By Laws for Candidate
Chant Books
Mallet and Chisel for Inner Guard.
Mark Apron & Jewel for Candidate
Working Aprons for Deacons and Candidate

In Coming Procession

Whilst many of the lodges choose to open with the Master & officers in their seats there is the option to form an incoming procession in a similar format to a craft lodge should you so wish.

Saluting Grand Officers

Ensure that you know the names, ranks and order of seniority of any Grand Officers before entering the Lodge.

Before the Minutes

Most Worshipful Brethren	11
Present and Past Deputy Grand Masters	9
Present and Past Assistant Grand Masters	9
Provincial Grand Master	7
Deputy Provincial Grand Master	5
Assistant Provincial Grand Master	5
Right Worshipful Brethren	7



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Present and Past Deputy and Assistant Provincial or District Grand Masters shall be entitled as such to 5, only within their own Provinces or Districts. As a courtesy, we do recognise the Dep. and Asst. Prov.G.M.s of neighboring provinces and salute them with 5.

After the Minutes

Very Worshipful Brethren	5
Present and Past Grand Officers	3
Present and Past Provincial, or District and Overseas Officers	3

In the Mark and RAM degree we recognise Justices of the Peace, Commanders, Officers and Members of the British Empire and holders of a Certificate of Merit.

Further information is given in Appendix 1.

Outgoing Procession

On an official visit, the Provincial GDC will arrange the column out after the last rising (and after visiting Brethren have given greetings)

On any other Regular Meeting the Lodge DC will organise the column out as follows, whilst the Closing Ode is being sung.

1st verse

Lodge DC perambulates and collects JD and SD who follow in pair - SD on the right.

2nd perambulation, collects JW and SW who fall in behind the Deacons

All 'line up' in Column in the North facing the WM.

WM 'double knock' for Tyler, who enters Lodge and leads the column, collecting the WM at his pedestal in the East.

WM takes his place behind Deacons *, but in front of Wardens.

Lodge DC sees that this is done with decorum.

Column moves off, Deacons keep wands planted when they turn in, WM, Wardens and remaining Brethren all exit Lodge Room.

* If a Ruler in the Mark, is present the Lodge DC should see that he accompanies the WM (on his left) from the Lodge Room.



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Alternatively:

WM 'double knock' for Tyler, who enters Lodge and heads the column.
Call for Bro Deacons who assemble behind the Tyler.
Call for Bro Wardens who assemble behind the deacons leaving space for WM
Call for Worshipful Master who stands between the deacons and Wardens.
Invite any Provincial Rulers to join the WM.
Forward Brethren.

Alternatively:

Ask the brethren to remain in their places whilst the Worshipful Master retires, escort the WM from the lodge.

Before the Festive Board

Liaise with the caterer and inform them of how many wine takings between each course.

Ensure all Members and guests are in the dining room in good time.
You should be aware of who is proposing and responding to the Toasts.
It may also be advisable to check with the proposers and responders of Toasts that they have prepared for the undertaking.

You need to ensure that the proposer of each Toast has a copy of the Toast that they will be proposing and are conversant with all the abbreviations on the toast list, and (when appropriate) are aware of the correct way of addressing a Provincial representative.

A proposer of the Visitor's Toast should also know the name of the responder, if a response is to be given.

Remind the proposer that they are formal toasts. Adding a few words of welcome (when appropriate) will be appreciated, but jokes and 'stories' need to be avoided. Advising them who conducts the Fire is also prudent.

In Warwickshire 'Masonic Fire' is conducted at a **moderate and even speed** and with **decorum throughout**.



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If the charity collection is not being done in the lodge room consider when this can be done, ideally before the desserts are served which will allow any raffle taking place to be completed before the coffee arrives.

The Festive Board

Check gavels are in place and that an up to date toast list is to hand.

You will already be aware that you call the Brethren 'To Order' before announcing the Worshipful Master.

However before doing so ensure the Brethren at the tables between the door and the Master's Chair have stood back so that the Master can walk in front of them.

On the Master's arrival at his chair make sure he Gave without any delay.

Announce Grace Immediately.

Wine Taking

Guidance given to Provincial Escorts is as follows:- (you may want to consider adopting it in your Lodge)

Wine takings during the meal should be kept to a minimum and should not interrupt the meal and general conversation.

It is better if they are taken at the end of each course before the catering staff remove the empty plates. You will need to liaise with the caterers to control this point.

The following is then suggested:

After the First Course

WM with his Principal Officers

WM with everyone

The following may be at the WM's discretion:

WM with the newly appointed and invested officers

WM with those who took part in the Ceremony

WM with his personal guests and the rest of the visitors

WM with Masters of other Lodges

WM with all Royal Ark Mariners



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Installation Meetings Toasts

The Province endeavours to have a Ruler or Representative attend all Installation Meetings. He will invariably be accompanied by an experienced escorting DC who will guide you through the procedures.

In some instances, a Provincial Representative may wish to attend a Regular Lodge Meeting, again the escort will guide you through the procedures. You will however receive notification of any intended visit.

The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies (or his Deputy) on arrival will need the following information from you and or the Secretary.

Do you expect any Right Worshipful or Very Worshipful visitors to be present?

The precise point in the Ceremony that the address to the WM is normally given

When do you usually sing the National Anthem, in the Lodge or at the Festive Board?

You will need to advise the Worshipful Master that he should offer the gavel to the Visiting Official and welcome him to the Lodge.

Note: The gavel is not offered to visiting officials below the rank of Assistant Provincial Grand Master.

Where a Ruler in the Mark attends a Regular Meeting in a 'private capacity' he will not be escorted by the Provincial GDC.

There is no escorting column for him into the Lodge, but he will accompany the WM together with the officers of the Lodge in procession/recession.

The Ruler will be saluted according to his rank by the Lodge DC.

It would be right and proper for the WM to offer the Gavel to the ruler prior to opening the lodge which he is likely to decline.



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Toasts

The King no Fire
The Grand Master followed by Fire
Grand Officers followed by Fire
The Provincial Grand Master followed by Fire
Provincial Officers followed by Fire
The Worshipful Master followed by Fire
The Newly Advanced Brother followed by Fire
The Past Masters and Officers of the lodge(if desired) followed by Fire
Visitors followed by Fire
Tylers Toast

The Toast to Absent Brethren may not be taken before Toast 1 and 2, unless it is a petition to absent brethren and in which case it would not be fired.

You need to control speed of raffle. Try to avoid unnecessary time wasting by inviting the Worshipful Master to draw **all** the tickets.

When a song is to be coupled with a Toast the following sequence should be adopted.

The Proposer announces the toast
The Toast is drunk
Fire follows
Then the song is sung

With the Loyal Toast
The Anthem is sung
The Proposer announces "The King"
Repeat "The King"
The Toast is drunk
No Fire

With the Masters Song at Installation Meetings try to ensure Master and Wardens know the sequence of events.

Please remember that you as the Director of Ceremonies should never be the centre of attention.



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Royal Ark Mariners

Preparing the Lodge

You will need to liaise with the Worshipful Commander and Scribe, not fewer than 3 days before a meeting that all the Lodge officers are available to attend the meeting. A further check the day before would be useful to enable you to find replacements for any officers unable to attend. No doubt you will encounter last minute illnesses or work commitments preventing an officer from attending.

You will need to obtain a list of those attending from the Scribe to plan the salutes to be given at the meeting.

While your Warder is entrusted to prepare the Lodge, it is the duty of the Director of Ceremonies to ensure that it has been laid out correctly.

General Equipment Required:

Warrant

Tracing Board

Wands and stands for DC & Deacons

Officers Collars

Banner

Ballot Box & Balls

Large triangle in centre of room with point towards the Commander.

Commanders Pedestal

Sceptre

Porphyry stone

VSL

Triangle

BOC Provincial Bylaws, Lodge Bylaws.

Senior Wardens Pedestal

Sceptre

Junior Wardens Pedestal

Sceptre



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Additional Equipment Required for Elevation

Blindfold
Sprig of green.
BOC, Provincial and Lodge By Laws for Candidate
Chant Books
Triangle for Guardian
RAM Apron & Jewel for Candidate

Saluting Grand Officers

Ensure that you know the names, ranks and order of seniority of any Grand Officers before entering the Lodge.

Before the Minutes

Most Worshipful Brethren	11
Present and Past Deputy Grand Masters	9
Present and Past Assistant Grand Masters	9
Provincial Grand Master	7
Deputy Provincial Grand Master	5
Assistant Provincial Grand Master	5
Right Worshipful Brethren	7

Present and Past Deputy and Assistant Provincial or District Grand Masters shall be entitled as such to 5, only within their own Provinces or Districts.

Members of the Grand Masters Royal Ark Council.

After the Minutes.

Holders of Grand Rank in the Ancient & Honourable Fraternity of RAM 3

In the Mark and RAM degree we recognise Justices of the Peace, Commanders, Officers and Members of the British Empire and holders of a Certificate of Merit.

Further information on salutations is given in appendix 1.



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Outgoing Procession

WM 'double knock' for Warder, who enters Lodge and heads the column.
Call for Bro Deacons who turn inwards with wands.
Call for Bro Wardens who turn inwards next to deacons.
Call for Worshipful Commander who stands behind warder.
Invite any Provincial Rulers to join the W.Cdr.
Forward Brethren.
Warder leads off through the column of deacons and wardens after the W.Cdr has passed the wardens fold in behind the W.Cdr.

It's traditional in Warwickshire for the Deacons and Wardens to take their places at the start of the Closing Ode, the Commander and others retire whilst singing the 3rd Verse - "So now His sons, ere they withdraw etc".

BEFORE THE FESTIVE BOARD, THE FESTIVE BOARD, WINE TAKING & TOASTS

All these sections are the same as for the Mark so please refer to that information,

The fire in this degree can be tricky and you may wish to introduce the word "and" before striking the table, i.e. 1,2,3 "and".

Useful Contact Information

For easy reference, here are some email and web addresses that you may find useful:

Provincial Grand Secretary:	provgsec@warksmarkpgl.co.uk
Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies	provgdc@warksmarkpgl.co.uk
Provincial Deputy Grand Secretary:	provdepgsec@warksmarkpgl.co.uk
Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary:	provasstgsec@warksmarkpgl.co.uk
Provincial Grand Registrar:	provgreg@warksmarkpgl.co.uk
Provincial Website:	https://warksmarkpgl.co.uk/

In any case of difficulty or confusion, the Brethren above will be happy to help with advice and information – don't suffer in silence!



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Appendix 1

SALUTES - Mark

If there is an obituary it must be given before any salutes.

The DC needs to consult the Yearbook to ascertain the most senior Grand Officers are named first i.e. highest rank, and then seniority by date of appointment.

Station yourself in front of the Lodge Master Overseer facing East. Give the D.C.'s salute to the Provincial Grand Master and say *"Brethren we will salute the Right Worshipful Brother XYZ, the Provincial Grand Master **for** the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Warwickshire, with **SEVEN**, taking the time with me. To order Brethren, (lean your wand against your right shoulder) * * * * *. Be seated Brethren.*

If the Deputy Provincial Grand Master/Assistant Provincial Grand is present follow the same procedure. If either or both are accompanying the Provincial Grand Master they should be saluted individually in turn. *"All rise Brethren. We will salute, the Worshipful Brother XYZ, a "Grand Rank" of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges Overseas, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master **of** the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Warwickshire, with **FIVE**, taking the time with me. To order Brethren, * * * * *. Be seated Brethren".*

Similarly:- for the Assistant *"All rise Brethren. We will salute, the Worshipful Brother XYZ, a "Grand Rank" of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges Overseas, the Assistant Provincial Grand Master **of** the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Warwickshire, with **FIVE**, taking the time with me. To order Brethren, * * * * *. Be seated Brethren".*

It is the Provincial Grand Master's wish that any other Right Worshipful Brethren present should now be saluted (with **SEVEN**). These are the only salutes to be given before the Lodge Minutes.

You should remain in place until the recipient of the final salute has thanked the Brethren for their salutation and resumed his seat. Give a court bow to the W.M. and take your own seat. Indicate to the W.M. that he can now take the minutes, take note that a ruler may be invited to sign the Minute Book.

Any Past Deputy or Assistant Provincial Grand Masters are now saluted as Follows:

*"Brethren below the Rank of a Past Deputy/ Assistant Provincial Grand Master please rise. We will salute the (Very) Worshipful Brother..... etc. etc. etc. of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges Overseas the Past Deputy/ Assistant Provincial Grand Master with **FIVE** taking the time with me. To order Brethren, * * * * * Be seated Brethren".*

The Very Worshipful Brethren are now saluted as follows:-

Give a court bow to the senior one and say *"Brethren below the style of a Very Worshipful Brother all rise. We will salute Very Worshipful Brother..... etc. etc. etc. of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges Overseas with **FIVE** taking the time with me. To order Brethren, * * * * * Be seated Brethren".*

It is suggested that names in full should be used only down to the style of V.W.Bro., but in some cases where only one or two Grand Officers are present it may flow better if you use their full names also. Use your common sense and only commit yourself to a task with which you feel comfortable.

The Grand Officers will now be saluted as follows:-

Give a court bow to the senior one and say *"Brethren below the rank of a Grand Officer please rise. We will*



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*salute Worshipful Brother..... etc. etc. etc. of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges Overseas, with **THREE** taking the time with me. 'To order Brethren', * * *. Be seated Brethren". Remember to give the names and ranks in order of seniority i.e.*

P.G.S.D.s, P.G.J.D.s, P.A.G.D.C.s etc.

Remember that several Grand Officers in the Province also hold acting Provincial Rank i.e. W.Bro. XYZ, **P.A.G.D.C.**, Provincial Grand Treasurer etc. Their Provincial ranks should be appended to their Grand ranks when giving these salutations.

The Provincial Grand Officers will now be saluted as follows:-

It is customary in Warwickshire to name the Principal officer present followed by the rest of etc.

Give a court bow to the Senior Acting Officer and say; "*Brethren below the rank of a Provincial Grand Officer all rise. We will salute Worshipful Brother.....etc. etc. etc. and the rest of the Provincial Grand Officers Present and Past of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Warwickshire and any other Province here represented, with **THREE** taking the time with me. To order Brethren, * * *. Be seated Brethren*".

Only turn your head towards the Brother you are naming. Try not to turn your body. Always make sure that you are able to see the first to be named i.e. if he is sitting in the Senior Warden's Chair then go to the front of the Secretary's pedestal, if he is in the Senior Overseer's Chair then position yourself in front of the Junior Warden.

If there is a ruler present with an escorting DC the escorting DC will usually give the salutes to the rulers of the Province, if you would like assistance with other salutes please discuss this with the escorting DC prior to the meeting date.

Justices of the Peace, Commanders, Officers and Members of the British Empire and holders of a Certificate of Merit.

If the brother is a J.P. this is added to the salutes directly after this name so the salute would be W.Bro Anthony Norris Other, one of his majesty's justices in the commission of the peace for England and Wales... then the usual word format.

If the brother is a C.B.E. this is added to the salutes directly after this name so the salute would be W.Bro Anthony Norris Other A Commander of the most excellent order of the British Empire... then usual word format. For an O.B.E. or M.B.E., the word Commander is substituted by Officer of Member.

If the brother has been presented with a certificate of merit this is added to the salutes directly after his grand rank (if he has one) so the salute would be W.Bro Anthony Norris Other A Past Grand Senior Deacon of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons its districts and lodges overseas, a recipient of the R.W. Provincial Grand Master's Certificate of Merit.

SALUTES – RAM

If there is an obituary it must be given before any salutes.

Station yourself in front of the Worshipful Commander facing East. To the West of the Triangle, Give a court bow to the Provincial Grand Master and say "***Brethren we will salute the Right Worshipful Brother XYZ, the Provincial Grand Master for the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master***



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Masons of Warwickshire and of the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners, with honours SEVEN, taking the time with me. To order Brethren." (lean your wand against your right shoulder). * * * * *. *Please be seated Brethren.*

(NOTE –Even though those you are saluting are indeed Past Commanders, when saluting you always refer to them as Worshipful Brother and **NOT** as Worshipful Past Commander. This applies to ALL holders of Grand Rank including the Presiding Officer, indeed all past Commanders. Some Past Commanders may try to tell you that this is incorrect, it is not.)

If the Deputy Provincial Grand Master/Assistant Provincial Grand Master is presiding follow the same procedure.

If either or both are accompanying the Provincial Grand Master they should be saluted individually in turn. Give a court bow to the brother being saluted and say ***"All rise Brethren. Brethren we will salute the Worshipful Brother XYZ, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Warwickshire and of the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners, with honours FIVE, taking the time with me. To order Brethren."***

Similarly:-

Give court bow and say ***"All rise Brethren. Brethren we will salute the Worshipful Brother XYZ, the Assistant Provincial Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Warwickshire and of the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners, with honours Five, taking the time with me. To order Brethren."*** You should remain at post until the recipient of the salute has thanked the Brethren for their salutation and resumed his seat. Give a court bow to the Worshipful Commander and take your own seat. Indicate to the Worshipful Commander that he can now take the minutes, take note that the Presiding Officer is usually asked to sign the Minute Book.

The Grand Officers will now be saluted as follows:-

Give a court bow to the senior one and say *"all below Grand rank please rise. We will salute Worshipful Brother..... etc. etc. etc. a/ all Holder(s) of Grand Rank in the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners, with **THREE** taking the time with me. To order Brethren, * * *. Be seated Brethren"*. Remember to give the names in order of date seniority.(refer here to your Grand Lodge year book)

Remember that several Grand Officers in the Province also hold acting Provincial Rank i.e. W. Bro. XYZ, a Holder of Grand Rank in the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Royal Ark Mariners, the Provincial Grand Secretary etc. Their Provincial ranks should be appended to their Grand rank status when giving these salutations.

For Justices of the Peace, Commanders, Officers and Members of the British Empire and holders of a Certificate of Merit, please see notes on the Mark salutes.

Holders of Provincial Grand Rank are not saluted.

If there is a ruler present with an escorting DC the escorting DC will usually give the salutes to the rulers of the Province, if you would like assistance with other salutes please discuss this with the escorting DC prior to the meeting date.



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Appendix 2

Order of Precedence of Officers in a Mark Lodge

Master
Senior Warden
Junior Warden
Master Overseer
Senior Overseer
Junior Overseer
Chaplain
Treasurer
Register of Marks
Secretary
Director of Ceremonies
Almoner
Charity Steward
Senior Deacon
Junior Deacon
Assistant Secretary
Assistant Director of Ceremonies
Organist
Inner Guard
Stewards
Tyler

Order of Precedence of Officers in a RAM Lodge

Commander
Senior Warden
Junior Warden
Chaplain
Treasurer
Scribe
Director of Ceremonies
Almoner
Charity Steward
Senior Deacon
Junior Deacon
Assistant Scribe
Assistant Director of Ceremonies
Organist
Guardian
Stewards
Warder



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Appendix 3

Making Meetings More Fun & Developing Your Lodge.

Freemasonry is constantly changing and adapting to new environments at every level and whilst the Worshipful Master controls the lodge for his year (or two) longer term direction falls to those who hold office for longer periods, which is likely to be you.

If you are new into the office, or the general running of the lodge has not been reviewed for some time, a review of the lodge is recommended. Conducting a review with all members in attendance can be challenging, therefore it is recommended that a small working party of 4 be formed comprising of 2 senior members and 2 new members to consider the general operation of the lodge, some elements you may want to consider are:

- Where and when do we meet – does this still fulfil the needs of the members.
- How often do we meet?
- Target start and finish times.
- Is wine included within the meal cost and should it be?
- Can changes be made to give the members better value for money?
- Progression within the lodge
- Engagement with our members and attraction of new members.

This list is just some ideas, you may have some of your own to be considered.

On a meeting-by-meeting basis:

If there are no candidates to advance, take time to consider how meetings are going to be run and what might make them attractive for members and visitors to attend, some thoughts are listed below:

- Salutes – Consider how many are really required.
- Sharing the work in the lodge room.
- Keep toasts brief and sincere.
- Bring in a speaker, possibly on a non-masonic subject of interest, try to resist putting on the summons “to receive a paper of masonic interest” it generally does not inspire anyone to attend. Be specific and imaginative with the title!
- Most units only meet 3 to 4 times a year, how well do we know our members? Consider asking 4 members to speak for 5 minutes (they will take 10!) on their lives, experiences, hobbies and interests.
- Move the meeting to meet with a craft lodge so you can build bridges with Craft lodges to attract new members.
- Move the meeting to meet with another Mark Lodge.
- Consider eating elsewhere or change the meal - Buffett / Fish & Chips.



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- Keeping the festive board flowing, to complete the meeting efficiently, consider serving the coffee straight after the sweet so formal toasts are ready to commence immediately after the sweet course is completed.
- Festive board layout / seating plan or not as the case may be.
- Add spare seats at the festive board to allow the brethren to move places during the festive board.

Once again, this list is just some ideas, you may have some of your own to be considered.