

Membership Challenge Visits Protocol

The visits will be headed by either the Provincial Grand Master, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master or one of the Assistant Provincial Grand Masters, accompanied by a Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies or a Provincial Grand Steward who will act as Provincial DC for the evening. They will also be accompanied by Members of the Membership Development Team, other Members of the Provincial Team and Members of The Provincial Royal Arch Chapter Team.

The object of the visit is to help the Brethren understand the Pro Grand Master's Membership Challenge and how this relates specifically to their Lodge. We will discuss the help available from UGLE and the Province to enable brethren of the Lodge to plan the way ahead in order to meet the Membership Challenge. It is expected that the Provincial Ruler present will take 20-30 minutes of the Lodge's time and for that reason, it is hoped that the visit will coincide with a Business Meeting. If this is not possible due to the Lodge schedule, it is strongly suggested that the Lodge Tyles the Meeting 30 minutes early in order to accommodate the presentation.

To mark the importance of these Visits the following protocol should be observed;

- a) The Summons for the Meeting will state the name of the Provincial Ruler in attendance
- b) An item on the Agenda, immediately after the Lodge has been opened will indicate that the Lodge will receive the Provincial Ruler, who will be formally introduced into the Lodge by his DC. The Worshipful Master will proffer him the Gavel
- c) After the adoption of Minutes (or matters arising) salutations will be accorded to the Provincial Ruler by his DC
- d) There will be an item on the Agenda, immediately after the Minutes or Matters arising entitled "The Membership Challenge". This will be in the format of an introduction (by the Ruler in attendance) followed by an informal discussion
- e) The Provincial Ruler and Members of the Team will retire after the Closing of the Lodge with the Master under the direction of the Lodge DC. If it is not the custom of the Lodge to retire in procession, the Lodge DC will ensure the Brethren remain standing while the visiting Team retires from the Lodge with the Worshipful Master

At The Festive Board, the Provincial Ruler will sit at the top table to the right of the Worshipful Master. Other Members of the Team should, wherever possible be sat with their opposite number in the Lodge (ie; Treasurer, Secretary, Charity Steward etc). **This is of particular importance in respect of the Members of the Membership Development Team in attendance, ie. the Provincial Membership Officer and Provincial Mentor along with Area Mentors and Membership Officers**

Members of the Royal Arch should also be sat with the Lodge RA Rep along with any Master Masons of the Lodge who may be interested in becoming Royal Arch Companions and completing their Craft Journey. Members of the Visiting Team should not be sat together. This will give Lodge members the chance to converse freely with members of the Visiting Team.

The Toast to the Provincial Grand Master (if he is present) and/or the Toast to the Province should be given by one of the Junior Brethren (Officers) of the Lodge, it should be brief and relevant to the evenings events. Members of the Provincial Team will pay their own dining costs

Arrangements (admin, dining etc) for the Membership Challenge Visit will be co-ordinated by one of the Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies in conjunction with the Lodge Secretary.

Details of the date of the visit and who is attending can be found by clicking the following link:

<https://www.somersetfreemasons.org/membership-challenge-visits/>

Secretaries and DCs of Lodges are advised to bookmark the link in order that they can return to the page to check nearer the time just exactly who will be attending. The Provincial DC/Steward will contact the Lodge DC before the visit takes place to clarify any points of procedure.

The visit is an occasion that should be enjoyed by all concerned, the Provincial Grand Master sincerely hopes that this will be the case and that these visits will prove valuable to both the Province and Individual Lodges.

W Bro Garry Sharp
PrGDC