



Somerset Freemasonry



Communicating Freemasonry in the 21st Century

Foreword from the Provincial Grand Master

Freemasonry has always adapted to the needs of society whilst remaining true to its timeless values. In a world where people increasingly seek friendship, purpose, personal development and a sense of belonging, Freemasonry continues to offer all of these in abundance.

This guide has been produced to help members explain Freemasonry in a simple, honest and modern way. It is not intended to be a script, but rather a resource that helps answer the questions we are most often asked by family, friends, colleagues and those interested in joining.

At its heart, Freemasonry is about people. It is about building character, supporting one another, serving our communities and enjoying lifelong friendships. I hope this guide assists you in sharing that message with confidence and pride.

What is Freemasonry?

Freemasonry is one of the world's oldest and largest fraternal organisations. It brings together people from all walks of life who wish to develop themselves, build lasting friendships, support one another and contribute positively to society. It is founded upon integrity, kindness, respect, personal responsibility and service.

Is Freemasonry a secret society?

No. Freemasonry is a society that values discretion rather than secrecy. Our existence, charitable work, websites, social media channels and public activities are open to all. Some traditional ceremonies remain private simply to preserve the experience for new members.

Is Freemasonry a religion?

No. Freemasonry is not a religion and does not replace religion. Members come from many faiths and backgrounds. What unites Freemasons is a shared commitment to moral values rather than shared religious doctrine.

Can women become Freemasons?

Yes. There are well-established women's Masonic organisations in the United Kingdom which share many of the same values, traditions and charitable aims.

What happens at a meeting?

Meetings combine ceremony, learning, governance and fellowship. Members participate in traditional ceremonies, conduct the business of the Lodge, support charitable initiatives and enjoy each other's company.

Why do Freemasons wear aprons?

The apron is the principal symbol of Freemasonry. Originally worn by working stonemasons, it now represents honesty, integrity, equality and service. Different aprons indicate different stages of a member's Masonic journey.

What promises do Freemasons make?

Freemasons make formal promises concerning integrity, honour, discretion and personal responsibility. These obligations encourage members to live according to the values they profess.

What does Freemasonry contribute to society?

Freemasons support society through charitable giving, volunteering, mentoring and practical service. The contribution made by members is measured not only in money donated but also in time, skills and community engagement.

Who can become a Freemason?

Freemasonry welcomes adult men of good character from all backgrounds, professions, ethnicities, faiths and social groups. What matters is character, not status.

Is Freemasonry about networking?

No. Whilst members naturally meet people from many different walks of life, Freemasonry exists to develop character, foster friendship and encourage service rather than promote business interests.

What are the benefits of membership?

Members often speak of three key benefits: friendship, personal development and belonging. Freemasonry provides opportunities to build confidence, develop leadership and communication skills, and form friendships that often last a lifetime.

How old is Freemasonry?

Modern Freemasonry dates from the formation of the first Grand Lodge in London in 1717. Its traditions and symbolism, however, draw upon much older customs and practices.

Why do people join?

People join for many reasons. Some are attracted by the history and tradition, others by the friendships, charitable work or opportunities for personal development. Most remain because of the people they meet and the sense of belonging they find.

Questions We Hear Most Often

How much does it cost?

Costs vary between Lodges, but membership is generally comparable to many other hobbies and social activities. Prospective members are always given clear information before joining.

How often do you meet?

Most Lodges meet between four and ten times per year, together with social, family and charitable events.

What is the Royal Arch?

The Royal Arch is regarded as the completion of pure Antient Freemasonry and provides members with the opportunity to continue their Masonic journey and deepen their understanding of its teachings.

What happens after becoming a Master Mason?

Members continue learning, may take office within their Lodge, visit other Lodges and are encouraged to explore the Royal Arch.

How do I join?

The simplest route is to speak to a Freemason you know or make contact through the Provincial Website. Prospective members are invited to meet members informally and learn more before making any commitment.

Key Talking Points

- Friendship, personal development and service.
- Open to people from all walks of life.
- Not a religion and not political.
- A society that values discretion, not secrecy.
- Over 300 years of history and tradition.
- Supports communities through charity and volunteering.
- Provides mentoring, friendship and support.
- Develops confidence, leadership and communication skills.
- Encourages lifelong learning and personal growth.
- Offers a lifelong journey of friendship and self-improvement.

The Short Answer

Freemasonry brings together people from all walks of life who want to build friendships, develop themselves and make a positive contribution to society. It is not a religion and it is not political. It is a community built on shared values, mutual support and service to others, with traditions that have been passed down for more than 300 years.