

Order of the Secret Monitor

Or Brotherhood of David and Jonathan

Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler

R.Wy.Bro David Littlewood

Dep. Prov. Grand Supreme Ruler

Wy.Bro. William Anthony Stringer PGSwdB



Provincial Grand Recorder

Wy.Bro Alan George Harrison

44 Cedar Avenue

Sutton Weaver

Runcorn

Cheshire

WA7 3ET

Tel: 01928 716750

alan.harrison717@gmail.com

From the Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler.

16th. June 2021.

Brethren,

You will be aware of the Provincial suspension of meetings, instigated in July 2020 and which remains in force.

I am aware, too, of the discontent expressed by some members, about this continuing restriction. The merits of suspension and re-opening have been given much discussion, not only within the various Masonic groups, but within the public domain too.

After careful consideration, I have decided to lift the Provincial suspension with effect from Monday 21st. June 2021.

I remind you of the restrictions imposed upon both Conclaves and meeting venues, by either the Westminster Government or the Senedd Cymru, as Freemasons it is essential that we are seen to be abiding by these rules, and reiterate that each member must be free to make his own decision about attendance.

The guidance from the United Grand Lodge is:

Masonic meetings of up to 6 people are permitted.

If a Masonic Centre has conducted a risk assessment, taken into account government guidance and taken all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of transmission of Covid then it may host Covid-Secure Masonic meetings of more than 6 people, up to the lower of:

a. the maximum capacity identified in the risk assessment; or

b. 30 attendees.

Please see Regulation 6 of statutory instrument 2021/364 for more details.

Dining is restricted to groups of up to 6 people.

I also direct your attention to the directive from Mark Masons' Hall dated 15th. April 2021.

RESUMPTION STRATEGY

Following the UK Prime Minister's update of yesterday, on the exit of lockdown in England, we have been considering our strategy for a resumption of meetings, while maintaining our commitment to create options which reflect local conditions and accommodate the different needs of our members.

It is important to emphasise that you should only return to meetings when government guidance permits and when you feel it is right for you. No Brother should feel coerced into resuming their masonic activities prematurely.

With a membership spread across so many different countries, it has not been possible to devise a 'one size fits all' strategy for the resumption of meetings. The guidance contained in this note is most relevant to members in England whilst those in Scotland, Wales and Overseas, should follow the guidance issued by government and public health authorities in those areas.

Units in all Orders are permitted to hold meetings of up to **SIX** people subject to government restrictions that may be in force and if the local Head of Order is content to lift the local suspension. This may be agreed on a Centre by Centre basis to reflect the fact that some venues will remain closed for the time being.

Larger gatherings of up to **THIRTY** people may be permitted at venues that have carried out a risk assessment, considered all relevant government guidance and taken all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of transmission. In such cases, the maximum permitted attendance may be restricted to less than thirty if the risk assessment identifies a lower maximum capacity to be appropriate.

In all cases, dining may resume but will be restricted to groups of up to **SIX** people.

Units that cannot resume meeting because the members have indicated they do not wish to do so at this time or are prevented from doing so because their meeting place is not open, may continue to make use of the Virtual Business Meeting scheme until it is possible to recommence physical meetings.

Some Brethren have asked whether individuals who have not been vaccinated will be allowed to attend physical meetings when they resume. Introducing any form of restriction based on vaccination status would place an undue burden on Units and may prove difficult to police.

It is the responsibility of every Brother to ensure that he only attends meetings if he is free of Covid-19 symptoms and, having regard to his general health, deems it appropriate and safe to do so.

Brethren, please be aware that the ability to hold larger gatherings as indicated above, is dependent on a combination of third party certification of the venue, accredited risk assessments, air flow and provisions for social distancing, to include movement of people and access / exit points.

Stay safe, protect each other

ITFOTO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Littlewood', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

David Littlewood
Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler
Province of Cheshire and North Wales