



THE GRAND LODGE OF MARK MASTER MASONS

of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges Overseas

GRAND SECRETARY'S OFFICE

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6 July 2020

To: Members of All Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall

Dear Sir and Brother

General Guidance for the Resumption of Masonic Meetings

At the beginning of June, I wrote to all our members setting out a Provisional Blueprint for an Exit Strategy. This eleven-point plan set out a common approach to exiting the General Suspension of Masonic Activity based on what we had learned from our Districts overseas that had already begun to resume meetings. This was a joint initiative with the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) and the Supreme Grand Chapter of England (SGC).

On 23 June 2020, the UK Prime Minister announced an easing of lockdown restrictions in England and, since then, the governments of the other Home Nations have also made changes to their policies. Collectively, these changes have now created an environment in which we feel there is scope to make plans for a resumption of masonic activity.

Accompanying this letter is a copy of the announcement of those plans which is being released today jointly with UGLE and SGC. It confirms our decision to let the General Suspension of Masonic Activity expire on 17 July and sets out general guidance for the resumption of masonic meetings after that date.

This is a significant and, I am sure, welcome step forward, but it is essential you understand that any resumption of masonic meetings can only take place where government restrictions permit and where meeting venues are able to provide a Covid-secure environment.

Masonic meetings will not resume immediately as there will be much to do before that can happen. However, the ending of the General Suspension will provide all our Units with the option to begin meeting again when the conditions are right for them.

Our Districts overseas will resume meetings when their local governments permit. Whilst the lockdown restrictions in those areas will differ from the United Kingdom, the general principles contained in this latest guidance should be followed wherever possible.

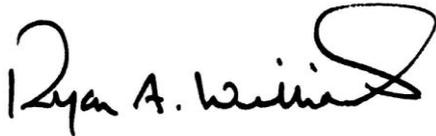
It has been suggested to me that the resumption of masonic activity later this month is too soon, and I understand that many Brethren, particularly those in high risk categories, will not want to attend meetings again for some time. Today's announcement is not a coercive move but is the first of many steps we must take if we are to move forward.

I am sure today's news will raise many questions in your mind which is why, later this week, I will be issuing a detailed guidance note accompanied by a comprehensive Frequently Asked Questions factsheet which will hopefully address any concerns you may have.

I have been greatly impressed by the way you have all responded to the challenges that Covid-19 has forced upon us. These unprecedented times have called for an unprecedented response and you should feel proud of the efforts you have made not just to keep our masonic family together but in reaching out to your local communities to help the vulnerable in society.

Returning to our masonic labours won't be easy nor will it happen overnight. This announcement marks the start of a long and probably difficult journey back to a new normality but with a common purpose at the heart of our intentions, we will succeed in rebuilding our Orders – ‘...we must not let the past dictate what we are, but we should let it shape what we will become...’

With fraternal regards and best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan A. Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

R.W.Bro. Ryan A Williams, P.G.J.W.
Grand Secretary