

PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE MEETING 28TH January 2026

Brethren, firstly may I welcome you all here this evening and thank you for your attendance at this Provincial Committee meeting.

This committee is an important part of the Provincial year and allows the Executive to update the Lodges on the work within the province and is also a vehicle for allowing the business of the Provincial Grand Lodge to proceed. Please do report back to your lodges following this meeting.

Over the last 12 months, the Executive have tried to bring the province into the 21st Century with a new website and substantial improvements to our emails and IT systems. These updates have greatly improved the efficiency of our secretariat and Executive but have also resulted in a reduction of our IT costs which is of course to everyone's benefit.

We have also seen Hermes go live within the Province and I would again express my thanks to W Bro Graham Bennett and his team for all their hard work rolling this out. I believe that most lodge secretaries are now working with Hermes and who will confirm that it is a big step forward in dealing with the secretarial paperwork.

Hermes will also now ensure that your Lodge Almoners are notified if a brother has been absent for 2 meetings without tendering apologies. It is vital that these notifications are acted upon to ensure our members remain fully engaged.

The sign up to Portal within the Province has improved over the last 12 months but there are still some 60% of the membership who have yet to register. There are more features being released via Portal all the time and in the future, it will be the only way that you will receive communications from UGLE.

If you know of members of your lodge that have not registered, and you can check who has and who hasn't on your own registration, then please ensure the mentor or membership officer speaks with the member and registers them.

Brethren, during this year we have very sadly lost far too many of our brethren. In particular, we lost RW Bro David Pascoe, our past MEGS following his brave fight against his awful disease.

David was a good friend to me and a wonderful supporter of our Province, and he will be greatly missed.

Brethren, following the culmination of the 2024 Festival and the wonderful celebrations at Truro Cathedral, I suggested that we should look to our local charities and good causes for 12 months.

At the meeting of Cornish Masters in November I was delighted to launch my new charitable appeal – Rezum for Cornwall. To raise £50,000 to purchase a Rezum machine for the urology department at Treliske. To provide this essential piece of equipment for our community to improve mens health and wellbeing.

The response to this appeal has been truly astounding and once again I am humbled by your generosity. I know that it is something that we can all relate to and I am sure that with your continued support we will be able to reach the target within the period.

Brethren, our wonderful organization, has once again been under attack from certain areas of the media and in particular from the Metropolitan Police. You will have read from the information circulated from London that UGLE are determined to fight the allegations and restrictions being proposed and we should be grateful to them for their actions. I fear that this will drag on for some time, but it is reassuring to know that UGLE are standing up for what we all hold dear.

At this meeting last year, I updated you on the details of The Strategy for Freemasonry 2022 and beyond and in particular, the progress that we as a Province are making with our Membership Challenge.

It is chastening to realise that we are nearly halfway through the Pro Grand Masters 7-year strategy but I am delighted that as a Province we are making progress with our membership numbers.

London reports that if the current trend continues, the National membership should actually grow in 2026/27, the first time that this has happened for several decades.

As a Province, our losses continue to reduce each year and for much of 2025 we were showing a positive growth. Unfortunately, in December we fell behind the line, but our losses are now less than 20 per year, reduced from nearly 100 per year in 2022 and with everyone's hard work, we too should be able to grow our numbers this year.

At the end of 2025 and earlier this month, we ran a digital marketing campaign. This has been very successful with in excess of 18000 hits on our new website and over 61 direct applications for membership. Of these 12 are now awaiting ballot or initiation. A wonderful result.

My thanks to W Bro Simon Taylor and the Communications Team for organizing this and to the Membership Team for handling the enquiries.

From the end of this month, London will again be running a NDMC which will run until April 2026 and again in the autumn. I am confident that we will again benefit from this campaign and would ask all Lodges to ensure that they respond in a timely manner to any referrals that they receive.

You will all have seen the message from Grand Lodge – “One Journey, One Organisation” explaining the relationship between the Craft and the Royal Arch. The two separate documents – The Members Pathway and Archway have now been amalgamated into a single way forward “Building Together” and you will hear a lot more about this in the coming months.

The Membership Team will shortly be launching Building Together and you will all receive notification of that event. At that launch, I do expect that a representative of every lodge and every chapter will be present. The Building Together team will be managed by W Bro Andrew Douce with VW Bro David Leaity acting as the Single Point of Contact to oversee the roll out.

It is wonderful to see the closer working relationship that is now in place between the orders and I thank in particular our MEGS and the PGM of the Mark Degree for their support.

Please remember that membership and the future of our order is the responsibility of us all and there is still a lot of hard work to be done.

Our ProGM in his 7-year plan encourages us to look at Community Engagement and RW Bro Sir David Wootton has recently published his recommendations on how we should move this forward in our Provinces. In too many cases our Lodges have become isolated and detached from the towns and villages in which they meet, and they no longer have any real connection with the local communities.

This is something that we can and must change. I would encourage you all to become involved in local community events, to volunteer where possible, to assist with local functions and to consider giving an hour of your time to help a local charity. By doing this we can ensure that our lodges are at the very heart of our communities.

We are also unique as a member organization, in that in many cases we own our meeting places. Please do consider how these can be made available for wider use – providing facilities for our communities and also providing an income towards their upkeep.

Brethren, last May, a special meeting of Grand Lodge was held to enable our light blues to attend a meeting in the Grand Temple. Some 20 brethren attended from Cornwall, and we all had a very enjoyable day. I am delighted to advise that following on from the success of this meeting, another similar Light Blue event will be held this May and then biannually thereafter. This is open to all members including Entered Apprentices so if you do get a chance to join in please grab the opportunity. We have recently received an allocation of 27 tickets for the event this May. If you need more details please ask W Bro Philip Venning the Provincial Grand Mentor.

We have for a number of years had our Light Blues group in the Province – The Trelawny Light Blues who have undertaken much hard work in encouraging the involvement of our newer members, organized visiting and generally assisted the Provincial Team at PGL and other events. In line with the Building Together policy, it is now encouraged that this be made open to our Companions from the Royal Arch who have not as yet passed through the Principals Chairs and I hope that we will see a growth in the numbers taking advantage of this group.

Our Charity Giving Day this year will again be held at Tintagel on Sunday 17th May. This is a wonderful showcase for our Province and is always well supported by Lodges and Charities. We have again this year allocated substantial funds in support of local causes, and I again look forward to your support. If your lodge hasn't previously supported the day, then please do consider coming along and making your charitable presentations in person.

Brethren, earlier this evening, our Provincial Grand Treasurer gave notice of motion to increase the Provincial dues by £1 per annum. None of us like to see an increase in costs but as our Treasurer has very clearly set out, we do need to ensure the continued viability of the Province, and I hope that you will support the notice at Provincial Grand Lodge.

Our Provincial Grand Lodge meeting this year will be held at Redruth School on Saturday the 11th April with dining at the Penventon Hotel.

This year we are trying a slightly different format which I trust you will all find beneficial. In April, we will be holding the meeting in the morning and then dining after the meeting which should allow for a slightly more relaxed lunch – especially for my ProvGDC !

At that meeting I will be making a number of changes to my Executive.

W Bro Simon Copas will be standing down as the Provincial Grand Secretary after having served in the office for 3 years. Before this, Simon served as the Assistant Secretary for 5 years.

We are all indebted to Simon for all his hard work on our behalf and I personally thank you for your valued support.

W Bro Trevor Conroy will be appointed as Provincial Grand Secretary in April.

London have now allowed all Provinces to appoint a Provincial Deputy Grand Secretary, and this office will be taken by W Bro Callum Gardner.

W Bro Andrew Deacon will be standing down as the Provincial Grand Registrar after 10 years in office. I doubt that many of us have any idea of the work of the Provincial Registrar, which is not only to provide legal advice to the Executive but to also advise on disciplinary matters and I'm sorry to say that Andrew has been kept too busy at various times. Again, I am very grateful to him for his counsel and support.

The new Provincial Grand Registrar will be W Bro Kevin Head of Love and Honour Lodge 75.

Brethren, the management of the province is very much a team effort and I would thank all of my Executive for their hard work during the year.

In particular I am delighted to confirm the reappointment of my Deputy and Assistant Provincial Grand Masters without whose support, I could not fulfil my position.

At the Provincial meeting I shall have the pleasure of presenting my Certificate of Service to Freemasonry to.

W Bro Malcolm Biddick of King Arthur Lodge 7134

W Bro Godfrey Carpenter of St Piran's Lodge 7620

W Bro Anthony Hoskings of St Piran's Lodge 7620

W Bro Ian Kerlake of Peace and Harmony Lodge 496

Finally, I am delighted to announce that my Provincial Senior Grand Warden from the 11th April will be W Bro Andrew Philip of Carlyon Lodge 7392, and my Provincial Junior Grand Warden will be W Bro John Stewart of Loyal Victoria Lodge 557.

The Provincial Grand Sword Bearer will be W Bro Brian Morgan of True and Faithful Lodge 318, and the Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works will be W Bro Lyndon Allen of St Michael Lodge 2747.

Brethren, thank you once again for attending this meeting and for the support that you and your lodges have given to me and our Province.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Provincial Grand Lodge in Redruth on the 11th April and meanwhile, please have a very safe journey home.