

PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF

# West Kent MAGAZINE



PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE  
OF WEST KENT



PROVINCIAL GRAND  
CHAPTER OF WEST KENT

SPRING 2026



# BUILDING TOGETHER

*Attracting Members – Growing Freemasonry*



# In this edition



- 2 PGM Message
- 3-4 Craft & Royal Arch Exec Updates
- 5-12 Building Together Overview
- 13 Provincial Grand Lodge Invite
- 14-15 Conversation with Matthew Watson, Cornwallis Lecture
- 17 Peaks of Commitment:  
Loyalty & Remembrance Lodge's Festival Finale
- 18 Have You Anything to Give in the Cause of Charity?
- 20 My First Year as President of the Widows Sons West Kent



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**BUILDING  
TOGETHER**

*Attracting Members – Growing Freemasonry*



## From the Provincial Grand Master & Grand Superintendent

Brethren and Companions,

Let me take this opportunity to thank you all for the good wishes and the support since taking on the roles of Provincial Grand Master and Grand Superintendent in October.

Since my investiture we have achieved much. Building Together, the harmonisation of the Craft and Royal Arch has been successfully launched and the Provincial Building Together Team made up of the former Craft and Royal Arch Membership Teams have rolled out the West Kent plan to Lodges and Chapters across the Province.

I am happy to report that many of you have grasped the concept of one journey, one organisation with great enthusiasm. This has resulted in growth. It is testament to your efforts and willingness to make the necessary changes to how you view Freemasonry as a whole.

There is still much to do though and the membership officers assigned to your individual units are on hand to assist further.

Thank you all for your efforts in helping this growth. It is early days and I am sure that your continued support and efforts to help our Province grow, thrive and survive will not diminish.

As I travel around the Province, I am overwhelmed by the happiness and enjoyment I witness in the Lodges and Chapters I have been fortunate enough to visit. It is a sign that the Province is in a good place.

Can I thank you all too for your continued support for the 2026 Festival. As this comes to an end, I like many of you, am excited to find out the final figure. This money is already coming back into the Province to support many disadvantaged in our communities. Please continue to support the Festival until the end.

As a Province we are doing much in our communities and for our Armed Forces. You should all be proud of what has been achieved so far.

I thank you all for your continued support and I look forward to seeing you all as I continue my travels around the Province.

Keep up the great work you are doing. Continue to enjoy your Freemasonry and share what you do and why you do it with anyone that you feel would be interested in joining.

Sincerest Fraternal regards,  
Andrew



## From the Deputy Provincial Grand Master

As I write this article for the magazine, it's the start of spring, the days are longer, and the sun has made an appearance or two. The bulbs are emerging, and the daffodils and tulips are bursting into bloom. I am reflecting that the province is also springing into action, the hard work of the Executive and Membership Team over the winter months in developing the Building Together program is showing the first shoots of growth for our members.

The Building Together seminars are well underway, and being very well supported by our lodges, and the program is being embraced. The proof is that our numbers are growing, and the members are enjoying being part of this super Province. The resignations are dropping dramatically, and that is always proof that we are enjoying the interaction within our lodges and want to be a member of our great organisation.

We are approaching the end of our festival, and I am, as I have been since its launch back in 2020, confident that we will have a spectacular total to announce at the provincial meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> June, followed by the celebration event on the 27<sup>th</sup> June.

The regular business of the Province is continuing well, and we thank the secretaries and Scribes for their continued hard work, with the Executive busy visiting to support Lodges and making those special visits to celebrate the achievements of members.

The appointment and promotion letters, if slightly delayed, were all sent out, and we congratulate those members of the Province who received them for their continued commitment to the Province and their units, likewise those who received appointments and promotions from the Grand Master.

As the year has started so well, let's continue to grow our Province, where we can enjoy our Masonry, as that's what it's all about.

Graham



## From the Deputy Grand Superintendent

Brethren and Companions,

I am very pleased to say that the Royal Arch in West Kent is continuing to grow. It is so encouraging to see the numbers of candidates that are being lined up for Exaltation into our wonderful order – we are clearly seeing the benefit of embracing the ‘One Journey – One Organisation’ concept.

Now with the onset of ‘Building Together’, I envisage our Order becoming even stronger. Building Together will of course benefit both the Craft and the Royal Arch, and where it is being utilised, we are already seeing a positive effect on both Craft and Royal Arch membership numbers.

The future of Freemasonry in West Kent looks bright; as I write this article, it is encouraging to note that the number of members of both the Craft and the Royal Arch in West Kent are higher than the figures for last year.

I am sure that those Craft and Royal Arch units that utilise the principles within Building Together, will continue to grow and thrive, not only by bringing in new members, but also by ensuring that current members of all ranks and experience will remain connected and engaged with their units. The Executive and membership teams in West Kent stand ready to assist those units that require advice.

On another subject, this year we will again be holding our Provincial Grand Chapter Meeting at Bromley. It will be a Meeting to remember and certainly one that should not be missed. Tickets for this event will be announced in the near future. It is anticipated that the event will again be heavily oversubscribed – early booking is therefore advised.

Brethren, should you not yet be a member of the Royal Arch, now is a very exciting time to join – details can be obtained from your Lodge Mentor or Royal Arch Liaison Officer (RALO), or of course any member of the executive or membership team; I can assure you that you will not regret your decision to join.

Brethren and Companions, thank you for your continued support of the Royal Arch in West Kent, I feel very proud and privileged to be your Deputy Grand Superintendent.

Very best regards

James



## Building Together – A Fresh Start for Growth in West Kent

Spring is a season of renewal, optimism and fresh beginnings. It is therefore the perfect time to reflect on how we can strengthen and grow Freemasonry across West Kent.

With the introduction of Building Together, our Province is embracing a clear, structured and positive approach to membership that will help our Lodges and Chapters flourish for years to come.

### A Province Ready to Move Forward

West Kent is fortunate to be well positioned at the start of this journey. With our Provincial Grand Master and Grand Superintendent contributing directly to the United Grand Lodge of England's Building Together Development Group, we have been able to shape a strategy that aligns closely with the wider UGLE vision while remaining practical and meaningful at a local level.

Our approach centres on a fully integrated Provincial Building Together Team (PBTT). This unified team supports both Craft and Royal Arch units, ensuring a consistent approach while still allowing flexibility for local circumstances. The strategy has been presented to and endorsed by the Province's senior leadership and places West Kent at the forefront of Building Together implementation.

The rollout is being delivered through a phased approach. This allows time to build awareness, ensure alignment, and introduce the programme in manageable stages across the Province. Each stage is followed by review and refinement so that we continue learning and improving together.

### One Team, One Goal

Preparation has been key to ensuring that support is in place for every Lodge and Chapter. Recently, the roles of Provincial Membership Officers (PMOs) and Provincial Mentors were refined so they could focus more closely on engaging with fewer units and provide stronger support. In addition, ten further members have joined the effort as PMOs with a particular focus on Royal Arch membership.

These changes have enabled us to bring together the former Craft and Royal Arch membership teams into one harmonised Provincial Building Together Team. Operating as one organisation with one shared goal, the PBTT exists to help Lodges and Chapters address their individual membership challenges to achieve sustainable growth.

Each Craft and Royal Arch unit in West Kent has been assigned a Provincial Membership Officer to provide guidance, share best practice and help units make the most of the Building Together resources. If you have not yet connected with your dedicated PMO, now is the perfect time to do so—they are there to support you.

Equally important is ensuring that key officers within each unit, including Lodge Membership Officers, Chapter Membership Officers, Royal Arch Liaison Officers and Mentors, understand their roles and work closely with their assigned PMO. Together, this creates a strong local support network.

## A Shared Responsibility

Every Lodge and Chapter plays an important role in the future of Freemasonry in West Kent. Each unit is encouraged to set its own membership objectives and contribute to the wider Provincial Membership Challenge.

This requires a positive and open mindset. Building Together encourages us to adopt a “Yes, if...” approach rather than “No, because...”, embracing change where it improves the experience of our members and the sustainability of our units.

While attracting new members is important, retaining existing members is essential. Reducing avoidable losses—what we refer to as controllable losses—is essential if we are to reverse the negative growth in Craft membership and create a steady positive growth in our subscribing member population across the Province. Ultimately, the future rests in the hands of every member.

Your Lodge. Your Chapter. Your Future. Your Province.

## Understanding the Building Together Framework

At the heart of our membership activity lies the Building Together model itself. It is designed to provide a clear framework that Lodges and Chapters can use to strengthen their membership and develop in a sustainable way.

The framework is built around five interconnected areas, known as Hubs:

- Shape
- Attract
- Continue
- Engage
- Respond

Each hub focuses on a different aspect of membership development, but all work together as one system to support the full Masonic journey.

Leadership and oversight are provided by the Provincial Grand Membership Officer, Royal Arch Membership Officer, Provincial Mentor and Royal Arch Mentor, who work alongside the wider Provincial Executive team and report to the Provincial Single Point of Contact for Building Together. Supporting them is the network of Provincial Membership Officers, assigned to work directly with Lodges and Chapters.

A key message runs throughout the programme:

These hubs, elements and threads are not owned by the Province — they belong to the Lodges and Chapters. They are simply tools, frameworks and support structures designed to help each unit thrive.



## Shape – Getting Our House in Order

The first hub, Shape, focuses on understanding where a Lodge or Chapter stands today and where it wants to go in the future.

Before attracting new members, it is important to reflect on some fundamental questions:

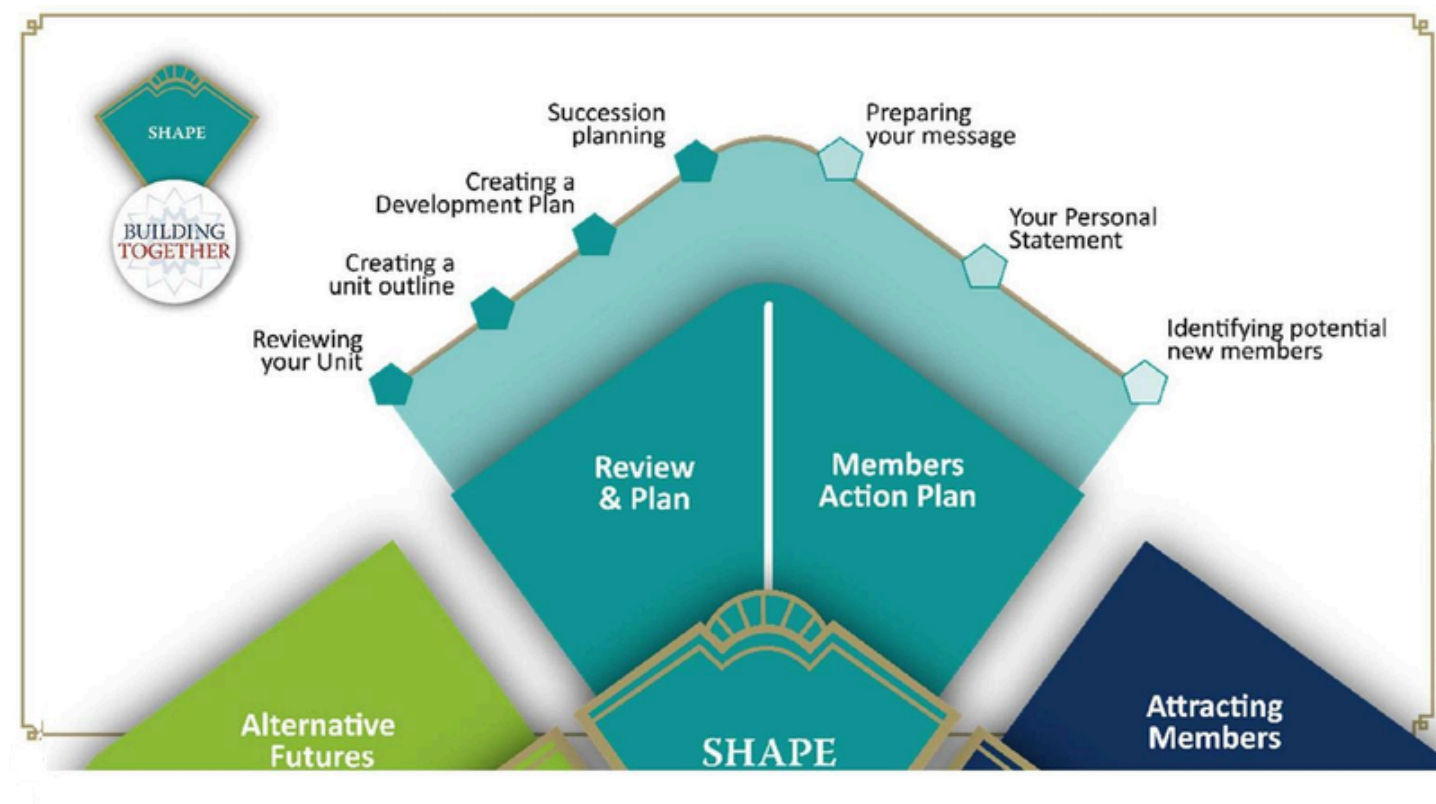
- Who are we as a Lodge or Chapter?
- What do we offer our members?
- Where do we want to be in the coming years?
- How will we get there?

A simple SWOT analysis—looking at strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, can help units assess their current position honestly. From there, members can develop a practical development plan with clear and achievable goals.

This process also encourages succession planning, helping to ensure that officers are supported and prepared for future roles.

The outcome can include a clear information sheet describing the Lodge or Chapter and what makes it special, something that can be shared when speaking with potential members.

Importantly, shaping a unit is not a one-time exercise. Regular health checks help Lodges and Chapters adapt, stay resilient and continue thriving.



## Attract – Sharing Our Story

Once a unit understands who it is and what it offers, the next step is to Attract new members. This hub focuses on how Freemasonry is presented to the outside world. Clear, honest and engaging communication is essential. Potential members want to understand what Freemasonry means in real terms and what they can expect from their journey.

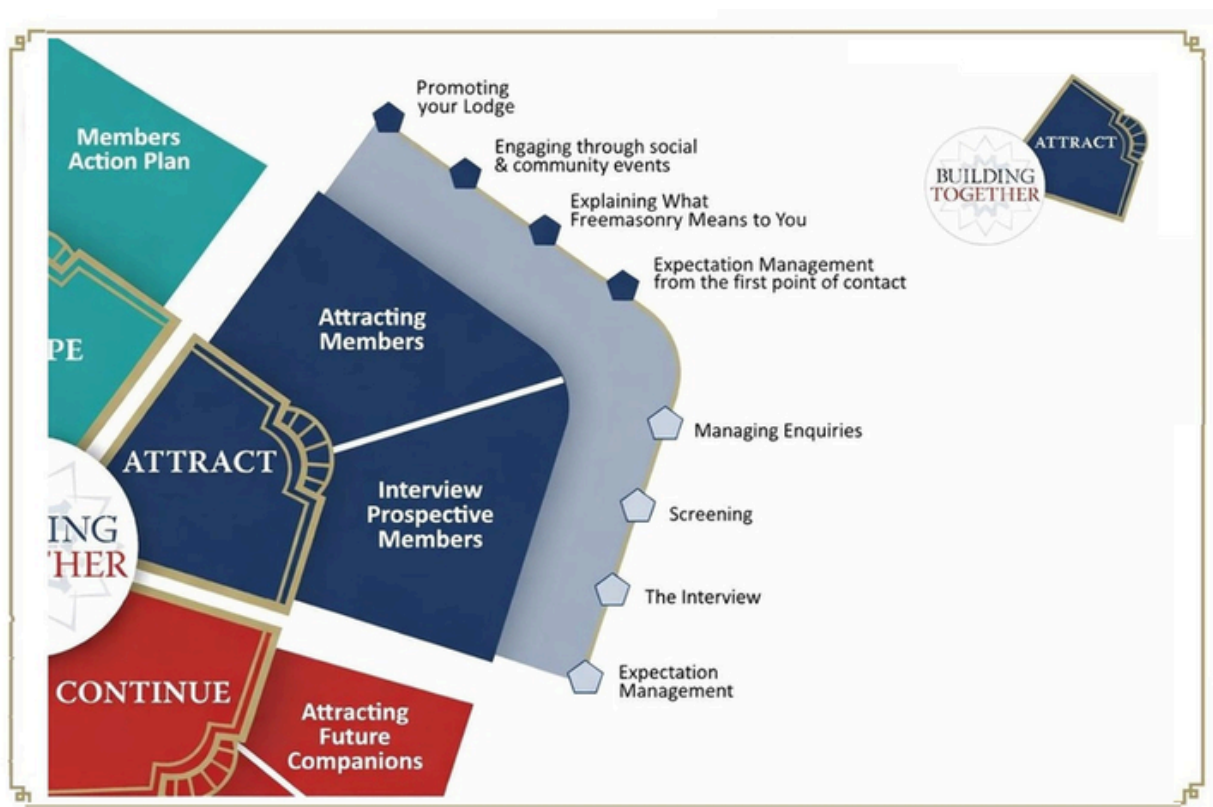
Social events, community activities and public engagement all provide opportunities to present Freemasonry positively and naturally.

Units are supported in this work by the Provincial Communications Team, which provides guidance on messaging, media, branding and campaign materials. Their role is to help Lodges and Chapters promote themselves professionally while protecting the reputation of Freemasonry.

The Provincial External Events Team can also assist Lodges in participating in local community events, helping them connect with their communities and increase visibility.

Authenticity is key. When members share their own personal experiences of Freemasonry, conversations with prospective candidates become genuine and meaningful.

Clear expectation management from the very first conversation is equally important. Candidates should understand the full Masonic journey, including the Craft degrees and the opportunity to naturally progress into the Royal Arch.

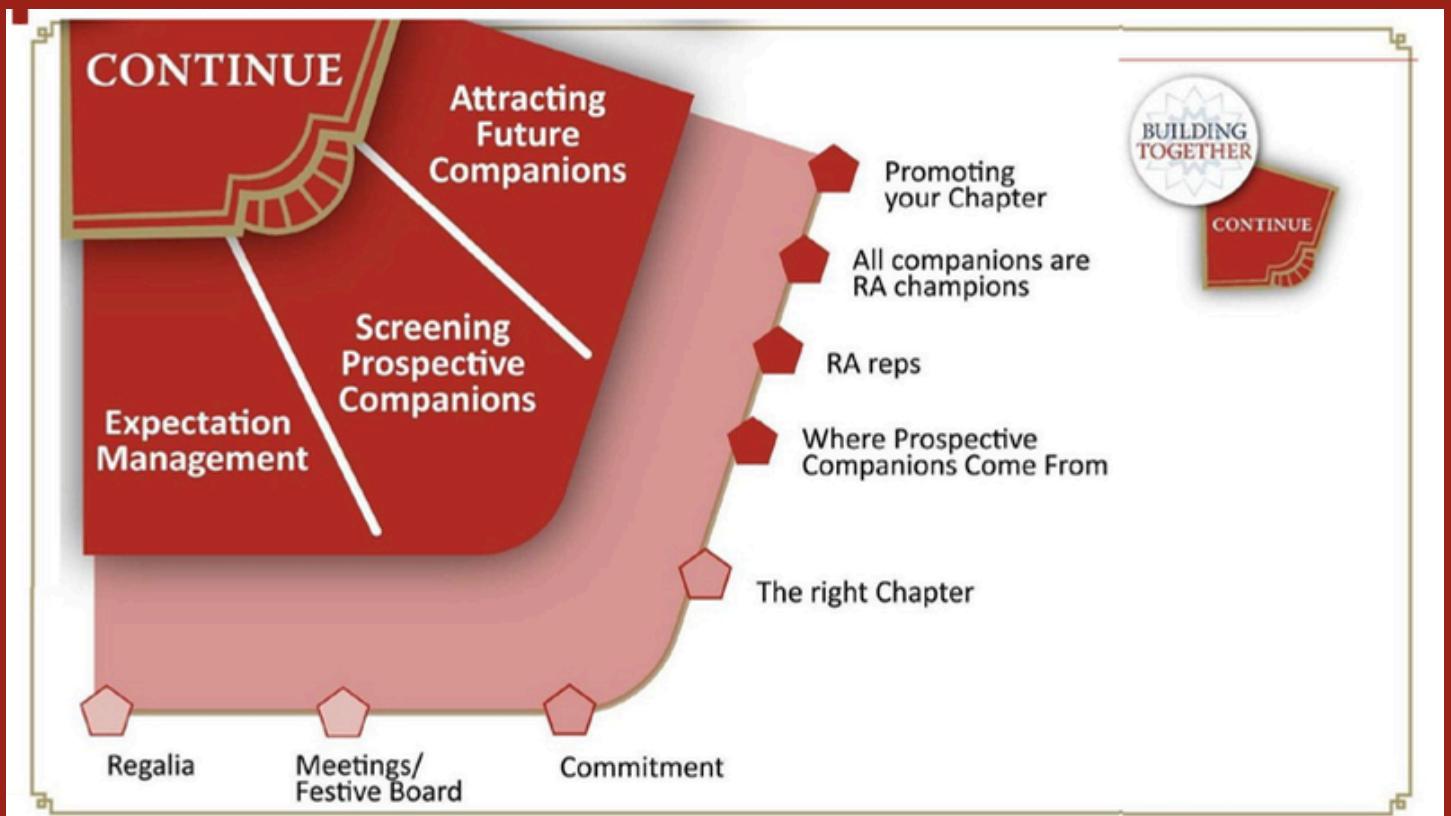


## Continue – The Royal Arch Journey

The Continue hub focuses specifically on supporting the journey into the Royal Arch.

It reminds us that the Royal Arch is not separate from the wider Masonic experience, but rather a natural continuation of it. The tools within this hub help Chapters strengthen their membership teams, promote their activities and guide prospective Companions through the enquiry and screening process.

Clear information, open communication and effective mentoring ensure that new Companions enjoy a fulfilling and rewarding Royal Arch experience.



## Engage – Supporting Members to Thrive

The Engage hub is supported by the Provincial mentoring team, ensuring that members receive the guidance and encouragement needed to enjoy their Masonic journey.

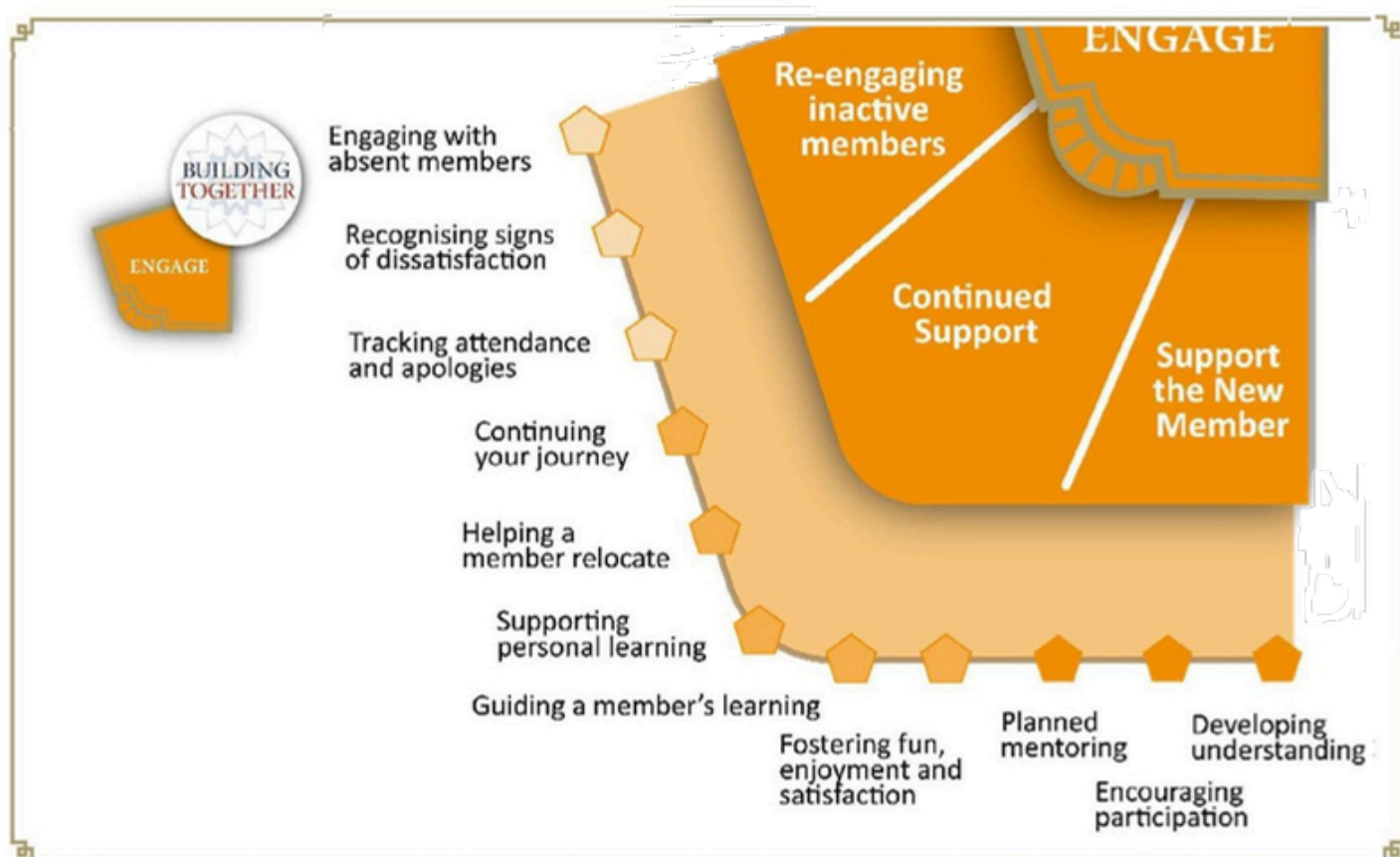
Attracting new members is only part of the story. The Engage hub focuses on what happens after someone joins.

Joining a Lodge or Chapter can be exciting but also overwhelming. New members encounter unfamiliar language, traditions and ceremonies. Good mentoring and friendly support make a tremendous difference during this early stage.

Personal mentoring, learning resources and welcome materials help new members build confidence and understanding at their own pace.

Participation is also essential. Members who feel involved and included are far more likely to remain active and committed. Encouraging attendance at meetings, visits to other units and participation in social events helps strengthen connections and friendships.

Above all, Freemasonry should be enjoyable. When members enjoy their experience, engagement naturally follows.



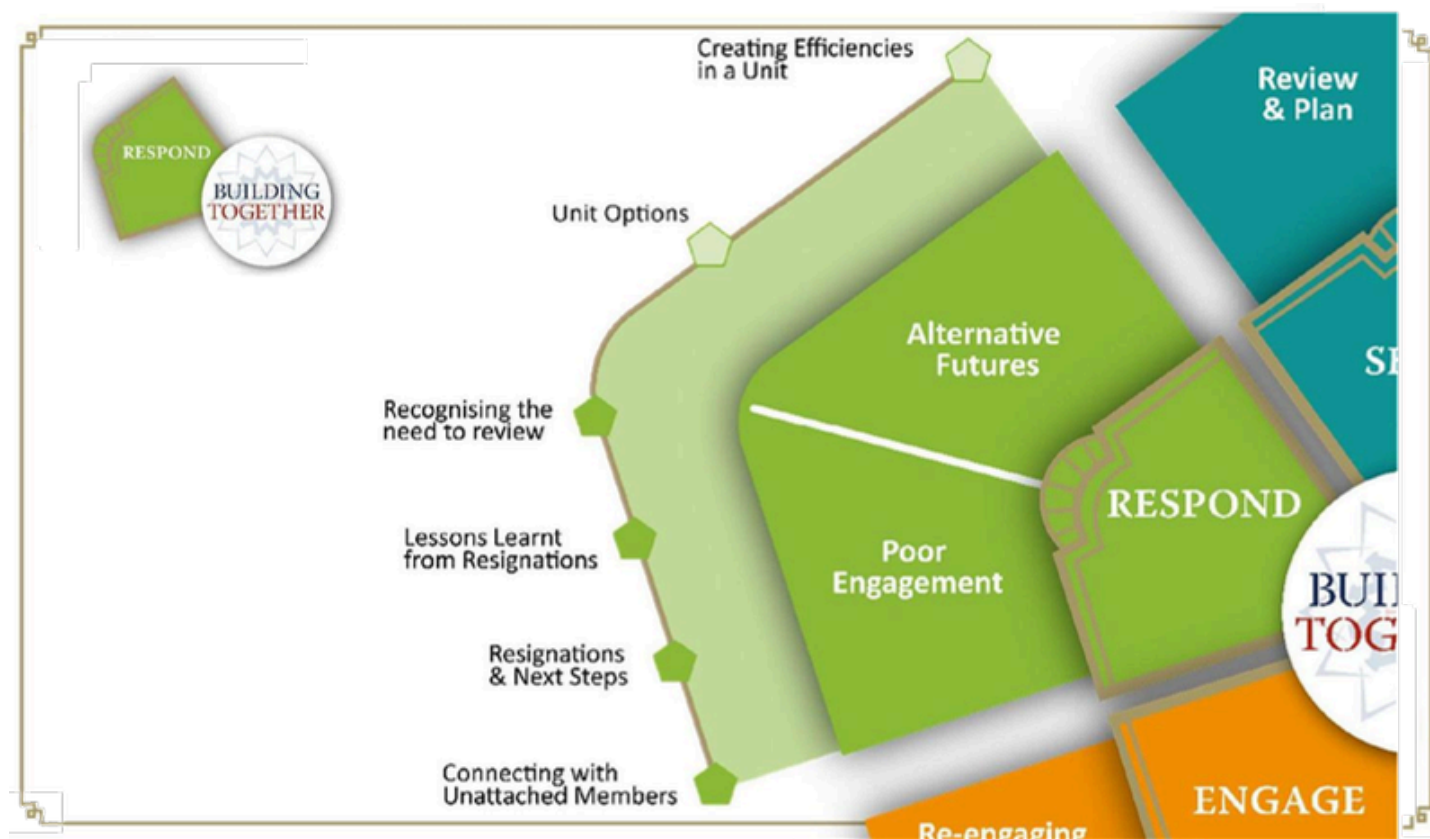
## Respond – Learning and Improving

Meanwhile, the Respond hub focuses on reconnecting with unattached members and understanding the reasons behind resignations, helping units learn and improve.

Even in the strongest units, challenges can arise. Members may become less active, move away or face personal pressures that affect their involvement.

The Respond hub encourages early awareness and supportive conversations when these signs appear. Often, simply listening and offering understanding can make a significant difference.

When members do leave, there is still an opportunity to learn. Understanding why helps units adapt and improve, strengthening the experience for future members.



## Looking Ahead

Building Together provides a practical roadmap for the future:

- Shape your unit and plan for the years ahead.
- Attract new members through positive engagement.
- Continue the journey through the Royal Arch.
- Engage members so they feel supported and involved.
- Respond early when challenges arise.

Resources such as the Building Together Interactive Quick Start Guide and the learning platform, Solomon offer further guidance and tools to support every unit.

Above all, success will come through collaboration, openness and enthusiasm. Share what you know. Encourage others to take part. Welcome new members warmly. And always remember to enjoy the friendships and experiences that Freemasonry brings, and don't deny others the opportunity to enjoy the same.

Together, we can ensure that Freemasonry in West Kent continues to grow, thrive and inspire future generations.

### Link to Building Together in Solomon.

<https://solomon.ugle.org.uk/course/view.php?id=142>





## **Celebration of Craft Provincial Investitures and 2026 Festival Finale Friday 12 June 2026**

Dear Brethren

This is a reminder that our Craft Provincial Investiture Ceremony will be held in the Grand Temple at Great Queen Street on Friday 12th June 2026, with the luncheon in the Grand Connaught Rooms.

### **Format of the meeting.**

As we will be undertaking all necessary business at a meeting at Oakley House beforehand, this event in London on 12 June will be exclusively devoted to celebratory matters and the investiture of those receiving Provincial Craft preferment.

The agenda will be:

13:00-15:00 - Lunch in the Grand Connaught Rooms

15:45-17:30 - Craft Investiture in the Grand Temple

17.30 -1800 - 2026 Festival Finale

### **Who can attend?**

As all our Masonic administration will have already been undertaken, this flagship event will be open to Masons and non-Masons alike - members of the Province, their Masonic guests, wives, partners, families and prospective members.

Accordingly, we strongly encourage all Craft recipients and their guests to attend the luncheon and to join us for the Craft investiture and the finale of the 2026 Festival, when the final total raised will be announced by the MCF, in the afternoon.

Booking is essential, but attendance to the meeting only is free of charge.

### **How do I book in?**

Booking tickets for the event could not be simpler and full details are on our Provincial website.

Those who wish to attend, or offer apologies, should do so using the TryBooking facility by clicking on the link below:- <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/101943>

Whether you are receiving Provincial honours or not, and irrespective of your rank, you are cordially welcome to attend the pinnacle event in our Craft Provincial calendar, especially as the final total that we have raised for 2026 festival will be announced - do please support the event as best as you can.

This is an excellent event to bring your prospective members along too, as well as a social celebration for your Lodge members, and I look forward to your company on the day.

For all enquiries, please email [Bookings@westkentmasons.org.uk](mailto:Bookings@westkentmasons.org.uk)

Yours sincerely and fraternally,

**Andrew Waddington**

Provincial Grand Master

Scan to book in



# Hidden in Plain Sight: A Conversation with Matthew Watson on Hogarth, Symbolism, and the Cornwallis Lecture.



Interviewed by Gordon Rollo

When I sat down with this year's Cornwallis Lecture presenter, it was immediately clear that this was a subject driven by genuine passion. What began as an interest in art and Freemasonry has grown into a compelling lecture exploring the hidden symbolism within the works of William Hogarth.

Best known for his vivid depictions of 18th-century life, Hogarth's work reveals far more on closer inspection. As our lecture explains, Masonic themes have been "hidden in plain sight" for centuries, only recently being fully appreciated. Now delivered across both West and East Kent, the lecture has sparked real interest among the Brethren, prompting discussion, repeat audiences, and raising funds for the Museum of Freemasonry.

In this interview, we explore the inspiration behind the lecture, the discoveries it reveals, and the journey of bringing it to life.

*Your recent lecture tour explored hidden Masonic symbolism in the works of Brother William Hogarth. What first inspired you to choose Hogarth and his art as the focus of this lecture?*

I love Freemasonry and I love doing pencil sketches. I was already interested in Art and Freemasonry combined and I have done several Masonic themed Pencil Sketches. Including those for the PPGM, Mark Estaug hand our current PGM Andrew Waddington. I knew of Hogarth from my Art Degree and I knew he was a Freemason from my newly found interest in Freemasonry. My lecture is based on a book by Jeremy Bell, who revisits Hogarth's work from a Masonic perspective, and golly gosh when you look at what is hidden in plain sight - you see so many Masonic references.

*For readers who may not be familiar with Hogarth's connection to Freemasonry, what aspects of his work reveal Masonic themes or symbolism?*

William Hogarth was a satirical political sketcher from 18th Century. Most people will have some awareness of him from his sketch Gin Lane of 1751 - the one with the drunken mother letting her child slip from her arms. He was introduced into Freemasonry in 1725 as it was first evolving and you get an insight into that early and significant evolution. He even sketches Dr James Anderson, the editor of the Book of Constitutions of 1723. The main focus of the lecture is on Hogarth's six etchings of A Harlots Progress in 1731. It follows the early three degrees and tells the story of Moll Hackabout who comes to London to work as a seamstress, but ends up being a lady of the night. The A3 sized sketches are riddled with hidden Masonic symbolism and my lecture explains all of this to you.

*Researching historical art and symbolism can be quite a journey. What was the most surprising or fascinating discovery you made while preparing this lecture?*

In the final Hogarth sketch that I share called "Night" as part of "Four Times of the Day" from 1736, Hogarth sketches someone tipping a bucket of urine over a very famous Freemason, Thomas De Veil. I was shocked that after only 10 years in Freemasonry, Hogarth was more interest in the bawdy revelry of the Festive Board than the pious ritual introduced to make Freemasonry more serious and attract Royalty. So to show his disillusionment, or should I say how "pissed off" he was. He creates this sketch. But left a incredible legacy including The Grand Stewards Jewel, which he designed in 1724.

*Your lecture has taken you to lodges and chapters throughout both West and East Kent. What has the experience of presenting the talk across the Provinces been like for you personally?*

I have been flattered that my very eclectic 5000 word lecture that took me a year to write, has been listened to by over 300 Freemasons and raised over £900 for the Museum of Freemasonry. I honestly thought the lecture was "too weird" for people to want to come and listen to it. I have since found out that some masons have listened to it 3 times. I am a West Kent Light Blue, but now live in Walmer on the Kent Coast. Being able to deliver it across that two provinces has given me connections in East Kent Masonry that I never would have found any other way. I was the most nervous at my final lecture, the West Kent Provincial Grand Stewards Lodge. There was around 100 freemasons there including, our PGM and two PPGMs. I was even miked up like a masonic Britney Spears and I was so proud that meeting alone raised £445 for the museum.



**Having delivered the lecture to a number of different lodges and chapters, what has stood out to you most about the reactions and discussions it has generated among the Brethren?**

All I wanted to do was share this hidden symbolism, that has been in those A3 etching for 300 years and only recently been noticed. "Hidden in plain sight" I called it in my slides. After each lecture, I had so many positive reactions and conversations where Masons thought they saw something else in the sketch that I had not commented on. As part of the lecture tour, my notes are turned into a little booklet to read which is sold for £5 to raise money for the museum. So many Masons bought one so they could read it in more detail at home. I am fascinated by the history of Freemasonry and the role of art in that history, I didn't realise how many brethren also shared that interest. As part of being a fellowcraft we are told to explore the liberal arts and sciences and being able to bond with Brethren about Hogarth's symbolism has been quite wonderful.

**Looking back on the tour as a whole, what has been the most rewarding part of sharing this lecture with so many lodge and chapters?**

Lord Cornwallis wanted the lecture to span both West and East Kent and bring both provinces together. I firmly believe that being a West Kent Mason living in East Kent that delivering this Lecture has enabled me to enjoy the best of both provinces. I need to pay thanks to both of my mentors, Alan Wondzinski, 3rd Grand Principle for West Kent, and Graham Chisnell, APGM for East Kent for editing my lecture many times and attending all of my lectures. Both of them now, I consider as friends as well as brothers.

In addition and at the risk of name dropping, Right Worshipful Brother Jonathan Winpenny, attended my last lecture and brought with him the Grand Stewards Jewel, designed by Bro Hogarth in 1734 and still worn today, to personally show to me this beautiful jewel.

And finally, if you are the Cornwallis Lecturer, you are always top table and served first and get a free dinner !  
AHAHHAHA !!

**For Brethren or Companions who might be considering developing their own lectures or educational talks, would you encourage them to do so, and what advice would you give them?**

Writing the lecture itself took a year. Yes – a whole year. As who writes 5000 word lectures anymore?

I write emails for work and I write the least amount of words possible. Now I am writing a very prestigious article in which I have strict rules to follow and I have to talk for 40 minutes non stop !! In saying this. It has been the most rewarding Masonic experience I have ever done. If you do it. You need to find the time to research and you need a team around you to proof read your article and to encourage you to keep going. Just keep going. Masonry is about making ourselves a better man. I feel I am a better man for writing my lecture.

**Finally, if someone wanted to follow a similar path and take a lecture on the road to lodges or chapters across the Province, what practical steps would you recommend they take to get started?**

This lecture is not for the faint hearted. It is prestigious and there are strict rules to follow. You need to find a passion, an interest in Freemasonry and when you do that, as I did, you open a wonderful world of interest.

You also need to find the time to invest in the research and studying so your lecture is robust.

Time was the biggest thing for me. I wrote almost all of it in my quiet times at work. I would do an hour a day.

And that was over the course of a year.

Your lecture becomes a legacy you leave as part of Lord Cornwallis's vision.

The support team around you will help you with content and challenge what you have written, as you get a "blindness" to the words when you are so close to it I was so lucky I had two brilliant masons to guide me through all of it. I could not have done it without them.

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## Peaks of Commitment: Loyalty & Remembrance Lodge's Festival Finale

Over the week of 9th March, four members of the Loyalty & Remembrance Lodge, based in Sidcup, tackled the Yorkshire Three Peaks to conclude their 2026 Festival efforts and secure their Festival Gold honour. The Worshipful Master, Greg Rawlins, was joined by his Senior Steward, Alan Stacey, and Senior and Junior Wardens, Nicholas Hair and Geoff Hetherington, in achieving the incredible feat of completing all three peaks on three consecutive days.

Against the odds on Monday, in dense fog, the team scaled Ingleborough in impressive time. On Tuesday, a scramble up Pen-y-Ghent's more challenging southern face left some feeling a touch of nervousness, but it was again completed with aplomb.

The team concluded what had, to that point, been a misty and damp week with stunning sunshine atop Whernside, the tallest of the three summits—albeit accompanied by fierce winds blowing in from the Irish Sea. In total, the group climbed 5,401 feet over the three days—the equivalent of 376 'vintage' Routemaster buses, or five Eiffel Towers. The distance travelled was 22.35 miles, roughly equivalent to the journey from Charing Cross to the southern perimeter of Gatwick Airport, or to Sevenoaks.

The total raised exceeded £2,000, with, at the time of writing, a minimum of £2,197 including Gift Aid on the JustGiving platform.

Commenting, the Worshipful Master of the Lodge, Greg Rawlins, said:  
"I am immensely proud of this group, and of the Lodge as a whole, who have excelled in recent weeks with an exceptional Ladies' Night, followed by this challenge, demonstrating our commitment to the Lodge's core values of Impact, Bonhomie and Inclusion.

"There can be little doubt that we are immensely proud, as a Lodge, of what we have achieved for the West Kent 2026 Festival, particularly the efforts of these four, who truly pushed themselves."

**JustGiving**™ <https://www.justgiving.com/page/5842yorks>



# Have You Anything to Give in the Cause of Charity?



This foundational phrase resonates with every individual embarking on their journey into Freemasonry. Taking thought for others, and dedicating oneself to charitable endeavour, underpins much of who we are and what we do as an organisation. While Lodges throughout the Province are consistent in their support of local charities, with Masters often selecting a cause particularly close to their hearts during their year in office, we are increasingly recognising that financial donations, though always appreciated, are not the only, or sometimes the most impactful, way to contribute. Charities can often benefit significantly more from the gift of our time, practical support, or the utilisation of our collective skills and networks.

Pilgrim's Lodge decided to embrace this broader view of charity by developing a unique, hands-on outreach project. Collaborating with the Wrotham Masonic Centre and the established local charity, The Community Cupboard, they devised a plan to prepare and serve up to 50 complimentary hot, two-course lunches for members of the community who rely on the services of the local food bank. The initial step involved a crucial meeting between members of the Lodge and the charity's representatives. This direct consultation was vital, allowing the Lodge to establish the true level of need within the community and gain a comprehensive understanding of how best to structure and provide this specific form of support to ensure maximum benefit.

The Community Cupboard operates as a vital local food bank within our Province and has been a recipient of considerable support from numerous Masonic units, particularly since the onset of the pandemic. The statistics clearly illustrate the deepening challenges facing our local communities: in 2025 alone, The Community Cupboard distributed over 81 tonnes of food, supporting a total of 980 individuals, which tragically included 294 children and 41 infants. This support was primarily delivered through 3,012 individual food parcels—a sobering 49% increase on the number issued in the previous year. These figures serve as a stark reminder of the real, daily struggles many people in our locality are currently facing. The charity played a key role in the project by agreeing to confidentially identify those users deemed most in need of the Lodge's hot lunch support, liaising directly with them to confirm their attendance and finalise the necessary numbers.

The practical delivery of these meals required further community engagement. The Lodge approached a pub well-known to its members, initially intending to simply source the food ingredients at wholesale cost. However, the response from the pub staff exceeded all expectations. They were not only happy to assist but volunteered to go significantly further: they offered to manage the entire food ordering process, meticulously work out the costs for the two-courses, and undertake the bulk of the preliminary food preparation in advance. This extraordinary gesture dramatically reduced the workload, leaving the Lodge members with only the final stages of cooking and preparation on the day of the event itself. The success of the inaugural lunch was ensured by the dedication of 12 volunteers from the Lodge, who generously gave up their time to cook, serve, and ensure that the food reached all those in need with warmth and hospitality.

This event marks the highly successful first step in what the Lodge intends to be a sustained programme of outreach to the local community. The plan is to adopt a rotational model, similar to the highly effective approach utilised by the DoKC (Duke of Kent Court) Coffee Mornings. Under this model, different Masonic units will be invited to sponsor future quarterly lunches and, crucially, provide the volunteers required to prepare and serve the food. These charitable lunches are intended to become a quarterly fixture on the calendar, with the next event already scheduled for July and, encouragingly, a sponsor already secured. If you or your Lodge are interested in becoming actively involved in this meaningful and rewarding initiative at the Wrotham Masonic Centre, please do not hesitate to reach out to the organisers. Your time and practical support can make a tangible difference in the lives of those in our community facing hardship.



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# My First Year as President of the Widows Sons West Kent



When I accepted the President's patch of the WSWK, I understood that the role would carry responsibility. I anticipated organising ride-outs, charring meetings and ensuring that the Chapter continued to function effectively and harmoniously. What I did not fully appreciate at the time was the breadth of opportunity the office would provide.

Shortly after my appointment, I was reminded that one of my responsibilities would be to organise a charitable fundraising event. My previous charitable experience as a Freemason had largely been within the Lodge room or at festive boards. As Charity Steward in my Lodge, I had supported worthy causes; however, I had not truly considered how I might extend those efforts beyond that familiar setting. The Presidency of the Widows Sons afforded both the platform and the confidence to do precisely that.

Our first major initiative took place at the Westerham Brewery with live music performed by Flipping The Bird. The summer fundraiser raised £541 for the Ravensbourne Project. While modest in absolute terms, the sum represented a meaningful contribution within our local community.

We undertook another PSA Blood Run from Dartford to central London. Three members of the Chapter transported vital prostate cancer screening samples to The Doctors Laboratory, working in collaboration with the West Kent Pastoral Care Team. Although not a public fundraising event, it served as a reminder that charity is not solely measured by funds raised.

During the summer, we were also invited to visit West Bank Nursing Home. Eight motorcycles attended, including a striking red trike that quickly became the focus of attention. Residents were offered supervised rides within the grounds, and the response was remarkable. The experience highlighted that charitable engagement can take many forms. Sometimes, the simple act of presence can bring genuine comfort and joy.

December marked our most substantial undertaking of the year: the 2025 Annual Toy Run. With outstanding support from Lodges across West Kent, Metropolitan Lodges, private donors and fundraising initiatives, we raised £4,423 to provide Christmas gifts for children and families in need. Preparations commenced at The Entertainer in Bromley, where trolley after trolley was filled with toys, twenty-one large boxes were packed and prepared for distribution. On the morning of the Toy Run, members gathered at the Westwood Masonic Centre in Welling before riding in convoy to Bromley Football Club. Dressed in festive attire, the procession provided a visible and positive demonstration of Freemasonry in action. With the assistance of Bromley Children's & Families Voluntary Forum, we were able to distribute gifts to Bromley Well Young Carers, Bromley FC Community Trust, Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid, Hilda Lane Community Association, Bromley Borough Foodbank, Baby Basics Bromley, CASPA, Living Well Bromley, Crystal Palace Community Trust, The Baby Bank – West Wickham and Shirley, and Bromley Care Leavers. The breadth of organisations supported reflected the scale and reach of the collective effort. We were honoured by the presence of several distinguished guests: West Kents PGM; DPGM; APGM; and the Mayor of Bromley, in full ceremonial dress. Their presence underscored the significance of the Toy Run within both the Masonic and the wider local community.

As we move into the new year, our focus turns to Easter. We are preparing a fundraiser in aid of CASPA (Community Autistic Support, Pride & Advocacy). We will undertake an Easter Ride Out to personally deliver Easter eggs to both CASPA and the Ravensbourne Project, who we also intend to make a further donation to.

Over the course of the year, the Chapter has raised nearly £5,000, delivered hundreds of Christmas gifts, transported critical medical samples and brought joy to elderly residents. More importantly, we have demonstrated that Freemasonry need not be confined within Lodge walls. It can be active, visible and engaged within the communities we serve.

If any Brother is interested in joining us, or if you would like to support our charitable initiatives, we would be pleased to hear from you. Please feel free to contact me directly at [president@westkent.wsmba.uk](mailto:president@westkent.wsmba.uk) or our Secretary at [secretary@westkent.wsmba.uk](mailto:secretary@westkent.wsmba.uk) for further information.

Robert Yeeles (Mushroom) President | West Kent Widows Sons.

# Provincial Grand Communications Officer & Editor of this Edition of West Kent Magazine!

As we welcome the Spring edition of the West Kent Newsletter, this issue places a strong focus on the rollout of the Building Together initiative, and how it can be successfully implemented within our Lodges and Chapters.

In this edition, the Membership team shares valuable insight into both the why and the how behind Building Together, helping to highlight its importance in strengthening and sustaining our Province for the future.

From a Communications perspective, there are a number of resources available to support you and your Lodge or Chapter. Rather than listing everything here, I would encourage you to get in touch — whether it's for guidance, ideas, or simply to sense-check your approach. Even a quick conversation on best practice can make a real difference.

You will also find contributions from the Widow's Sons, a message from Matthew Watson, our Cornwallis Lecturer for 2025–26, as well as some excellent examples of Freemasonry in action. This includes the wonderful work taking place in Wrotham with Pilgrims Lodge, and the charity walks organised by Loyalty & Remembrance Lodge.

Finally, if your Lodge or Chapter is involved in community work, or you have a story you feel others across the Province would find interesting, I would be delighted to hear from you. Please do get in touch as we begin to shape the Summer edition of the West Kent Magazine.

This should be my last edition as editor. I am excited for our new West Kent Magazine Editor to start, and I'm sure in due time, he will introduce himself to you all and take this Magazine to new heights.

Thank you for your continued support.

Gordon Rollo  
Provincial Grand Communications Officer  
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