



Wiltshire Freemasons

Attracting | Engaging | Growing

WELCOME

WE ARE

OPEN

2023

A GUIDE TO ORGANISING A SUCCESSFUL OPEN DAY



Integrity



Respect



Friendship



Charity

There is no such thing as a free lunch – an 'open day' will cost money.

Funding your Open Day

You will require a budget for your open day. This will be used primarily for purchasing advertising space for the event in the local press as well as for banners and promotional support advertising. Don't forget, refreshments for visitors and supporters is always appreciated.

The budget required will be different for each open day and is heavily influenced by local advertising costs.

Promoting your Open Day.

The Provincial Information Team is able to assist in promoting your open day in the following ways:

Providing the Provincial Exhibition Stand.

Help with press releases.

Help with the design of open day posters.

Contact with local media and radio.

Liaising with charities, which the Lodge has supported.

Press attendance – if cheque presentations are to be made.

Promoting the event via the Provincial Web Site and Twitter.

After the event, ensuring a Press Release and images are submitted to the local press.



You need to make visitors welcome – it sounds obvious doesn't it but you do need to make visitors feel special and very important. Treat them as guests, it really could be the difference between a quick look and an interested viewing.

Planning essentials for an Open Day.

The dress code for an Open Day is a matter of choice. However, morning dress or dark suits in the reception areas might present a sombre image of Freemasonry, whereas smart casual dress promotes a more informal atmosphere.

Do ensure that you have members available to meet and greet on the door. Do remember that sometimes it's best to restrict your numbers to two or three maximum in order that visitors do not feel intimidated.

Do ensure a Lodge member is charged with maintaining a count using a 'clicker counter' to make sure you have an accurate record of attendees at your Open Day. The Province has a specially designed form which you can use

Encourage charities and visitors to attend.

The attendance of charities is a really excellent way to communicate to the public the support given by Freemasons. You do need to give charity organisers at least one month's notice of your Open Day to ensure they can organise and attend. Many charities have their 'own following' who may well attend your Open Day.

Do not be afraid to open your Lodge Room to visitors. It is the one place everyone wants to see. In simple terms it will provide the 'wow' factor and you will be surprised at the positive reaction it provokes from visitors.

Important things to remember to do and not to do....

Avoid Masonic terminology – understand your visitors will be interested in our history, our lodge room, our ceremonies, they may enquire about some Masonic myths.

First Impressions Count.

Lay out of the reception room.

First impressions are important and you should have meeters and greeters at the door to ensure a friendly welcome. Use a 'clicker' to count the incoming visitors not only to provide useful information as to the number of attendees but also to comply with health and safety requirements and fire regulations.

Use the banners outside the hall to advertise and attract.

Use the members wisely, too many will be overwhelming and put members of the public off. Too few, and members of the public will be reluctant to step beyond the threshold.

A good display can impress.

Central Exhibition Room.

Careful consideration to the layout must be given. Use the Provincial exhibition stand, pop ups and other display material

The attendance of charities you support will act as a magnet and you should take full advantage of every opportunity to involve charities in your open day activities.

Use pop ups, charity display boards and the Provincial information boards which present the history of Freemasonry in a clear and concise manner.

Avoid using boards with too much Masonic detail but where you do be prepared to offer an explanation. Visitors are interested in the 'Honours Board' often identifying the name of a Past Master with someone they know.

Use only Craft displays. Detailing Other Orders 'Beyond the Craft' may unintentionally confuse visitors.

Give quality space to the charities attending. Make them feel welcome and acknowledge their participation at every opportunity. Remember they will attract their own supporters and it is important that every person who visits the Open Day carries away a positive recollection.

Here are just a few examples of the charities you may wish to invite. Please do remember the more 'local' the better.

The Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

SSAFA

The three Hospices in Wiltshire and also Naomi House.

Alzheimers Support

Cancer Charities

Headway

Heart Charities.

Women's Aid

Children's Charities

Scouts and Guides

But there are other things....

What else makes for a good day?

It's always the little things!



Refreshments are recommended – tea / coffee biscuits available throughout the day.

Cheque presentations to a charity attract publicity to the day and encourage the local media to be involved. You may wish to consider this as an option. It is worth considering limiting the presentations should you have more than five charities to which you intend to present a cheque. Sometimes spreading the presentations over a few weeks allows you to get maximum publicity in the press.

Members of the Provincial Communication Team, the Provincial Director of Ceremonies and the Provincial Membership Officer would be pleased to assist you in any way possible.

The Provincial Grand Master, the Deputy PrGM or Assistant PrGM would be pleased to assist in any presentation.

The Lodge Room.



The **'WOW'** factor
Some of things visitors say
about our Lodge Rooms
Amazing
Incredible
Beautiful
Peaceful



Experience suggests that the Lodge Room is the area, which attracts the greatest amount of interest and the largest audience; above all it provides that all important WOW factor, and to have the Lodge Room open is an essential part of your Open Day. There is no Masonic reason why it cannot be open to the public. If it's good enough for Grand Lodge, it's surely good enough for Wiltshire Lodges.

To ensure Lodge Room presentations are relevant and interesting it is suggested that you avoid theatre style lectures; consider instead allowing small groups to visit the Lodge room, commencing their short tour at different points in the Lodge Room. Remember, your visitors might just want to 'browse' and take in the ambience of the Lodge Room without feeling obliged to listen to a presentation. They will probably take a special interest in the Honours Boards so it's always a good idea be ready to answer questions on 'notable' Brethren (former Mayors, business leaders etc).

Brethren should they wish, may wear their regalia in full or a collar only, whichever is felt may help in the presentation.

If you issue badges please do not use Masonic titles - it's perfectly acceptable to just print a name and if you wish put under the name the word FREEMASON.

Remember, the whole purpose of the event is to make your guests welcome and not to frighten them off by adopting a 'them and us' attitude.



You don't have to do this on your own....

Remember the Provincial Communications Team is available to help.

Displays and Materials.

The Province has an Exhibition Stand, Banners and the use of Information Boards.

Information leaflets from the Province and from UGLE including Masonic Charitable Foundation booklets are available.

You may wish to use the Provincial presentation on a continuous video loop.

The Province has follow up request cards for the use of visitors who might wish to learn more about Freemasonry.

Legal issues.

You do need to keep within the law.

Having a lodge Open day does require you to consider the legal obligations, which may affect the use of the building and visitors attending, for example: -

Health and safety.

Fire regulations.

Risk assessments.

Insurance cover.

Licensing – should the bar be used.



Evaluation.

Good data helps you make good decisions.

It is important to evaluate the day not just in terms of numbers attending but equally importantly whether there are areas that you would wish to change the next time you hold an Open Day.

You may consider conducting a simple questionnaire on attendee's thoughts on the Open Day.

How did they hear of the Open Day?

How did they rate their visit? (Scale one to six)

Was the Open Day informative?

What part of their visit interested them most?

Did it change their perception of Freemasonry?

Are they interested in becoming a Freemason?



Be open minded to change.

Ladies Freemasonry really does exist - honest....

Very often we are asked about Freemasonry for ladies - always be very positive in responding to this question. Please do not treat or respond to any enquiry in a 'joking' manner, remember we aim to be respectful at all times.

There are two Orders you can refer to:-

Order of Women Freemasons

27 Pembridge Gardens,
London W2 4EF

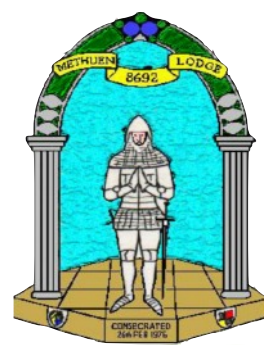
Hon Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons.

Acre House
402 Finchley Road,
Childs Hill,
London NW2 2HY

Fact Sheet Province of Wiltshire.

Number of Lodges 44

Bradford on Avon	2 Lodges
Calne	2 Lodge
Chippenham	2 Lodges
Corsham	3 Lodges
Devizes	3 Lodges
Downton	1 Lodge
East Knoyle	1 Lodge
Highworth	1 Lodge
Ludgershall	2 Lodges
Malmesbury	1 Lodge
Marlborough	2 Lodges
Melksham	1 Lodge
Salisbury	7 Lodges
Swindon	9 Lodges
Trowbridge	2 Lodges
Warminster	2 Lodges
Westbury	1 Lodge
Various	2 Lodges



Number of members in the Province approximately 2,000

Number of Lodges in the English Constitution: 7,696

Use the tools we have available....

Materials available to help make your Open Day successful.

- Wiltshire Freemasonry leaflets covering History, Charities and Good Causes, Partners Guide, Interested? -
- Provincial Exhibition Stand/Trailer
- Story Boards
- Grand Lodge Information Booklets
- Press releases;
- Provincial Web Site & Twitter;
- Provincial Magazine Across the Plain;
- Monthly Newsletter



Available from:

Communications Officer: pcowiltshire@gmail.com or Gordon Lindsay: lindsay.ge47@gmail.com

Finally a word from the Provincial Grand Master....



I am sure we would all agree that people don't plan to fail, but sometimes they fail to plan. I trust this guide will prove useful in assisting in the planning of your Open Day.

I am very aware of the incredible work that is undertaken for every Open Day held in the Province and I have been privileged to attend a number of these events and continue to be amazed at their popularity with members of the public. They venture into our Masonic Lodge Rooms and gaze in wonder at their intrinsic beauty. It really is true when we say a Lodge Room provides the WOW factor.

Changing a person's perception of Freemasonry is a difficult thing to do, especially when the media perpetuates some of the more outlandish, unfavourable and fanciful untruths.

We have every right to be proud of who we are and what we do, and I encourage you to make your Open Day a great success; but above all, have lots of fun promoting the beneficial effects of our Ancient and Honourable Institution.



MEET THE MASONS

Highworth Market Square

SATURDAY 14th AUGUST

About the Freemasons

We are a members' organisation which has thrived for over 300 years. We have no political connections, we have members of all ages, races, religions, cultures and backgrounds. Freemasons have met in Highworth for over 40 years and currently meet in the North View Community Centre.

Our Principles

- ✓ Integrity
- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Friendship
- ✓ Charity

WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS



This booklet is one of a series produced and published as part of THE MEMBERS' PATHWAY by the Provincial Communication Team on behalf of the Provincial Membership Team, the Provincial Mentoring Team, and the Provincial Learning and Development Team.

Five of the booklets are specifically written to help a Freemason understand the important step he has taken and to answer a few of the many questions he may be asking about the ceremony he has experienced and Freemasonry in general. None of the booklets claim or intend to be the definitive or absolute answer to every question. Freemasonry being a progressive science the booklets offer its members the opportunity to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge.

The series of booklets also include GUIDANCE NOTES for Officers of the Lodge. The guidance reflect the wishes of the Provincial Grand Master and it is hoped that Lodge Officers will actively support the practical advice, tips and hints contained in the notes.

Errors and omissions are inevitable. If you spot a mistake or consider something of importance has been missed out, please contact the editor pcowiltshire@gmail.com