



# Province of Yorkshire, West Riding

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Brethren, Companions, Mark Master Masons and colleagues,

## Coronavirus

Following the issue of further guidance this morning by The United Grand Lodge of England (copy attached) and from The Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons this afternoon, (also attached) we are taking the unprecedented step of giving joint advice on the implications within our Province and the actions we plan to take over the coming weeks and until the current situation subsides.

There will inevitably be those who think we are over-reacting and those who think we are not doing enough. We are being guided in this by the advice from UGLE, Mark Grand Lodge and central government and we have the very best interests of those many amongst our members who fall into the especially vulnerable categories.

We recognise that our actions and recommendations will cause further disruption but we hope to enrol and maintain your support so that we all come out of this as best we can over what will inevitably be the coming months.

As Provincial leaders it is important that we set an example in adhering to the guidance and we have taken the following decisions with immediate effect and until further notice:

- Anyone who would normally be attending an event or meeting in an official capacity on behalf of the Province (Craft, Royal Arch and Mark) will not now do so. This includes all Rulers, Provincial Representatives at Installation meetings, Charity Representatives at Mark Installation meetings and Liaison Officers attending meetings in that capacity.
- Those Lodges and Chapters scheduled to hold special events such as **Centenary or other celebrations** should either postpone these until after the current situation subsides or run them wherever possible without guests and visitors to minimise the risk. In any event no Provincial Ruler or representative as indicated above will attend if these meetings go ahead
- **Installations** as with all other meetings should be called by summons as normal but may be carried out in minimal form and wherever possible without visitors or guests. Where insufficient members are in attendance to hold the

meeting it may be abandoned as per previous guidance. In any event no representative of the Province will attend. We will issue further guidance on this next week.

- **Mark Masons Lodges may be postponed by dispensation** of the Provincial Grand Master to a subsequent date. This does not apply to the Craft or Royal Arch.
- **The meeting of Craft Provincial Grand Lodge scheduled to take place on May 5<sup>th</sup> is now cancelled** and further instructions will be issued in due course. Those receiving appointment or promotion will be deemed to have received that appointment or promotion on May 5<sup>th</sup> and will be entitled to wear their new regalia from that date.
- **The meeting of Mark Provincial Grand Lodge scheduled to take place on April 18<sup>th</sup> is now cancelled** and further instructions will be issued in due course. Those receiving appointment or promotion will be deemed to have received that appointment or promotion on April 18<sup>th</sup> and will be entitled to wear their new regalia from that date.
- **The Craft Initiates evenings in Huddersfield and Otley have been cancelled**
- **There will be no further visits by Acting Officers and no Escorted Visits in the Mark** until such time as restrictions are lifted. This will include the Craft visit scheduled for March 25<sup>th</sup>, the Craft and Royal Arch luncheon scheduled for April 26<sup>th</sup> and The Mark Escorted Visit scheduled for March 20<sup>th</sup> will be postponed or cancelled.
- The Provincial Office will be closed to all but absolutely essential visitors who must make an appointment to visit. “*Absolutely essential*” in this context means only those whose business cannot be conducted in any other way because they require personal access to files or equipment. No callers will be admitted unless pre-arranged.
- The Provincial Office will operate at a minimal level of staffing with only 1 staff member being at the office at any one time and as much work as possible being done remotely from home.
- As a consequence of the above we would urge all regular contact with the office to be made by email rather than by telephone as this will aid remote working
- Physical meetings of The Rulers and their respective Advisory Councils and committees will not be held but instead discussions and decisions will be held and made remotely.

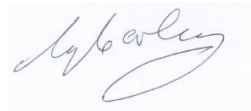
Inevitably there will be further advice and guidance issued over the coming weeks and you may have queries about what has been outlined above or other issues.

Please direct these in the first instance for Craft and Royal Arch to [advice@wrprovince.co.uk](mailto:advice@wrprovince.co.uk) and for The Mark Order to [secretariat@westyorksmark.org.uk](mailto:secretariat@westyorksmark.org.uk) **DO NOT MAKE PHONE QUERIES PLEASE!**

Thank you for your support and assistance in these matters and would Secretaries/Scribes E please make every effort to get this to ALL members as quickly as possible, especially those who are not on email and may be in the most vulnerable categories.



David S Pratt  
Provincial Grand Master



Stewart G Carley  
Grand Superintendent



James Steggle  
Provincial Grand Master