



PROVINCE OF EAST KENT

Support and Development Group

Preparing for the Master's Chair

This Seminar is one of the “Preparing for Office” training series designed to help those who are about to take the Chair of their Lodge for the first time. Each lasts two and a half hours and is led by two local Past Masters who have experience in teaching, presenting or leading discussion groups. Various venues across the Province host these sessions to cut down travelling time, and encourage local networking. From the Spring of 2010 they will be held annually.

So what happens?

At the start of the evening, each delegate is asked to write down the three aspects of taking on the role of Worshipful Master which worry him the most. These are then grouped together and the results are used to drive the agenda for the evening. All Brethren are encouraged to participate in a free and open discussion, and to seek joint solutions to the problems facing them.

At the end of the evening, each delegate is presented with a copy of “*Preparing for the Master's Chair*”, a guide published by the Province of East Kent to provide a central reference point for the new Master as he tackles his year in office.

What subjects are covered?

The exact make up of the evening and the order in which subjects are dealt with depends on the delegates but usually the topics covered include:

- **Selecting and Appointing the Officers of the Lodge.** One of the first tasks to be undertaken by the Master Elect and potentially one of the trickiest. Guidance is given on the correct procedure to be adopted and on how to effect change without giving offence.
- **Public Speaking.** You may have proposed or responded to one or two toasts but, as Master of your Lodge, you will speak on your own behalf in the Temple, at the Festive Board and possibly at other events. Some speakers seem perfectly relaxed – how do they do that? How should you prepare?
- **The Festive Board.** As you approach the Chair most of your attention will naturally be on the challenges posed by ceremonial aspects of the role. However a Masonic meeting includes a Festive Board. What are the things that you need to know to help the Festive Board run smoothly?

- **Chairing Lodge and Committee Meetings.** As Master you will have control of your Lodge and Committee meetings. Advice is given on how to manage the agenda, how to plan your programme of work and on how to develop your younger brethren. Guidance is also given on how to Chair an effective committee meeting.
- **Standards and Etiquette.** You will be a role model for the junior brethren demonstrating those standards of good Masonic conduct that you will have observed and acquired over the years. Consistent application of these principles will give you confidence in the way you conduct yourself as the figurehead of your Lodge.
- **Visiting and Representing Your Lodge.** There will be many occasions when you will be an ambassador for your Lodge and its reputation will to some extent depend on the way you conduct yourself when you are out and about. What are the various occasions and opportunities open to you and what can you expect in each case?
- **Recruitment and Retention.** A great deal of advice and guidance is now available to help Lodges with Recruitment, Retention and Retrieval (the so-called three Rs). This is particularly important as Lodges grapple with the challenges of attracting new members and maintaining the interest of existing members. What resources are available? Where can you find them?

What others have said.....

Here are a selection of comments from previous delegates:

".... I came away with my ears and eyes wide open, much better prepared for next year..."

Margate, September 2009.

"... a focussed training programme for key Masonic issues."

Gillingham October 2009

"Very informative....more of these needed".

Dover October 2009

"Please do it again"

Gravesend October 2009

How do I reserve a place?

Simply e-mail [mentoringpdg@googlemail .com](mailto:mentoringpdg@googlemail.com) for a copy of the 2010/11 programme and a booking form, or speak to your Lodge Secretary who will be sent full details in due course.