

# THE ASSOCIATION OF BRECON FREEMASONS

The Masonic Hall, Cerrigochion Road, Brecon, Powys. LD3 7NR

[www.breconfreemasons.co.uk](http://www.breconfreemasons.co.uk)



Secretary to the Association:

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1 of 3

Monday 6th September 2021

## **To - Secretaries, Scribes & Recorders etc.**

Dear Brethren,

### **Re- COVID 19 - use of Brecon Masonic Hall (BMH).**

I trust that you are all keeping safe and well.

Following receipt of the Welsh Government Alert Level 0: Guidance for employers, businesses and organisations, the Chairman of the Association met with the Treasurer and Secretary to discuss and formulate a response to ensure that BMH satisfies its minimum legal requirements for the use of the Hall. Additionally, the well-being and welfare of all was paramount, to promote and encourage the return of the Brethren to a well maintained and managed environment.

The Committee of the Association of Brecon Freemasons assumes that all Brethren who attend BMH, will have received their "double jab" vaccination.

Following much constructive debate and taking cognisance of the specific characteristics of BMH to ensure all reasonable measures are in place, we are pleased to inform you that the building will re-open, albeit with minor requirements and recommendations (date as per above) in preparation for the new Masonic Year and as follows:

### **Requirements -**

1. The current COVID Risk Assessments and policies will still apply, as the hazard from the virus is unchanged; Secretaries should refresh themselves of its contents.
2. Face Coverings will remain mandatory when walking within the building; downstairs, stairway and landing area - to and from the temple. Coverings can be removed once inside the temple, preferably when seated.

3. Secretaries must ensure all persons attending meetings are recorded in the minute book or a separate log to ensure a "Track and Trace" system is in place (the manner of registration will be at the discretion of the Secretary, but must be saved for a minimum of 21 days). This also applies to lodge committee meetings when held downstairs, to comply with COVID and Fire Precaution regulations; again, records should be kept for a minimum of 21 days. As at 06/09/2021, BMH can hold a maximum of **54 persons** - this number is subject to change and Secretaries will be duly informed.
4. **Visitors** may now attend and should be included in the maximum permissible numbers allowed.
5. Meeting dates and times - each meeting (including committee meetings and rehearsals etc) shall continue to be "ring-fenced" for a minimum of 72 hours. Brethren should only access BMH if they are affiliated to a specific meeting. Under no circumstances should BMH be accessed, without first referencing the Association Website Calendar (**this is deemed the default information point for ALL meeting dates and is regularly updated - consult the calendar, prior to making any arrangements for your Lodge/Chapter/Preceptory. Please contact the Association Secretary if any of your meeting dates have yet to be included on the calendar**).
6. The bar will now be open and a one way system will be implemented at the bar area, to address the overcrowding issue. Please wait to be called forward to be served. Once served, please move promptly away from the area, to avoid congestion.

#### **Recommendations to be considered -**

1. All doors, windows to remain in the open position to assist in ventilation whilst the building is in use. (Ensuring they are closed at the end of all meetings).
2. Every Brother using BMH, should take responsibility for their own welfare and only enter, if they are feeling well. If after visiting, a Brother feels unwell, he should contact the Secretary and inform him. Appropriate medical intervention should be sought, if deemed necessary by the Brother.
3. Persons should not attend if they have any signs or symptoms of COVID-19.
4. The use of the stairlift should be restricted to one person at a time. The stairway will be monitored and coordinated by a nominated member of the Lodge (as per BMH RA). A "stop/go" system will be in place to avoid congestion in this particular area.
5. Brethren should continue with social distancing whenever possible or keep a space of one chair between each other in the Temple. "unusable" chairs, will be clearly marked. Once a Brother has chosen his seat, he must not change to another - this will minimise cross-contamination. If there is a need to change a seating position (for H&S etc), the used chair MUST be immediately sanitised.
6. All Brethren should continue to sanitise their hands on entry, at regular intervals and sanitise equipment before and after use. (This does not apply to the tracing boards - an extendable "pointer" can be used to avoid contact).
7. Face coverings should be used when in close proximity to others, especially in anti-rooms.
8. The playing of Lodge music is now permissible, as is the re-introduction of singing during ceremonies and rehearsals. Gloves can now be worn.
9. Apply common sense at all times.
10. Abide by the guidance previously issued by UGLE, WG, PGL and policies set for the safe use of BMH.

In accordance with the guidance it is also a duty on all responsible persons who use BMH, to undertake all reasonable measures. Lodges may if they so wish, take additional precautionary measures to those above if they consider it appropriate, but these must also be recorded.

If any Brother notices the need for the maintenance of furniture, lack of sanitising gels etc, the Secretary should be informed as a matter of priority.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Association Secretary should you require any further guidance.

### **Festive Board Update**

As per the guidance from PGL and the easing of restrictions in Wales, a Festive Board (FB) can now be organised. The FB will be governed by the maximum number allowed at the Masonic meeting and in line with the COVID protocols laid out at the dining facility.

### **Common Sense Approach**

It is acknowledged that the vaccination programme is proving to be effective in the number of hospitalisations but does not affect the rate of infection or transmission of the disease. Cases are still being recorded, it is therefore imperative that we all take a sensible and judgmental approach to our long awaited return to normality ensuring we keep ourselves and families safe.

Updates will continue to be communicated as and when necessary, ensuring that BMH can operate within all legislative frameworks.

Yours sincerely and fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Repe', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

On Behalf of Chairman of The Association of Brecon Freemasons.