



Grand Lodge of Scotland

FREEMASONS' HALL
96 GEORGE STREET
EDINBURGH, EH2 3DH

5th June 2025

Dear Sir and Brother,

I have to request your attendance at a Regular Communication of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, to be held here on Thursday, 12th June 2025 at 2.00 p.m. Brethren are requested to be seated by 1.50 p.m.

Before entering the Hall, Members must sign the appropriate Attendance Sheet; they must present their membership cards, which are not transferable under pain of forfeiture; they must be properly clothed and should appear in their own regalia.

The Election of members of the Governance & Strategy Board will take place at the Regular Communication to be held on Thursday, 30th October 2025. Qualified Members with the requisite skill set who wish to serve on the Board should obtain an application from Grand Secretary, to be completed and returned by Friday 19th September 2025.

I enclose herewith Proceedings of Grand Lodge, No. 1, 2025-2026.

The next Regular Communication of Grand Lodge will take place at Freemasons' Hall, 96 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3DH, on Thursday 30th October 2025, at 2.00 p.m. (Brethren to be seated by 1.50 p.m.)

Yours Faithfully and Fraternally

William M. S. Semple
Grand Secretary

BUSINESS

1. Presents - Reports of Proceedings of Sister Grand Lodges.
2. Minute of Grand Lodge. Pages 1 to 9 of Proceedings.
3. Minute of the Governance and Strategy Board and of the Board of Benevolence and Masonic Homes. Pages 10 to 22 of Proceedings.
4. Transactions of the Governance & Strategy Board shown on Pages 23 to 50 of Proceedings embracing the following recommendations: -
 - (a) That The Grand Lodge of Scotland join as full members the Council for Freemasonry in Great Britain and be represented by the Grand Master Mason and Grand Secretary. Page 48 of Proceedings.
 - (b) That Lodge Macduff, No. 940, with Lodge Earl Haig, No. 1260, within the Province of Fife and Kinross, be amalgamated to be known as Lodge Earl Haig, No. 1260. Page 48 of Proceedings.
 - (c) That Brother Gary John Upchurch, be appointed as a Grand Steward to represent the Province of Renfrewshire East and to replace Brother Andrew McFadden. Page 49 of Proceedings.
 - (d) That Brother Charles I. Z. Lawson be appointed as a Grand Steward to represent the Province of Sutherland and to replace Brother David J. Williams. Page 49 of Proceedings.
 - (e) That Grand Lodge appoints 26 Proxy District Grand Masters and 4 Proxy Grand Superintendents. Page 49 of Proceedings.
 - (f) That Brother Nadar Heyat be appointed as a Representative of The Grand Lodge of Scotland near to The Grand Lodge of Azerbaijan. Page 50 of Proceedings.
 - (g) That Brother Querlin Baudilio Sanchez be appointed as a Representative of The Grand Lodge of Scotland near to The Grand Lodge of the Dominican Republic. Page 50 of Proceedings.
 - (h) That Lodge St Andrew, No. 966, Malta, currently under the direct supervision of The Grand Lodge of Scotland moves to come within the jurisdiction of the District Grand Lodge of Gibraltar and the latter is named The District Grand Lodge of the Western Mediterranean. Page 50 of Proceedings.

- (i) That Lodge Gwanda, No. 1462, District of Zimbabwe, be relocated to the District of Central South Africa. Page 193 of Proceedings 2024-2025
- (j) That Lodge Eval, No. 1464, (Inverness-shire), be declared Dormant.
- (k) That Lodge Kildinguie, No 1381, (Orkney and Zetland), be declared Dormant.
- (l) That Lodge Chingola, No. 1394, (Zambia), be declared Dormant.
- (m) That Lodge Richard Cooper No. 1661, (Zimbabwe), be declared Dormant.
- (n) That Lodge Springburn, No. 1198, (Glasgow), be declared inactive for a period of twelve months.

5. Motion proposed by Brother William H. Gauld, Past Depute Grand Master, and seconded by Brother Kenneth D Kennedy, Past Depute Grand Master at the Regular Communication on 6th February 2025 "In order to give effect to the amendment of Laws 125 and 192 (including the First Schedule, item 126) to remove the requirement for 10% of annual fees to be added to Lodge Benevolence Funds, it is proposed that the following alterations to the Constitution and Laws be approved)."

- At Law 125, delete paragraph 4 in its entirety, **'From each annual contribution levied, a sum specified in the Bye-Laws, but not less than that set forth in the First Schedule ,Item 27 [sic Item 26], Shall be paid into the Benevolent Fund of the Lodge. The Remainder shall be paid into the General Fund of the Lodge'** and replace with, **'Each annual contribution levied shall be paid into the General Fund of the Lodge'**.
- At Law 192, second line, delete, **'Laws 105 and 125'** and replace with, **'Law 105'**.
- First Schedule, Item 26, headed **'Benevolent Fund'** will be added.

6. Notices of Motion for consideration at the Regular Communication on 30th October 2025:-

6.1 To give effect to allow the creation of Proxy Grand Superintendents, it is proposed that the following alterations to the Constitution and Laws be approved.

- at Law 4; After ***“Grand Superintendents”*** add, ***“or their Proxies”***.
- at Law 88; Add at the end of the 1st paragraph, ***“It shall be competent for any Grand Superintendent to nominate and appoint a Qualified Member of any Daughter Lodge in good standing as his Proxy Superintendent”***.
- at Law 148; After ***“Proxy District Grand Master”*** add, ***“or a Proxy Grand Superintendent”***.

To be proposed by Brother Michael McAdams, Grand Steward, and seconded by Brother Alexander C.G. Moncrieff, Depute Grand Master

6.2 To give effect to remove the requirement of an affiliation fee from a Brother whose Lodge has been declared dormant within the last 12 months, it is proposed that the following alterations to the Constitution and Laws be approved.

- at Law 171, third paragraph, second sentence; After, ***“The Affiliation Fee shall be stated in the Lodge Bye-Laws and shall not be less than that specified in the First Schedule, Item 21”***, add ***“,with the exception of a member of a Daughter Lodge that was declared dormant within twelve months of the member’s application, who was a qualified member at the time of dormancy, in such case the fee shall be waived”***.
- at First Schedule, Item 21; After ***“Minimum Fee”***, add ***“with the exception of a member of a Daughter Lodge that was declared dormant within twelve months of the member’s application, who was a qualified member at the time of dormancy, in such case the fee shall be waived”***.

To be proposed by Brother Andrew Mushet, Grand Treasurer, and seconded by Brother Kenneth D. Kennedy, Past Depute Grand Master.

6.3 To give effect to reduce the restriction on Brethren abroad from being active members of other specified Constitutions, it is proposed that the following alteration to the Constitution and Laws be approved.

- at Law 133(c); After ***“any other Masonic Constitution”*** add: ***“(that of the United Grand Lodge of England or that of the Grand Lodge of Ireland being excepted)”***

To be proposed by Brother Michael McAdams, Grand Steward, and seconded by Alexander C.G. Moncrieff, Depute Grand Master

6.4 To give effect to streamline the process for inter-constitutional visitations between the Scottish, English and Irish Constitutions only, it is proposed that the following alterations to the Constitution and Laws be approved.

- at Law 207, fourth paragraph; Replace ***“Where the proposed visit ... to a Daughter Lodge then;”***, with ***“Where the proposed visit is by a Qualified Brother or Brethren, or a Daughter Lodge to a Lodge of another Constitution (not that of England or Ireland) or is by a Brother or Brethren or a Lodge of another Constitution (not that of England or Ireland) to a Daughter Lodge then;”***.

at Law 207; Before the last paragraph beginning ***“It should be noted”***, insert ***“Where the proposed visit is by a Qualified Brother or Brethren, or a Daughter Lodge to a Lodge of the English or Irish Constitution or is by a Brother or Brethren or a Lodge of English or Irish Constitution to a Daughter Lodge then this situation is covered by Appendix 9”***.

To be proposed by Brother Michael McAdams, Grand Steward, and seconded by Brother Alexander C.G. Moncrieff, Depute Grand Master

7. Report from the Grand Master Mason.
8. Collection for the benefit of the Scottish Masonic Benevolent Fund.
9. Any other competent business.



THE EASY FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE – AN EXCELLENT AND SIMPLE WAY OF RAISING MONEY FOR THE BENEVOLENT FUNDS OF GRAND LODGE!

The Chairman and members of the Benevolence and Care Committee invite you to join them in supporting the above initiative which enables much needed monies to be raised for the benevolent funds at NO cost either to you or to Grand Lodge. Please take the time to visit the website to find out more at [www.easyfundraising.org.uk /how it works/](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/how_it_works/). Please also feel free to contact the Benevolence and Care department at Freemasons' Hall and staff will be very pleased to assist with any query you may have.

The scheme operates by the registration of organisations and individuals with the service and when they shop online with a participating retailer a donation is made to their nominated recipient. Different retailers give different percentage donations and the scheme requires you to register once and thereafter you can go directly to the websites of hundreds of retailers and suppliers. Shopping via the Internet is much more cost effective for companies and it is for this reason they are willing to donate part of these savings to charitable organisations. So many of us now shop online that it is an excellent way of raising funds just by doing something which we would anyway.

Since the Committee first approved participation in this initiative, Grand Lodge has been registered and now has a unique identification number which means that we can receive money from the scheme. Therefore the more people who register and nominate Grand Lodge as their benefactor, the more funds we can raise simply by making online purchases in the normal way but using the links from the above site first!

To go directly to the unique web address for Grand Lodge type:

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/glsbf , and follow the links to register. The website is easy to use and gives a step by step guide.

IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO RAISE FUNDS IN THESE CHALLENGING ECONOMIC TIMES SO BRETHREN ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONSIDER THIS INITIATIVE TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE BENEVOLENT FUNDS OF GRAND LODGE



2025 - 2026

PROCEEDINGS

OF

Grand Lodge of Scotland

From FEBRUARY 2025 to JANUARY 2026



EDINBURGH:

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF GRAND LODGE
BY GRAND SECRETARY

NO. 1

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6th February 2025

AT THE REGULAR COMMUNICATION

Held in Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh on Thursday, the 6th day of February 2025

Present - Brothers W. Ramsay McGhee, Grand Master Mason on the Throne; Alexander C. G. Moncrieff, Depute Grand Master; William H. Gauld, James Bell, Thomas C. Smith, Andrew E. Paterson, Ewan Rutherford, Douglas W. Duncan, Kenneth D. Kennedy, Past Depute Grand Masters; David A. Reid, Substitute Grand Master; John McKenzie, John F. Herrick, Hugh Clelland, George R. Kelly, Thomas F. Jessop, Past Substitute Grand Masters; James L. Jack, Senior Grand Warden; Alistair Henderson, Junior Grand Warden; William M. S. Semple, Grand Secretary; Thomas Davidson, Grand Almoner; Ronald W. A. Forbes, Grand Director of Ceremonies; Rev. Alexander J. Shuttleworth, Senior Grand Chaplain; Rev. Stephen F. Clipston, Junior Grand Chaplain; Archibald Chalmers, Senior Grand Deacon; John A. Anderson, Grand Librarian; Thomas K. Leckenby, Grand Architect; Alexander J. Craib, Grand Jeweller; John D. Duncan, Grand Bible-bearer; George R. J. Donnelly, Grand Bard; James Ellis, Grand Sword-bearer; Stewart J. Quigley, Grand Director of Music; Stuart J. Robertson, Assistant Grand Secretary; Ronald J. Simpson, Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies; Alberto F.G.E.O. Massimo, Grand Organist; Robert Burns, Grand Piper; John S. Drummond, Grand Marshal; Christopher M. Wong, Grand Inner Guard; Clark Wilson, Grand Tyler and all other Brethren as per attendance sheets.

Grand Lodge was opened in full form and with solemn prayer.

In Memoriam

BROTHER REVEREND WILLIAM PATERSON, BD KStJ

Past Senior Grand Chaplain

Died 28th October 2024

BROTHER JOHN A. FRASER

Past Provincial Grand Master of Ross & Cromarty

Died 23rd November 2024

BROTHER WILLIAM CAVEN STEEL

Past Provincial Grand Master of Ayrshire

Died 24th November 2024

BROTHER NEIL CAMPBELL GOW

Past President of the Board of Grand Stewards

Died 3rd January 2025

The Brethren being up standing, the Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason called

upon them to open the service by singing the 23rd Psalm, 'The Lords my Shepherd', to the tune of 'Wiltshire'.

The Grand Master Mason thereafter addressed Grand Lodge in the following terms: - "Brethren it is with great sadness that I intimate the passing of four highly respected and well-loved members of our Craft, namely Brother Reverend Bill Paterson, Brother John A. Fraser, better known as Ian, Brother William Caven Steel, and Brother Neil Campbell Gow.

Brother Reverend William Paterson was born in Airdrie on the 5th of June 1936, the eldest of four children. After school he joined the family building firm established by his great grandfather, serving his apprenticeship as a bricklayer. He spent eighteen years in the building, civil engineering business and running the family farm. Bill left the family business to study divinity at Glasgow University, becoming parish minister in Bridge of Weir, Edinburgh and finally Chirnside in Berwickshire, before retiring in 2001, although he was still taking services until 2024. Bill was the mainstay on several committees for the Church of Scotland.

Initiated into Airdrie Operative Lodge, No. 203 he was the fifth generation of the family to do so. He affiliated to Trades House Lodge No. 1241, Glasgow, and after moving to Edinburgh, he affiliated to Lodge Canongate Kilwinning, No. 2 on 27th May 1998.

Within the Lodge, Bill fulfilled the role of Chaplain and Substitute and Depute Master for his son Douglas. He is perhaps better known as Past Provincial Grand Chaplain in the Province of Edinburgh for the first three Provincial Grand Masters, and as Senior Grand Chaplain for the Grand Lodge of Scotland. He received his sixty-year Diploma in 2017.

Bill was widowed in 1996 and remarried in 1999. He became involved with the Order of St. John Scotland, founding the South East Scotland area and was invested as a Knight of the Order in 2021 for all the charitable work he carried out, raising £25,000 for the Margaret Kerr unit at the Borders General Hospital.

As many of you will know, Bill loved Burns Season, which he liked to refer to as the festival of St. Robert, attending and hosting many Burns Suppers. He delivered countless Immortal Memories in Lodges and various circles; his record was attending thirty Burns Suppers in one January.

Douglas told me that cards and letters following Bill's death carried a similar message - a gentleman and a gentle man and mason, an expert advisor who was respected by all who knew him.

Bill is survived by his second wife Isobel, his son Douglas and daughter Muriel.

Brother Ian Fraser. Ian was born on the 16th of November 1936 in the county of Sutherland, the eldest of three children. He completed his education at Dornoch Academy and readily admits that had he studied harder he might have achieved better academic results. However, he always maintained that the strict discipline

associated with life in the 'Boys Hostel' stood him in good stead in later years and on being called up for National Service, which he served in the Royal Air Force, mostly in Malta, he had no difficulty adapting to service discipline.

In 1957 he commenced his police career as a Constable in the Ross & Cromarty Constabulary. During the ensuing 30 plus years he served throughout the Highlands including two Island postings – one in Lewis and one in Shetland. While in the post of Detective Inspector in Dingwall he was awarded the Queens Commendation for Brave Conduct. He had a very active Police career which, latterly, included appointment as Staff Officer to HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in the rank of Chief Superintendent and Assistant Director of the Senior Officers Scottish Command Course at Tulliallan Castle. He finally retired in November 1991.

For over 60 years, Ian was an active Freemason. Initiated into Lodge Averon No. 866 in 1964, he served as Right Worshipful Master from 1972 to 1974. He was Provincial Grand Master of Ross and Cromarty from 2001 to 2006. He joined Hebrides Royal Arch Chapter in 1966, subsequently becoming Provincial Grand Superintendent of Ross and Cromarty and ultimately First Grand Principal of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland in March 2009 serving through to 2018. He was, to say the least, a highly respected Freemason at home and abroad.

Unfortunately, Ian's health deteriorated over the course of the last few years, and he was no longer able to lead an active life. Ian passed to the Grand Lodge above on 24 November 2024. He will be missed most by those who loved him dearest, his wife Joan and sons Hugh and Neil. Neil is known to many as a Past Provincial Grand Master of Renfrewshire East. Brother Ian Fraser will be remembered with great respect by all who knew him.

Brother William Caven Steel, better known as Billy, was born on the 11th December 1955 in Hurlford. However, Billy did a fair amount of his growing up in Mauchline, before moving back to the Irvine Valley, this time to Galston, where he started his secondary school career at Loudoun Academy. He left at age of 15, and from there he joined the Army as a boy soldier and spent 3 years reaching the rank of sergeant, in the Royal Highland Fusiliers.

Billy married Tina in Dailly Parish Church on the 13th of September 1975. He had a strong secure home life with Tina and his two daughters Karen and Tracey. He worked at the same job in Vesuvius Crucible in Newmilns for 35 years. When it closed, he had a variety of jobs but found his final great calling when he took a course as a Civil Celebrant. His involvement with Darvel Parish Church, his deep faith and his experience as an Elder of the Church of Scotland carrying him through when helping families through the difficult time of bereavement.

Billy was initiated into Lodge Loudoun Kilwinning Newmilns, No. 51, in 1978 and was Master thereof in the years 1985 to 1987. He later affiliated to Lodge Darvel No. 971 and was Master thereof in 2005 to 2006 and served as Treasurer from 2007 until shortly before his passing. He was also affiliated to Lodge St. Thomas No. 201 and was Inner Guard at the time of his passing.

Billy first served as an elective Office-bearer in the Provincial Grand Lodge of Ayrshire under Provincial Grand Master Brother Adam Cunningham. He served three terms as a Substitute Provincial Grand Master and one as Depute Provincial Grand Master before being Commissioned as Provincial Grand Master in 2017, guiding the Province through the Covid pandemic.

Billy was a member of various other Masonic Orders. He served as First Principal in Loudoun Royal Arch Chapter No. 251, was Treasurer of Drumclog Royal Arch Chapter No. 480. He served as Most Wise Sovereign in Ayr Sovereign Chapter No. 20 and Grand Commander of Ayr Sovereign Council No. 68 and was promoted to the 32nd Degree in the Antient & Accepted Scottish Rite. He was a founder Office-bearer of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Carrick & Annandale of the Royal Order of Scotland and was a member of Hurlford Preceptory and Priory and was a petitioning member of Loudoun Castle Preceptory and Priory.

Away from Freemasonry, Billy's other passion was our National Bard, Brother Robert Burns. He was a regular and popular speaker on the Burns circuit.

Brother William Caven Steel was a highly respected man and Mason as was evidenced by the large number who attended his funeral service in Darvel. This was further evidenced by the Brethren from within and out with the Province who attended the Lodge of Sorrow held to commemorate his memory. He will be missed most by those who loved him dearest, his wife Tina, daughters Karen and Tracey but he will be remembered with respect by all who knew him.

Brother Neil Campbell Gow was born in Dundee of the 26th of August 1939. Neil served in the Royal Navy during National Service and was a great lover of the sea. He was also a great model railway enthusiast and had an extensive set up in the garden shed where he spent countless hours.

He was initiated into Lodge Albert Lochee, No. 448, on the on the 20th of April 1972, Passed on the 11th of May 1972, Raised on the 25th of May 1972 and advanced on the 30th of November 1972. He was a Life Member of the Lodge. Brother Gow was also a Past Substitute Provincial Grand Master of Forfarshire, serving from 1992 to 1997. Brother Gow affiliated to Lodge Dalhousie, No. 679, in Carnoustie on the 1st of November 1977 and became Master thereof from 1979 to 1981.

He served Grand Lodge for many years and was President of the Board of Stewards of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, from 2011 to 2012. He was also a Past First Principal of RA Chapter Albert No. 503.

After retirement Neil moved to the village of Tannadice in Angus and his funeral took place on Monday the 20th of January 2025 at Oathlaw Tannadice Church, where he was interred in the Church Cemetery.

Neil was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, uncle, and brother and will be sadly missed by all who knew him".

The service was concluded by the Brethren being upstanding and singing Psalm 24, verses 7 to 10 to the tune 'St George's Edinburgh'

WELCOME

The Grand Master Mason, Brother W. Ramsay McGhee, very warmly welcomed all to the February Regular Communication of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. He extended a special welcome to Brother James T. Miller, Depute Grand Master, Brother Ivan Subotic, Grand Secretary, Brother Raffi Sahakian, Grand Treasurer, Brother Daniel Rech, Grand Orator, all from the Grand Lodge 'Alpina' Switzerland and Brother Pablo Lesme, Depute Grand Chancellor of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Paraguay.

PRESENTS

Proceedings had been received from the United Grand Lodge of England.

MINUTE OF GRAND LODGE

The Minute of the Regular Communication held on Thursday, 31st October 2024 (pages 151 to 163 of Proceedings) were as printed and circulated amongst the members of Grand Lodge and were held as read and approved.

MINUTE OF GRAND LODGE

The Minute of the Annual Communication held on the 28th of November 2024 (pages 164 to 170 of Proceedings) were as printed and circulated amongst the members of Grand Lodge and were held as read and approved.

MINUTE OF THE GOVERNANCE & STRATEGY BOARD

At a meeting of the Governance & Strategy Board held on 6th February 2025. Present, Brother W. Ramsay McGhee, Grand Master Mason, presiding and 17 members as per the list of attendees.

The minute of the Governance & Strategy Board held on 12th December 2024 (page 171 to 179 of Proceedings) as printed and circulated to members of Grand Lodge was held as read and approved.

MINUTE OF THE BOARD OF THE BOARD OF BENEVOLENCE AND MASONIC HOMES

The Minute of the Board of Benevolence and Masonic Homes held on 12th December 2024 (pages 171 to 179 of Proceedings) was held as read and approved.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGY BOARD

On the recommendation of the Governance and Strategy Board (pages 180 to 198 of Proceedings) Grand Lodge approved the following: -

- (a) That Brother Colin J. MacLeod be appointed as Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Orkney and Zetland with effect from the 12th of June 2025. Page 197 of Proceedings.
- (b) That Brother John K. Bryce be appointed as Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Perthshire West, with effect from the 12th of June 2025. Page 197 of Proceedings.

- (c) That Brother James Thom be appointed as Provincial Grand Master of the Province of The Scottish Borders, with effect from the 12th of June 2025. Page 197 of Proceedings.
- (d) That Brother Stuart Stirling be appointed as Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Stirlingshire, with effect from the 12th of June 2025. Page 197 of Proceedings.
- (e) That Brother David J. Williams be appointed as Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Sutherland, with effect from the 12th of June 2025. Page 197 of Proceedings.
- (f) That Brother David A. McKellar be appointed as District Grand Master of the District of the Far East, with effect from the 12th of June 2025. Page 197 of Proceedings.
- (g) That Brother Larry Bradley be appointed as District Grand Master of the District of Newfoundland and Labrador, with effect from the 12th of June 2025. Page 197 of Proceedings.
- (h) That Brother The Hon. Justice Nicholas C. Browne-Marke be appointed as the District Grand Master of the District of Sierra Leone and The Gambia, with effect from the 12th of June 2025. Page 197 of Proceedings.
- (i) That a cordial vote of thanks be recorded in respect of the following Brethren for their service to the Scottish Craft during the term of their Commissions: Brother Alan S. Balfour, Provincial Grand Master of Orkney and Zetland, Brother William M. S. Semple, Provincial Grand Master of Perthshire West, Brother Andrew E. Forsyth, Provincial Grand Master of The Scottish Borders, Brother Gordon W. S. Sewell, Provincial Grand Master of Stirlingshire, Brother Christopher Wong, District Grand Master of the Far East, Brother Gary W. Dinham, District Grand Master of Newfoundland and Labrador, and Brother Chrispin B. Deigh, District Grand Master of Sierra Leone and The Gambia, all of whom demit office on the 12th of June 2025.
- (j) That Brother Daniel McGinley be appointed as a Grand Steward to represent the Province of Glasgow and replace Brother Graeme Cameron. Page 197 of Proceedings.
- (k) That Brother Adam McLachlan Provan be appointed as a Grand Steward to represent the Province of Glasgow and replace Brother James McMillan. Page 197 of Proceedings.
- (l) That Brother Petras Kudaras be appointed as Representative from the Grand Lodge of Scotland near to the Grand Lodge of Lithuania. Page 197 of Proceedings.
- (m) That recognition be extended to, and representatives exchanged with, The Grand Lodge Baja California, Mexico. Page 198 of Proceedings.
- (n) That Lodge Jwaneng, No. 1790 (Botswana), be declared inactive for a period of 12 months. Page 198 of Proceedings.
- (o) That Lodge St. Clair of Balbeggie, No. 867 (Fife & Kinross), be declared inactive for a period of 12 months. Page 198 of Proceedings.
- (p) That Lodge St Leonard's Newington, No. 1283, (Edinburgh), be declared dormant. Page 198 of Proceedings.

- (q) That Service Lodge, No. 1291, (Edinburgh), be declared dormant. Page 198 of Proceedings.
- (r) That Lodge Masjid-i Suleman, No. 1324, (Edinburgh), be declared dormant. Page 198 of Proceedings.
- (s) That Lodge Concord, No. 1341, (Glasgow) be declared inactive for a period of 12 months. Page 198 of Proceedings.

REPORT FROM THE GRAND MASTER MASON

Brother W. Ramsay McGhee, Grand Master Mason, addressed Grand Lodge in the following terms: -

“Brethren, it is once again my privilege and pleasure to present my report to Grand Lodge.

Can I start with an update on the work of the Governance and Strategy Board and the Standing Committees. In terms of the strategic objectives, I am delighted to report that much progress has been made.

In terms of our first priority - *Placing Membership at the Heart of Scottish Freemasonry*, the sub-committee who are working on a new IT structure are making excellent progress and are now at the stage of going into the market with a view to procuring a system that will place members at the heart of the organisation and it will also provide a future ability to embrace the other Orders who have displayed an interest in being part of the new technology. While much work remains to be done, it is sincerely hoped that we can have the system in place by the end of this year.

We are also launching a Leadership Programme on the 26th of April 2025 in Edinburgh for, in the first instance, Provincial Grand Masters then District Grand Masters. After we have a full debrief on those meetings, we will make the necessary changes to the programme before rolling it out to Lodge Masters. The programme will be designed to ensure that those of us who have a leadership role at any level never lose sight of the need to place membership at the heart of Scottish Freemasonry.

With regard to Growing Scottish Freemasonry Internationally, let me remind you all of the 5th International Scottish Masonic Conference being held this coming May in Zambia. This, brethren will be much more than just a Conference, it will very much be a family event as well. If you haven't already sorted your summer holidays, give the conference some consideration. The District have organised an excellent programme and likewise a special deal with Qatar Airways. The four previous Conferences have all been highly successful and I have no reason to believe that this one will be any different. Full details of the Conference are available on the Grand Lodge website.

When it comes to *Creating Inspiring Communication and Engagement*, let me update you on three initiatives: -

First, like most of you, I am acutely conscious of the fact we have extreme difficulty encouraging any part of the media to give us good, positive coverage. That being the case, Grand Secretary and I are going to host a media evening at which we will invite

editorial staff from all branches of the media into Grand Lodge. We will invite them to tour the building and then sit down with them with a view to agreeing a more positive approach to what we do and what we stand for.

Secondly, one of the working parties under the Information and Communication Standing Committee are forging ahead with plans to have a Grand Lodge presence, coupled with a local Provincial and Lodge presence at National events throughout Scotland. We will have tents, suitably badged along with suitable content to encourage the right men to consider being part of Scottish Freemasonry. In the first instance, we hope to be at the Royal Highland Show in June. The Committee will be pleased to accept ideas for suitable events throughout Scotland. I am aware that a number of Lodges and Provinces as well as many of our Districts already participate in such events, but this initiative will provide you all with new ideas and information to be used at such gatherings.

And thirdly, arrangements are now being finalised for our Armed Forces Covenant recruitment event which will be hosted in Freemasons' Hall on the 24th of April 2025. It is anticipated that there will be around 200 attendees, and the event will be organised collaboratively by the Lowland Reserve Forces Cadets Association, the Association of Project Management and Grand Lodge, with assistance from the Officers Association Scotland and the Forces Career Transition Partnership. It is anticipated 20 employers will have stands at the event, and we will invite Prostate Scotland, the National Literacy Trust, and The Personnel Recovery Unit also to have stands in the foyer. The aim of the event is to facilitate the transition to civilian life for those who are leaving the Armed Forces, and it also forms part of Grand Lodge's ongoing commitment to honouring our pledge to support the Covenant and the Armed Forces community.

Brethren, I am confident that the new Governance and Strategy Board is being effective, decisions are being made much more quickly, and the talking is being converted into positive action by properly qualified Brethren in all disciplines much more quickly. I thank you all for your support, together we will make a difference.

Finally, Brethren, 2025 is proving to be a busy year, as the calendar stands at the moment, between now and November, Grand Lodge Office-bearers will be carrying out some fifteen rededication ceremonies and ten installations along with a considerable number of other events. We look forward to being with you in the Districts, Provinces and Lodges. Thank you".

NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion for consideration at the Regular Communication on 12th June 2025 was proposed by William H. Gauld, Past Depute Grand Master and seconded by Brother Kenneth D. Kennedy, Past Depute Grand Master: -

In order to give effect to the amendment of Laws 125 and 192 (including the First Schedule, Item 26) to remove the requirement for 10% of annual fees to be added to Lodge Benevolence Funds (page 183 of Proceedings), it is proposed that the following alterations to the Constitution and Laws be approved.

At Law 125, delete paragraph 4 in its entirety, ***‘From each annual contribution levied, a sum specified in the Bye-Laws, but not less than that set forth in the First Schedule, Item 27, (sic Item 26) shall be paid into the Benevolent Fund of the Lodge. The remainder shall be paid into the General Fund of the Lodge’*** and replace with, ***‘Each annual contribution levied shall be paid into the General Fund of the Lodge’***. At Law 192, second line, delete, ***‘Laws 105 and 125’*** and replace with ‘Law 105’. First Schedule, Item 26, headed ***‘Benevolent Fund’*** will be deleted.

COLLECTION FOR THE SCOTTISH MASONIC BENEVOLENT FUND

The collection raised the sum of £930.16

2000 CLUB

The Winners of the 2000 Club Draw which was drawn earlier were announced by the Grand Secretary.

Number	Name	Prize
4476	Lodge Buchan St. John, No. 636, Linlithgowshire.	£600.00
6158	Lodge Milncroft, No. 1515, Glasgow.	£500.00
4281	Lodge Caledonian St John Royal Arch, No. 195, Dunbartonshire.	£400.00
5387	Glasgow Kilwinning Lodge, No. 4, Glasgow	£300.00
498	Lodge Dunse, No. 23, The Scottish Borders.	£200.00

VISITORS

The Grand Master Mason invited Brother James T. Miller, Depute Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of ‘Alpina’ Switzerland, to address Grand Lodge, who thanked the Grand Master Mason for the invitation and hospitality received and encouraged Brethren from Scotland to visit Lodges in Switzerland where they will be most welcome.

Grand Lodge was closed in due form and with solemn prayer.

At a meeting of the Board of Benevolence and Masonic Homes and of the Governance and Strategy Board, held at Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh, on Thursday 24th of April 2025.

Present – Brother W. Ramsay McGhee, Grand Master Mason, presiding over 17 other members as per the list of attendees.

BOARD OF BENEVOLENCE AND MASONIC HOMES

REPORT BY THE BENEVOLENCE AND CARE COMMITTEE

24th April 2025

The Committee met on 20th March 2025.

Present – Brother Thomas Davidson, Grand Almoner, Chairman; David A. Reid, Dr. Douglas R.H. Nicol, Rev. Alexander J. Shuttleworth, Rev. Peter D. Clarke (by Teams), John Malcolm and the Chairman of the Administration Committee and Grand Secretary, *ex officio*s.

Apologies for absence were intimated from Brothers Douglas T. Philand and Jack Alexander.

Before commencing the business of the day, the Chairman extended a warm welcome to Brothers Rev. Peter D. Clarke and John Malcolm who were attending their first meeting.

MEETING OF 21st NOVEMBER 2024

The Minute of the meeting held on 21st November 2024, having been circulated, was approved and signed.

Matters arising

It was noted and agreed that all aspects of business arising had been appropriately covered by a dedicated Agenda item.

MEETING OF 20th MARCH 2025

Grant-giving Activities Masonic Benevolence First-time Grant

The Committee considered an application but could not, on this occasion, recommend that a grant be awarded. A further course of action on the case was agreed and will be progressed accordingly.

Annual Grants

The Committee considered an application for an Annual Grant and agreed to make a recommendation to the Board.

Level of Existing Annual Grants

It was agreed to maintain the status quo in respect of the sums paid to the recipients of existing annual grants. It was noted that masonic benevolence will be included in the wider review which is being planned. It was also, after discussion, considered to be wise to await the outcome of the potential statutory changes to the benefits system before deciding whether to make any changes to either the level of or eligibility to receive a grant, this rationale also being applicable to applications for first-time grants.

It was confirmed that the combined amount agreed for distribution in respect of both new and existing Annual Grants was within the terms of law 254.

Special Training Scheme

The Committee considered an application for continued assistance under the Special Training Scheme and agreed to recommend that a grant be awarded. A further recommendation on the case was agreed and will be progressed accordingly.

After discussion, it was again agreed that the availability, per the eligibility criteria which are in place, of grants under the Special Training Scheme ought to be more widely publicised and it was confirmed that the Training Scheme should be highlighted in both Grand Almoner's section of the next quarterly Grand Lodge newsletter and at meetings of the Provincial and District Committees as a standard agenda item. The Homes and Charities Manager reported that a feature in the Charity Section of the 2025 Grand Lodge Yearbook, which highlighted what the support had meant to a recent recipient of the grant to assist him in achieving his academic goals, had been well received.

Level of Grants under the Special Training Scheme

It was agreed to increase the level of the training grant to £750 per annum. It was noted that notwithstanding the sum above, the Committee may collectively make a discretionary adjustment to the award in any case if this was felt to be appropriate.

It was noted that the recommendations to be made to the Board were in accordance with Law 258.

Non-Masonic Benevolence

It was agreed to recommend a grant in the sum **of £3,000** to **Marie Curie** towards the work of the Charity which provides support services for people who are living with a terminal illness.

It was agreed that the remaining applications from the external charities listed within the agenda would be deferred until the August meeting of the Committee.

After discussion, it was agreed that the budget for non-masonic benevolence for the year from 1st June 2025 to 31st May 2026 be set at £40,000. It was explained that this is an indicative amount in order that there is the ability to respond in an emergency should this be required.

The Scottish Masonic Burns and Freemasonry Scholarship, Updated Report from Patrick Jamieson, PhD Scholar, dated March 2025.

The Committee was pleased to note the following report from Patrick Jamieson whose research and interaction with Lodges and Provinces had been very well received.

“It has been four months now since I began my research into Robert Burns & Freemasonry, though given how much I've packed in it almost feels like four years! This is in no small part thanks to the support of Grand Lodge and the Scottish Freemasons, who have granted me access to records both at Grand Lodge and at daughter Lodges across the country.

Coming to this with no intimate knowledge of Freemasonry, my first task was to immerse myself in its rich history and the particular ways in which it has developed across Scotland. Thankfully, the library at Grand Lodge provided me with a great starting-off point, and the advice and conversations I've had with many of the brethren at Grand Lodge and elsewhere have informed this further. Visits to individual lodges across Ayrshire and Edinburgh established a sense of the unique character of each region, and indeed each lodge, and how these informed - and have been informed by - Burns.

I have been granted access to minute books, archival documents, and histories of Lodges, both extant and defunct. Through this I have been able to corroborate the masonic network upon which Burns relied, developing - in some cases - upon the links already acknowledged in literature, and mapping out the ways in which Burns engaged with this network through his letters to construct an image of himself as Bard within 18th century Scottish Freemasonry. I've been met with nothing but enthusiastic welcome thus far, and I'd like to thank Archie Chalmers, Roger Bullard, Jim Bell, Alastair Hastings, Jim Lyle, Ronnie Paton, and several others for their assistance in facilitating my research up until now.

I have many plans to develop my research over the next three years, looking not only at how Freemasonry informed Burns' work on a local level in Ayrshire, Edinburgh and Dumfries, the ways in which he circulated his work and developed his image-as-Bard to best utilise this unique social network, but so too the ways in which Freemasonry took Burns across the globe, its relation to Empire and how this corresponds to the legacy of Burns in former colonies, his monumentalisation and influence upon Freemasonry in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the influence of Freemasonry upon Burns Clubs and Burns Suppers.

Finally, I'd like to thank everyone again at Grand Lodge and elsewhere who has welcomed and assisted me. I look forward to what's to come”

Prostate Scotland

An updated report from Grand Almoner regarding the Legacy projects, as follows, which had been circulated with the papers, was noted.

Prostate Champions In Scotland (first year)

- 62 Trained Prostate Champions (about 6 have dropped out due to either personal circumstances, age or health issues – this was expected)
- 4 Brethren currently undergoing training process
- 5 brethren about to start the training process
- 4 Provincial Grand Lodges are not yet engaged in the project and do not have a Prostate Champion. Currently, any requirements are being covered by brethren from adjacent Provinces which is not acceptable in the longer term. Three of the Provinces are either about to get a new Provincial Grand Master installed or have a recently had one Installed.
- Due to the uneven distribution of the Prostate Champions, it is difficult to draw a meaningful conclusion about individual effectiveness and the depth of awareness being achieved. In broad terms the Prostate Champions activity report shows roughly
 - o No activity (15%)
 - o Limited activity (30%)
 - o Moderate activity (25%)
 - o Fully engaged (30%)
- Over 200 talks have been delivered, or engagements fulfilled
- Over 4000 people attended talks
- Preliminary discussions are underway with a number of external organisations which are expected to bear fruit, and we expect to receive invitations to deliver talks to a broader spectrum of audiences in the late summer/early autumn of 2025.
- The Prostate Scotland Navigator App developed for Prostate Scotland had encountered problems for some mobile phones using certain android operating systems of some of the most up-to-date phones. De-bugging is still ongoing to find a solution. The App is an excellent tool if you can download it.

Overseas

- Modified Training documents were issued to all District Grand Lodges and Superintendencies at the end of September 2024 and start of October 2024. Copies sent to all District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents and their respective Secretaries for consideration and implementation at local level in line with local needs and incidence of prostate disease.
- Grand Almoner address the District Grand Masters Standing Committee by Teams on 19th January 2025 and emphasised the importance of raising awareness among our brethren and the communities around our lodges.
- Six of our districts abroad are in the top ten countries listed by the WHO for the highest incidence of prostate disease. These districts are either in Africa or the Caribbean.
- Three of our districts reported that they were already actively engaged, raising awareness of prostate disease with their brethren. The District Grand Lodge of the Bahamas has a Prostate Cancer committee and are seeking to

promote an international symposium late this year with experts from around the world attending. The District Grand Lodge of Barbados has an active Men's Health programme. The District Grand Lodge of Jamaica are engaging with their national Prostate Cancer charity.

PROSPACK Initiative

- The project was formally launched in November 2023, and we now have figures for the first year of operation. The projected target numbers were not reached due to a combination of factors (changes of personnel and the need to interface personally with the surgeons).
- We currently have a good uptake of packs in Highland and Eastern/Central Scotland, which cover about 60% of the land mass and about 45% of the population. A lot of work has been going on in the background to reach the remaining areas and arrangements are in an advanced stage to get an uptake by all remaining treatment centres by the end of Spring 2025. In addition, the Aberdeen area which operates under UCAN is expected to start taking packs to work in partnership and supplement their existing programme in the next few weeks.

Research Projects

- Two research projects were identified, approved and funds earmarked in March 2023. Earlier it was thought that a PhD project with a local university was the appropriate route for delivery of the project, however this was discounted in favour of Prostate Scotland recruiting a suitable member of staff. The first of these projects "Living with BPH" is expected to go live in April 2025 based on a part-time researcher over a two-year period. No additional funding beyond the original approval is expected to be required
- The second project "Living with Prostatitis" is currently in the planning stage

Prostate Scotland Survey Outcome

- A questionnaire was sent out to all Prostate Champions just prior to Christmas 2024 to try and establish activity levels over the year. Although it was intended to cover all of 2024 it must be remembered that the bulk of training did not complete until June when many Lodges were either in or going into summer recess. Some Prostate Champions had only completed training weeks before Christmas. The period could be best considered as 6 months for the full cohort of 60ish Prostate Champions.
- 37 Prostate Champions responded to the questionnaire (about 58%)
- Not all Prostate Champions had managed to arrange speaking opportunities, they were advised to speak to their Provincial Grand Masters and Provincial Grand Secretaries and seek guidance.
- In general, the Prostate Champions are doing a great job of raising awareness and should be commended for their work"

In supplement to the above, the Committee was interested in receiving a report from Brother John Malcolm which provided an insight into his work as a Prostate Champion and the collaborative initiative which has been developed in Renfrewshire. Brother

Malcolm also provided an update on arrangements for the Pro-Am golf tournament which is taking place at Erskine Golf Club, which will be an excellent way to raise awareness.

Armed Forces Covenant (AFC)

To facilitate charting progress on our Armed Forces Covenant Journey, it was agreed to continue to highlight the following initial ideas in terms of working towards the Gold Award, as follows:

- The use of Freemasons' Hall for further Cadet and Reservist Events.
- Establishing an Armed Forces Champion or Champions.
- Strengthening any initial links with one or more Cadet Units in different geographical locations
- Further development of support for projects with Armed Forces Charities – financial and collaborative
- Development of projects with Armed Forces Charities – practical and collaborative
- Spearheading a project leading to meaningful collaboration with daughter Lodges and Provinces to support the Covenant.

Event in Freemasons' Hall on 24th April 16, 2025

The Committee was pleased to note that arrangements are in hand relative to this event, the aim of which is to assist members of the armed forces community to transition to civilian life, specifically by highlighting employment opportunities in project management via the opportunity of meeting with a number of large and small employers. A copy of the pamphlet which had been produced to publicise the event was circulated and the Committee was interested to note the format and planned content for the day's programme. It was reported that Prostate Scotland will have a stand at the event which will provide an opportunity to raise awareness and for networking with the employers and attendees who are present. It was further reported that the Personnel Recovery Centre would also be represented at the event. Combat Stress Collaboration.

The Committee reviewed the information which had been circulated in respect of the work of Combat Stress, a charity which provides support for veterans with complex trauma-related mental health issues arising from military service, such as PTSD, complex PTSD, anxiety and depression. The work of Combat Stress was highlighted by a Lodge member who volunteers with the charity and accompanies representatives thereof to presentations to share his own life experience. After discussion, the Committee was pleased to endorse a collaboration whereby a communication would be issued to Provincial Grand Lodges by Grand Lodge giving details of the work of the charity and requesting that the information be shared with daughter Lodges. Any Lodges interested in inviting the charity to make a presentation could then do so directly.

The Committee extended its thanks to the member concerned for his assistance in facilitating this joint working opportunity.

A further verbal report was given on the following points:

- (i) Progress relative to working towards attainment of the Gold Award – ongoing discussion is taking place with our Engagement Officer with a view to attaining gold level in 2026.
- (ii) It was confirmed that a grant in the sum of £2,000 had been made to the Personnel Recovery Centre to assist the ongoing worthwhile work of the Centre to provide wide-ranging support for members of the Armed Forces to assist them in returning to duty after sick leave or to transition to civilian life.
- (iii) Both the Scottish Veterans' Residences and Veterans Housing Scotland have been invited to give presentations at a future meeting of the Committee and arrangements in this regard will be finalised in due course.
- (iv) Sponsorship of an award under the Cadet Adult Recognition Scheme as follows: -
'Sea Cadets East: sponsored by The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland' It was confirmed that the Committee had been delighted to sponsor this award and would be happy to consider further support for this worthwhile scheme in future years. Arrangements will be made to keep in touch with the Unit and it was agreed that a sum of £500 be awarded towards ongoing projects.

Collaboration with The National Literacy Trust

The Committee was pleased to note that there will shortly be 7 - 9 Masonic Literacy Champions who have completed their induction training with The National Literacy Trust. The volunteers are already enthusiastically sharing ideas and exploring the ways in which they can make an impact in their local areas to raise awareness and improve literacy levels.

All of the Champions will have a Handbook and other materials to assist them in delivering their presentations and taking part in other events and projects which they have identified would be beneficial in their local area. From the outset, although all the Champions require to follow the agreed guidance from The National Literacy Trust, it has been stressed that each Province has its own identity which is based on many different factors so local knowledge is key to making sure there is an approach which delivers the best outcome for each area. The Champions have been asked to discuss their proposed projects and next steps with their respective Provincial Grand Secretaries so that everyone is aware of and is in agreement with what is being planned. In turn, it is anticipated that Provincial Grand Secretaries and Masters will publicise the involvement of their Provinces in the pilot scheme for this initiative and lend their support to the work being done by the Champions within the masonic network and beyond in the community. This will be invaluable to the success of the initiative. The National Literacy Trust staff are very happy to provide support as is the Homes and Charities Manager. It was agreed that an update to the Scottish Craft to publicise the initiative and bring everyone up to date with progress should be provided during April 2025. It is hoped that some of the Provinces who aren't involved in the pilot will perhaps ask for a presentation to be made. A WhatsApp Group is in the process of being set up to include all the Champions, Provincial Grand Secretaries of the pilot Provinces, National Literacy Trust staff, Grand Almoner and

the Homes and Charities Manager which will greatly assist with communication and make the sharing of information, ideas and feedback much easier. Grand Almoner invited Brother David A. Reid to become more closely involved with this initiative by providing a link between the Committee and the Champions.

The Committee reviewed the Handbook which had been designed and developed by The National Literacy Trust and issued to the Masonic Literacy Champion volunteers. It was mentioned that some of the colours used may not be considered the best option and it was agreed that this would be fed back accordingly.

The Committee noted with interest the details of the post below, in italics, which had been shared on Grand Lodge social media to celebrate World book day and publicise the work of the Masonic Literacy Champions:

'Our ability to communicate can define our place in society. Whether through the written or spoken word, those who can express themselves clearly, and understand others well, may indeed enjoy greater life chances, including better mental and physical health, greater opportunities in education and the workplace, and even longevity.

Poverty and low literacy are inextricably linked. In Scotland one in four adults faces challenges because of their low literacy skills. Families experiencing poverty are less likely to have the resources, information and confidence to create the stimulating and engaging environment needed to develop crucial early communication, language and literacy skills.

Too many children are starting school without these skills, which they need to thrive, and children's enjoyment in reading is at a record low. Recent research from the National Literacy Trust shows that only 1 in 3 children aged 8 to 18 say they enjoy reading in their free time. When children enjoy reading, they read more often, helping to build vital literacy skills and bringing wider benefits for their wellbeing, confidence and learning.

Against this backdrop, the Grand Lodge of Scotland is delighted to announce a new collaboration with the National Literacy Trust to empower people with the literacy skills they need to succeed in life.

In a pilot project with four Provinces, Fife and Kinross; Forfarshire; Perthshire East; and Perthshire West, the National Literacy Trust will be training members to become 'Literacy Champions', volunteers who will use their unique skills and experiences, helping people in the communities they reach to make speaking, listening, reading and writing a part of their everyday lives and something they enjoy.

These new Masonic Literacy Champions will deliver public presentations, raising awareness and encouraging action, including simple ways members of Scottish Freemasonry and members of the public can help promote literacy and share a love of stories. The National Literacy Trust believes in the strength of communities to drive change from within. We look forward to celebrating our volunteers' impact as they begin this new venture'

‘We’re Giving You Our Extra Day’ Initiative

The Committee reconfirmed the previously expressed commitment to this initiative and reconfirmed that an appropriate time frame for the launch would be in 2026, with preparatory work commencing early in that year. It was agreed that this item would be added to the agenda for the meeting to be held in November 2025 in order that preparatory planning could, as agreed, commence early in 2026.

Standards and Legislation

The Homes and Charities Manager reported as follows on issues relating to Standards, legislation, et cetera, in relation to Grand Lodge benevolence and the operation of the Masonic Homes: –

- It was noted that the Register of Controlled Interests had been updated to reflect the changes to Grand Lodge Trustees in November 2024. It was reiterated that this would require to be done each time there is a change in the Trustees of Grand Lodge.

Scottish Masonic Homes, Updated Report

Review of Service Provision at Sir James McKay House

It was confirmed that this review is currently in progress and following several meetings of the Directors, the process is nearing completion.

After discussion, it was reconfirmed that authority to progress matters as appropriate should continue to be remitted to the Directors of Scottish Masonic Homes Limited.

Management Accounts

The Committee considered the Management Accounts for Sir James McKay House for the period from 1st June 2024 to 31st January 2025 in respect of the former Masonic Home Marcus Humphrey House and Sir James McKay House, which were noted accordingly.

The Homes and Charities Manager provided clarity as required in relation to certain operational expenditure.

Transfer/Allocation of Funds to Scottish Masonic Homes Limited

The Committee noted that there is no requirement to make a transfer at this time.

Review of Future Charitable and Welfare Provision

The Committee considered the above, important subject matter in the context of the extract from The Chairman’s verbal Report to The Board of Benevolence and Masonic Homes in December 2024, as below for information:

“Brethren, as has been reported, the landscape of our charitable care and welfare provision is changing. Several operational reviews are either presently ongoing or are planned. It is crucial that we manage and prepare for the changes ahead. Important work now requires to be undertaken to ensure that the direction which we take enables us to shape future charitable provisions to best meet the needs of our membership. The necessary strategic planning to achieve this aim now requires to form an essential part of the work of the Committee”.

Grand Secretary provided supplementary information related to discussions which had taken place at the Administration Committee meeting. It was agreed that the most effective way to expedite matters would be to set up an Ad Hoc Working Group, on which it was considered essential, for completeness, that both Committees are represented. It was further agreed that, as a starting point, Grand Treasurer, Grand Almoner and Grand Secretary would consider the makeup of this Working Group, with external expertise being co-opted as required.

Meantime, the members of the Committee were asked to give thought to the future welfare and charitable provision and submit their ideas and suggestions to Grand Secretary.

Land Maintenance at Dunblane

As had been previously reported, the land which remains in the ownership of Grand Lodge at Dunblane, comprising in the main three areas of woodland, is regularly inspected to ascertain what tree husbandry may be required. Annual planned, preventative maintenance is carried out to clear vegetation in certain areas to stop possible water pooling. A local tree surgeon assists and liaises with the Stirling Council Tree Officer who requires to give permission prior to any work, other than very general maintenance, being carried out. Neighbouring proprietors liaise with the Homes and Charities Manager should they have any issues and have requested that the trees along the roadway leading to the small estate where Ardnablane Masonic Home used to be sited are reduced in height. We have advised that whilst we would not, in principle, be against this if it was recommended by the Tree Officer that this work was essential, no such directive has been forthcoming yet. It was noted that over the years, several 'amenity value' based offers had been received for the land, however, to avoid a possible ransom strip scenario and as the land may be in future be redesignated which would attract a higher value, the Committee had not been minded to accept these. It was agreed that this position ought appropriately to be reviewed, and it was agreed that the matter be remitted to the small Ad Hoc Group which is appointed as above. Meantime, a quotation in the sum of £2,500 was approved to remove a storm damaged tree.

Correspondence

1. A communication, which had been circulated, relating to a mountain rescue fund-raising suggestion was noted and appreciated. Grand Almoner confirmed that he would speak with the brother who had made this suggestion as the idea may be more appropriately and effectively be managed as a Provincial Grand Lodge driven initiative.
2. The Committee expressed its appreciation in respect of a donation to the Benevolent Fund in the sum of £2,426.05 which had been received from the Mount Royal Hotel, Edinburgh City Centre.

Any other competent business

1. It was reported that work is ongoing to finalise leasing terms and arrangements for a new prospective tenant at 94 George Street. Matters are being progressed with assistance from the letting Agent and Grand Lodge Lawyers.

2. A bequest to the Scottish Masonic Benevolent Fund in the sum of £36,000 from a late member, representing a quarter share of the sale price (less fees) of a property in Glasgow, was noted.
3. A bequest to the Scottish Masonic Benevolent Fund in the sum of £2,500 from a late member was noted.
4. A bequest to the Scottish Masonic Homes Fund in the sum of £2,500 from a late member was noted.
5. The Committee members wished to place on record their thanks and best wishes to Brother Derek Robertson who is walking 150 miles around the Province of Stirlingshire in April to raise funds for Prostate Scotland and to Brother Jack Drummond who is walking from Lands' End to John o' Groats to raise funds for several charities. The support Jack has received from the United Grand Lodge of England and English brethren is acknowledged and appreciated.
6. It was noted with thanks that generous donations totaling £3,120 had been kindly received towards funding for the PROSPACK initiative. Presentations had been made accordingly to the Grand Master Mason by, firstly, the Provincial Grand Master of Renfrewshire West in the sum of £1,120 via 'Time on our Hands', a fund-raising initiative which had been organised by a member of Lodge Firth of Clyde, No. 626 and The Anchor Lodge of Research, No. 1814; and secondly by the Right Worshipful Master of Lodge No. 1814 which had donated the funds.
- 7 The Committee noted that Saffrey had been appointed as Grand Lodge Auditor with immediate effect. Saffrey takes over from Henderson Loggie which, as the provider of an outsourced finance service for Grand Lodge, can no longer continue in the capacity of auditor.

Meeting Dates

It was confirmed that the remaining meeting dates for 2025 will be 21st August and 20th November, commencing at 1pm, with lunch from 12pm (or at the conclusion of the meeting of the Administration Committee which is being held earlier on those days).

Vote of Thanks

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

Report Approved

In addition to the information that had been circulated, the Chairman provided the following verbal update:

"Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason and Brethren,

The Report of the meeting of the Benevolence and Care Committee which was held on 20th March 2025 has been circulated with the papers calling today's meeting and, there being no recommendations in respect of First-time Grants, I would first wish

to deal with the application for a new Annual Grant. The amount recommended for award in respect of the case concerned is £1,250.

I should now like to deal with the matter of existing Annual Grants, the list of recommended grants having been circulated. The total number of Annual grants recommended for award is 48 and the total amount recommended to be distributed is £45,630.

It has been confirmed that this sum is within the terms of Law 254, and I would ask for the Board's approval for these grants to be made.

Turning now to the Special Training Scheme, a list of the grants has been circulated which includes a recommended award in the sum of £750.00

It has been confirmed that this sum is within the terms of Law 258, and I would ask for the Board's approval for this grant to be made.

I have also to report that since the meeting of the Board of Benevolence and Masonic Homes on 12th December 2024, other than those recommended by the Committee to external charities, there has been one grant in the sum of £4,215 awarded from the General Relief Fund and no grants have been awarded under the Extended Benevolence Scheme.

As can be seen from the papers which were circulated, our collaboration with The National Literacy Trust is progressing well and the legacy work which we are carrying out with Prostate Scotland is continuing as outlined. As you are aware, we are hosting an event today as part of our Armed Forces Covenant journey, the purpose of which is to assist service leavers and veterans to transition into alternative employment. It is also pleasing to note that the work of our appointed scholar to the Scottish Masonic Burns and Freemasonry Scholarship is being very well received, and feedback has been excellent.

Brethren, you will have seen the communication which was shared in respect of the closure of Sir James McKay House. As has been widely documented within the media, the health and social care sectors are experiencing what many would consider to be the most challenging operational environment which has ever been faced. After completing an operational review, the decision was made to close the Home and our staff and the families of those living there were advised on 9th April.

The families of our residents have been reassured that our paramount concern is working with them to enable a smooth transition to suitable alternative accommodation for those who live in the Home.

We have a long-serving and committed group of staff at Sir James McKay House who have over many years worked hard to deliver first-class care as well as providing a warm and welcoming environment. We very much value and appreciate their outstanding contribution and are doing all that we can to support them during what we know is an upsetting and unsettling time.

It was important that we shared the news first with those who are directly affected by the closure and then that we provided a little breathing space before continuing the process with the Care Inspectorate and other regulatory bodies. With this in mind, formal notice – based on a minimum period of 13 weeks - will be given to the Care Inspectorate on Monday, 28th April, although our assigned Inspector has been made aware of the situation and what is being planned.

An agent has been engaged to progress the sale of the property with vacant possession and marketing will begin on 29th April.

This decision marks the end of an era for the organisation which has been a provider of residential care for older adults since opening its first Home in Dunblane in 1954. Worthy of note is that the social care landscape and regulatory framework which existed in 1954 in comparison to 2025 bear no resemblance which has led to the service being delivered by small providers such as Scottish Masonic Homes Limited being, for a variety of reasons, unsustainable.

Before closing, I must also highlight the crucial work which requires to be undertaken in regard to the review of our charitable welfare provision to ensure that it best meets the needs of our members. There are a number of factors which require to be considered during this process, and it was agreed that the most effective way to expedite matters would be to set up an Ad Hoc Working Group, on which it was considered essential, for completeness, that both the Benevolence and Care and the Administration Committees are represented. It was further agreed that, as a starting point, Grand Treasurer, Grand Almoner and Grand Secretary would consider the makeup of this Working Group, with external expertise being co-opted as required.

I trust that the recommended grant to the external Charity also has the Board's approval, together with the rest of the Report as circulated.

Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason and Brethren, that is my Report, and I move acceptance thereof".

The report was approved.

GOVERNANCE & STRATEGY BOARD**REPORTS BY THE STANDING COMMITTEES****ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE****20th March 2025**

Present - Brothers Andrew Mushet, Chairman, Thomas C. Smith, William H. Gauld, Kenneth D. Kennedy, Alexander Galbraith, Ewan Rutherford, James Bell, Steven Cowie and William M. S. Semple, Grand Secretary.

APOLOGIES

No apology was noted.

MINUTES

The minutes of the regular meeting held on 23rd January 2025 were held as read and approved.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTE**Review of Festival of St Andrew 2024**

A request was made for a breakdown of the hospitality provided at the Festival of St Andrew. Suggestions were made to re-organise the layout of the tables, and to consider whether entertainment was necessary. The Grand Secretary provided that the Information and Communication Committee had commenced a review of the event, however further suggestions in writing would be welcome.

LODGE INACTIVITY AND DORMANCY REVIEW

An update was received and a full progress report will be provided to the June 2025 meeting of the Committee.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST POLICY

This policy had been recommended by the Grand Lodge Audit and had been drawn up by the Grand Lodge solicitors. All members of the Committee were asked to sign the declaration and it was decided that new members should be asked to sign the declaration on joining. It was confirmed that any conflict should be recorded via a written submission to Grand Secretary who would maintain a register of the same.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ANALYSIS OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE ENDING 28 FEBRUARY 2025

Management Accounts for the period to 28th February 2025 were presented and discussed. Henderson Logie is to be instructed that certain expenditure should be considered as Capital not Revenue. It was confirmed that "Home Visits" reflected travel throughout the UK. There was no other matter arising.

INVESTMENT TRANSACTIONS TO 28th FEBRUARY 2025

The Committee received a commentary on the investment transactions within the

various funds of Grand Lodge, indicating total purchases of £289,510 and gross sales of £162,151 which incorporated an overall loss of £18,447.

RATHBONES INVESTMENTS

SCOTTISH MASONIC BENEVOLENT FUND

		Units	Cost	Sales Value	Gain/ (Loss)
Purchases					
08/11/24	Prudential PLC	1,500	£1,007		
21/11/24	ASSA ABLOY NPV	820	£19,274		
02/12/24	Hermes Investment	16,000	£33,518		
			£53,799		
Sales					
30/09/24	Anglo American PLC	1,100	£38,254	£26,671	(£11,583)
21/11/24	Sandvik AB NPV	1,300	£24,470	£18,836	(£5,634)
29/11/24	Redemption - GCP Asset Backed inco	5,922	£5,419	£5,291	(£128)
					(£17,345)

SCOTTISH MASONIC HOMES FUND

		Units	Cost	Sales Value	Gain/ (Loss)
Purchases					
08/11/24	Prudential PLC	500	£3,336		
21/11/24	ASSA ABLOY NPV	280	£6,581		
02/12/24	Hermes Investment	6,000	£12,569		
			£22,486		
Sales					
11/11/24	Elixirr Intl Ltd	200	£613	£1,500	£887
21/11/24	Sandvik AB NPV	450	£8,470	£6,520	(£1,950)
29/11/24	Redemption - GCP Asset Backed inco	2,013	£1,849	£1,798	(£51)
					(£1,114)

SCOTTISH MASONIC GENERAL RELIEF FUND

		Units	Cost	Sales Value	Gain/ (Loss)
Purchases					
08/11/24	Prudential PLC	1,100	£7,338		
21/11/24	ASSA ABLOY NPV	560	£13,163		
02/12/24	Hermes Investment	12,500	£26,186		
			£46,687		
Sales					
21/11/24	Sandvik AB NPV	900	£16,940	£13,040	(£3,900)
29/11/24	Redemption - GCP Asset Backed inco	4,737	£4,334	£4,232	(£102)
					(£4,002)

GRAND LODGE GENERAL FUND

		Sales	Gain/		
Purchases		Units	Cost	Value	(Loss)
21/11/24	ASSA ABLOY NPV	1,000	£7,992		
13/12/24	Pershing Square Holdings Ltd	100	£3,854		
			£11,846		
Sales					
21/11/24	Sandvix AB NPV	550	£10,352	£7,969	(£2,383)
26/11/24	Diversified Energy	500	£12,551	£6,339	(£6,212)
					(£8,596)

MARKET VALUATIONS ETC.

	General Fund	Scottish Masonic Benevolent Fund	Scottish Masonic Homes Fund	Scottish Masonic General Relief Fd	Total
Market Value as					
at 31.12.24	£3,089,053	£1,051,926	£2,194,078	£1,249,064	£7,584,121
Book Cost as					
at 31.12.24	£2,367,422	£848,646	£1,709,487	£906,821	£5,832,376
Cash Balance					
at 31.12.24	-	-	-	-	-
Unrealised					
Gains /(Losses)	£721,631	£203,280	£484,591	£342,243	£1,751,745
Income to					
to 31.10.24	£59,416	£21,811	£44,162	£21,842	£147,232
Cash on					
Deposit	£0	£0	£0	£85,559	£85,559
Cash on Fixed Term					
@ 5.5%	£1,200,000	£150,000	£350,000	£0	£1,700,000

BREWIN DOLPHIN - Scottish Masonic Homes Fund

Market Valuations	Scottish Masonic Homes Fund
Market Value at 31/12/24	£3,981,224
Book Cost at 31/12/24	£3,140,269
Cash Balance at 31/12/24	£56,118
Unrealised Gains /(Losses)	£840,955
Income to 31/12/2024	£39,463

SCOTTISH MASONIC HOMES FUND

Purchases	Sales Units	Gain/ Cost	Value	(Loss)
FIRST SENTIER INVESTORS ICVC STEWART INVRS ASIA PAC LDRS SUST				
19/11/2024 B GBP D	22,000	£71,394		
		£71,394		
Sales				
MORGAN STANLEY INVESTMENT FDS				
18/11/24 SICAV ASIA OPPORTUNITY J				
USD ACC	2,640	£79,341	£69,955	(£9,386)

BUDGET REVIEW 2024-2025

The Grand Secretary gave a verbal update on outstanding fees. There followed a general discussion on sanctions and Grand Secretary agreed to write an appropriately worded letter citing disappointment over the situation. The importance of maintaining accurate membership figures from Lodges was highlighted, together with the inspection of Lodges being carried out in accordance with the Constitution and Laws. Provincial and District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents should be reminded of their duties.

CASH REVIEW REPORT

The report was considered and the recommendations were accepted by the Committee.

1. Rathbones 1 year fixed term deposit due to mature shortly should be invested into equity, split 50:50 between Rathbones and Brewin Dolphin.
2. A further £1m of cash should be set aside in a fixed term deposit for 12 months with Rathbones.
3. The aforementioned would be subsumed into a short life working which will be established to review and report on the overall financial structure of Grand Lodge with a view to recommending any changes required to ensure the organisation was fit for purpose. Grand Secretary will liaise with the Chairman with regard to the composition of the short life working group along with terms of reference.

HALL & BUILDINGS REPORT

Essential Maintenance

The Committee noted the completed essential work.

Asbestos Management

The Committee noted the on-going work, and accepted the recommendation to tape off the 3rd Floor Attic Water Tank as boxing this area was not a sensible option.

Grand Lodge Staircase

The Committee accepted the advice of a subject matter expert and decided to refrain from any further work.

94 George Street Office Accommodation

The Committee was appraised of the current plan to reorganise the office space of Freemasons' Hall prior to the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland leasing two offices on the second floor of 94 George Street, Edinburgh. The plans were well received and progress authorised, with an estimation of costs requested.

Migration to SharePoint

The Committee approved the integration of Microsoft SharePoint for staff at Freemasons' Hall at a cost of £4,500.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO LAWS

The Committee considered three notices of motions to amend the Constitution and Laws and one amendment of the fourth schedule which does not necessitate changing through a motion to Grand Lodge. The proposed amendments were: -

- To permit the creation of Proxy Grand Superintendents.
- To remove the requirement of an affiliation fee from a Brother whose Lodge has been declared dormant within the preceding 12 months.
- To reduce the restriction on Brethren abroad from being active members (Office-bearers or members of committees) of other specified Constitutions.
- To streamline the process for inter-constitutional visitations between the Scottish, English and Irish Constitutions only.

The motions were deemed to be competent and will be presented to Regular Communication of Grand Lodge in June 2025.

Long Term Lease Agreements

The Committee was satisfied that all extended leases of Grand Lodge property would be managed through commercial lease agreements prepared by Grand Lodge lawyers.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**Reaffirm interpretation of Law 125**

The Committee re-affirmed its position that Lodges are still entitled to exempt Lodge members, who have paid 21 years continuous Test Fees, from having to pay any further Test Fees if the Lodge Bye- laws permit the same. Lodges still have a responsibility for the Capitation Fee in respect of each member.

Other business

- It was pointed out that the latest yearbook had out of date information. The Grand Secretary informed the Committee that information about individual Lodges was based on information provided by Lodge Secretaries, of which some had failed to provide that information. A similar situation exists as regards other Orders.
- There was a plea that Grand Lodge should be formally represented at the funeral of a Senior Member of the Craft.
- The Grand Secretary will update the Committee on IT developments at a future meeting.

CLOSE

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was approved.

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**31st March 2025**

Present – Brothers Andrew Mushet (Chairman), William H. Gauld, Alexander Galbraith, James Bell, Steven Cowie and William M. S. Semple (Grand Secretary).

Brother Dr Stephen Kettlewell was in attendance at the invitation of the Chairman.

APOLOGIES

An apology from Brother Ewan Rutherford was noted.

WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed the attending Brethren and explained the purpose of the meeting.

Brother Kettlewell gave an update on the progress of the proposed integrated computerised system for Grand Lodge. Brother Kettlewell informed the Committee that discussions with a potential software development company were ongoing, however the need for an external consultant was necessary to provide expert, independent advice and guidance. A full discussion took place, with the committee making the decision to engage the recommended consultant.

CLOSE

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was approved.



DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**9th December 2024**

Present - Brothers Raymond A. MacKeddie, Acting Chairman; Robert R. Law, Robert D. Jess, Ian H. Cameron and Scot M. Harrison.

Apologies were received from Brother Stewart J. Quigley, Chairman; Ronald W. A. Forbes, Alistair C. McDermid and John S. Drummond.

The Acting Chairman welcomed the members of the Committee and thanked them for their attendance.

The Committee considered the following cases:

LODGE ST MEDANS, No. 1335

The Committee considered a complaint relating to Brother Ian McMillan Cowan of the above Lodge, who had been sentenced to a period of imprisonment for forty-two months.

After due deliberation, and in terms of Law 232 of the Constitution and Laws, the Committee found Brother Ian McMillan Cowan guilty of conduct unbecoming a Freemason and imposed a sentence of *sine die* with expulsion from the Scottish Craft.

LODGE ANCIENT, No. 49

The Committee considered a complaint relating to Brother Cameron James Anfield Wilson of the above Lodge, who had been sentenced to a period of imprisonment for twenty-one months.

After due deliberation, and in terms of Law 232 of the Constitution and Laws, the Committee found Brother Cameron James Anfield Wilson guilty of conduct unbecoming a Freemason and imposed a sentence of *sine die* with expulsion from the Scottish Craft.

LODGE CAMPERDOWN, No. 317

The Committee considered a complaint relating to Brother David Robertson Duncan of the above Lodge, who had been sentenced to a period of imprisonment for twenty-seven months.

After due deliberation, and in terms of Law 232 of the Constitution and Laws, the Committee found Brother David Robertson Duncan guilty of conduct unbecoming a Freemason and imposed a sentence of *sine die* with expulsion from the Scottish Craft.

LODGE ST MARY'S CALEDONIAN OPERATIVE, No. 339

The Committee considered a complaint relating to Brother Kevin Brooks of the above Lodge, who, by his own admission, was sentenced to a period of imprisonment for twelve months or more.

The Committee were provided with various other reports.

After due deliberation, and in terms of Law 232 of the Constitution and Laws, the Committee found Brother Kevin Brooks guilty of conduct unbecoming a Freemason and imposed a sentence of *sine die* with expulsion from the Scottish Craft.

LODGE LATHERON, No. 1424

The Committee considered a complaint relating to Brother Gary McPhee of the above Lodge, who at a meeting of the Disciplinary Committee of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Caithness held on 5th September 2024, was found guilty of conduct unbecoming a Freemason and sentenced to a one-year suspension from the Scottish Craft. No appeal was received.

In terms of Laws 243, after due deliberation, the decision of the Committee was to find Brother Gary McPhee guilty of conduct unbecoming a Freemason and were of a mind to vary the sentence from that of a one-year suspension to that of a three-year suspension and subsequently to continue its consideration of this case to a future meeting in order to allow time for appropriate representations to be invited in terms of Law 243.

CLOSE

The Acting Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was noted.

DISCIPLINARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

17th February 2025

Present - Brother Stewart J. Quigley, Chairman, Ronald W. A. Forbes, John S. Drummond, Ian H. Cameron, Robert R. Law, Raymond A. MacKeddie, Scot M. Harrison, Alistair C. McDermid and Robert D. Jess.

The Chairman welcomed the members of the Committee and thanked them for their attendance.

The Committee considered the following cases:

LODGE GALLOWAY, No. 951

The Committee met as the first forum and considered a complaint relating to Brother Joseph Hill Cairns of the above Lodge.

After due deliberation, and in terms of Law 237 of the Constitution and Laws, the Committee found Brother Joseph Hill Cairns guilty of conduct unbecoming a Freemason and imposed a sentence of admonishment.

LODGE LATHERON, No. 1424

The Committee considered a complaint relating to Brother Gary McPhee of the above Lodge, which had been carried over from the previous committee meeting. No response had been received.

After due deliberation, and in terms of Law 232 of the Constitution and Laws, the Committee found Brother Gary McPhee guilty of conduct unbecoming a Freemason and raised the sentence imposed by the Disciplinary Committee of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Caithness from one year suspension to that of a three-year suspension.

LODGE REGAL, No. 1422

The Committee considered a complaint relating to Brother William Grahame McCusker of the above Lodge, who at a meeting of the Disciplinary Committee of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Glasgow held on 11th December 2024, was found guilty of conduct unbecoming a Freemason and sentenced to an admonition. No appeal was received. After due deliberation, the Committee confirmed the decision of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Glasgow that Brother William Grahame McCusker was guilty of conduct unbecoming a Freemason, but was of a mind to vary the penalty of an admonition to that of a one-year suspension from the Scottish Craft and subsequently to continue its consideration of this case to a future meeting in order to allow time for appropriate representations to be invited in terms of Law 243.

THE LODGE OF GLAMMIS, No. 99

The Committee considered a resignation from Freemasonry from Brother David J. Dewars of the above lodge. Brother Forbes declared an involvement and withdrew himself from the discussion and decision.

The Committee considered all evidence put before it, and after due deliberation, the Committee decided to accept the resignation from Brother Dewars.

Brother Forbes then rejoined the meeting

LODGE OAK, No. 877

The Committee considered an irrevocable resignation from Freemasonry from Brother James Beveridge of the above Lodge. Brother Quigley and Brother McDermid declared an involvement and withdrew themselves from the discussion and decision.

The Committee considered the evidence put before it and after due deliberation, and in terms of Law 247 of the Constitution and Laws, the Committee decided to accept the irrevocable resignation from Brother Beveridge.

Brother Quigley and Brother McDermid then rejoined the meeting.

LODGE NETHAN ST JOHN, No. 1289

The Committee considered an irrevocable resignation from Freemasonry from Brother Peter Gordon Mathieson of the above lodge to avoid potential Masonic Censure. Brother Drummond declared an involvement and withdrew himself from the discussion and decision.

After due deliberation, and in terms of Law 247 of the Constitution and Laws, the Committee decided to accept the irrevocable resignation from Brother Mathieson.

Brother Drummond then rejoined the meeting.

CLOSE

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was noted.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

31st January 2025

The meeting was held on Teams.

Present - Brother Peter Taylor, Chairman; James Ellis, Iain McPhee, Kevin Taggart, Jamie Greene, Shawn Carr, Josh W. Drayton and William M.S. Semple, Grand Secretary.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Brother Iain White.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th October 2024 were approved.

MATTERS ARISING

No matters arising.

COMMITTEE RESTRUCTURE

The Chairman informed the Committee that more emphasis will be placed on Media and Education this year.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE

Lodge Secretaries Guidelines

The subject will be raised at the Provincial Grand Masters Committee, by the Chairman, to ascertain whether any Provincial Grand Secretaries may be inclined to help with the creation of a publication for Secretaries.

Events

Burns Supper

The Events sub - group is awaiting costs from caterers so that a ticket price can be fixed and submitted to Grand Secretary for approval.

Young and New Masons Event

The Chairman of the Apprentice Pillars provided a running order of the Entered Apprentice exemplification degree planned for 28th June 2025.

Festival of St Andrew

The Events sub - group will review and make appropriate suggestions to refresh this event. A proposal will be formulated and submitted to the Grand Secretary for review and subsequent approval by the Administration Committee.

Classical Music Concerts

A series of classical music concerts (choral, soloist and orchestral musicians) was proposed and will be progressed with a view to commencing this year 2025 through the Events sub - group.

IT & Social Media

The Media sub - group has been tasked with formulating a Social Media Communication Strategy (SMCS) for the Scottish Constitution. Grand Secretary described the importance of linking a SMCS to the organisations strategic vision and priorities and the ongoing work supporting the development of Recruitment, Retention, Re-engagement (3R's) and the Information Technology Expert Group (ITEG). An introductory meeting is to be arranged between all relevant parties to facilitate a briefing and situational update for the new Media sub - group Chairman.

Website Maintenance

No update

History and Heritage

No update

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**Grand Stewards Onboarding / Induction Packs**

The Chairman will engage the President of Grand Stewards to ascertain if there are any Stewards who may assist with creating onboarding and induction packs.

CLOSE

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was approved.



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

28th March 2025

The meeting was held on Teams.

Present - Brother Peter Taylor, Chairman; Kevin Taggart, Jamie Greene, Shawn Carr, Josh W. Drayton and William M.S. Semple, Grand Secretary.

Sub - group members present – Brothers James Renfrew, John Hayes, David Hamilton, and Rabih Jarmakani.

Brother Stephen Kettlewell by invite of the Chairman.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Brother Iain White.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 31st January 2025 were approved.

MATTERS ARISING

Secretaries' guidelines have now been uploaded onto the SharePoint site and will be reviewed alongside the other publications.

The Chairman will speak with the President of Grand Stewards to initiate the development of Grand Stewards onboarding packs.

PRESENTATION

Brother Stephen Kettlewell was invited by the Chairman to conduct a presentation and provide an update on the IT Strategy. All present were duly updated and The Chairman thanked Brother Kettlewell on behalf of the Committee.

SUB-GROUP UPDATES

Media

The leader of the Media Sub-group informed the Committee that they will be meeting imminently to discuss the Grand Lodge Media Strategy.

Website

The Grand Lodge Website has been refreshed and updated.

Publications

The Chairman informed the Committee that he would be working alongside the other Brethren on the publications sub-group to get one publication a month submitted to the Grand Secretary for pre-approval.

Events

Burns Supper

Ticketing for the event will commence imminently.

Grand Organist Concerts

The events sub-group is having dialogue with the Grand Organist to secure these events.

Arcana Veritas Distinction Awards

The trophies for this year's winners will be sourced from Scotland.

Highland Show

The events sub-group leader is awaiting confirmation of a place from the Highland Show organisers.

Christmas Concert

The leader of the events sub-group is liaising with the Assistant Grand Secretary to secure this event.

Festival of St Andrew

Feedback is required from the Committee Members for recommended improvements for this year's event.

Young and New Masons Event

The Chairman of the Apprentice Pillars (Young & New Masons) informed the Committee that all planning for the event and meal afterwards has been secured and the Degree team has been selected.

The Grand Secretary informed the Committee that good feedback has already been received in regard to the Saturday Special Communication.

IT & Social Media

The Media sub-group has been tasked with formulating a Social Media Communication Strategy (SMCS) for the Scottish Constitution. Grand Secretary described the importance of linking a SMCS to the organisations strategic vision and priorities and the ongoing work supporting the development of Recruitment, Retention, Re-engagement (3R's) and the Information Technology Expert Group (ITEG). An introductory meeting is to be arranged between all relevant parties to facilitate a briefing and situational update for the new Media sub-committee Chairman.

History and Heritage

Documentation has been formulated in reference to streamlining processes of cataloguing furnishings and other Masonic artefacts.

The Grand Secretary informed the Committee of the new Heritage & Collections Manager role within Grand Lodge. Part of this individuals work will be assisting with archiving Scottish Masonic Heritage materials and making them available for wider public consumption.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

None

CLOSE

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was approved.

OVERSEAS, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS & SPECIAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**13th February 2025**

Present - Brother Gordon J. Mackay (Chairman), Brother W. Ramsay McGhee, Brother Robert McIntyre, Brother W. Scott Bartlett, Brother Alexander C.G. Moncrieff, Brother Thomas Wood, Brother William M.S. Semple, Grand Secretary.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Brother Michael A. McAdams.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th August 2024 were approved.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

GRAND LODGE OF ALBANIA

Correspondence was received from the Grand Lodge of Albania with further information on the recent case heard in the Central Court of Albania concerning the dismissal of the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Albania. This was noted and no further action required.

GRAND LODGE OF DENMARK, THE DANISH ORDER OF FREEMASONS

Correspondence was received from the Grand Lodge of Denmark, The Danish Order of Freemasons, regarding the Installation of a new Grand Master, Brother Peter Olesen Dahl held on the 25th January 2025.

GRAND LODGE OF GREECE

Correspondence was received from the Grand Lodge of Greece, with information on their new Board of Grand Officers elected for a three-year term, 2025-2028.

GRAND LODGE OF MAURITIUS

Correspondence was received from the Grand Lodge of Mauritius regarding the resignation of Past Grand Chancellor, Brother Christian Lefevre, and Past Grand Secretary, Brother Gerard Lousie, who no longer have any association with the Grand Lodge of Mauritius.

GRAND ORIENT OF ITALY

Correspondence was received from the Grand Orient of Italy regarding the European Court of Human Rights judgement to condemn the search of the Grand Orient of Italy's headquarters and the seizure of membership records.

GRAND LODGE OF AZERBAIJAN

Correspondence was received from the Grand Lodge of Azerbaijan with a proposal for Brother Nader Heyat to be appointed as the Representative of the Grand Lodge of Scotland near to the Grand Lodge of Azerbaijan, it was the recommendation of the Committee to proceed with this request.

GRAND LODGE OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Correspondence was received from the Grand Lodge of the Dominican Republic with a proposal for Brother Querlin Baudilio Sanchez to be appointed as the Representative of the Grand Lodge of Scotland near to the Grand Lodge of the Dominican Republic, it was the recommendation of the Committee to proceed with this request.

LODGE ST. ANDREW, No. 966, MALTA

A need for closer support and representation in respect of Lodge St Andrew, No. 966, had been identified as a result it is recommended that No. 966 once again comes under the supervision of the District Grand Lodge of Gibraltar and the District is renamed The District Grand Lodge of the Western Mediterranean. Both parties have expressed a willingness to support this proposal.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROVINCIAL & DISTRICT GRAND MASTERS & GRAND SUPERINTENDENTS

Having been tasked by the Governance & Strategy Board, a short-life working group has been established to review the current recommendation process of Provincial and District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

The Committee undertook to review current and future workstreams to ensure compatibility with the strategic vision and priorities set out by the Governance & Strategy Board.

CLOSE

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was approved.



OVERSEAS, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS & SPECIAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**17th April 2025**

Present - Brother Gordon J. Mackay (Chairman), Brother W. Ramsay McGhee, Brother Robert McIntyre, Brother W. Scott Bartlett, Brother Alexander C.G. Moncrieff, Brother Thomas Wood, Brother Michael A McAdams, Brother William M.S. Semple, Grand Secretary.

APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 13th February 2025 were approved.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

GRAND LODGE OF JAPAN

Correspondence was received from the Grand Lodge of Japan regarding the passing to the Grand Lodge above of Brother William D. Patterson, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Japan.

GRAND LODGE OF THE STATE OF HIDALGO MEXICO

An application was received from the Grand Lodge of the State of Hidalgo Mexico for recognition, after discussion it was the decision of the Committee not to proceed with the application.

GRAND LODGE OF BAJA CALIFORNIA

Correspondence was received from the Grand Lodge of Baja California with a recommendation to appoint Brother Alberto Angulo Verdugo to be the Representative of the Grand Lodge of Scotland at the Grand Lodge of Baja California. It was the recommendation of the Committee to proceed with the application.

LODGE PEACE AND CONCORDE, No. 445, LIMA, PERU

Correspondence was received from Lodge Peace and Concorde, No. 445, Lima, Peru in reference to the Representative of the Grand Lodge of Scotland at the Grand Lodge of Peru. The Grand Master Mason would meet with Brother Alexander C. G. Moncrieff, Brother Craig Thompson and Grand Secretary to discuss the situation.

APPOINTMENT OF PROXY DISTRICT GRAND MASTERS AND PROXY SUPERINTENDENTS

It was recommended by the Committee that the following Brethren be appointed as Proxy District Masters and Proxy Grand Superintendents.

District Grand Lodge

Bahamas
 Barbados
 Botswana
 Central South Africa
 East Africa
 Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope
 Far East
 Gibraltar
 Guyana
 India
 Jamaica
 Kwazulu Natal
 Lebanon
 Middle East
 Namibia
 Newfoundland & Labrador
 New Zealand North Island
 New Zealand South Island
 Nigeria
 Sierra Leone & The Gambia
 Trinidad Tobago & Grenada
 Western Australia
 Western Australia Goldfields
 Western Province of the Cape of Good Hope
 Zambia
 Zimbabwe

Grand Superintendency

Bermuda
 Sri Lanka
 Panama
 Malawi

Proxy District Grand Master

Brother Thomas Davidson
 Brother Craig Thompson
 Brother Mervyn Mitchell
 Brother Gordon Mather
 Brother W. Ramsay McGhee
 Brother Charles Winston
 Brother John White
 Brother William M. S. Semple
 Brother David Niven
 Brother George Donnelly
 Brother James Bell
 Brother David Irving
 Brother Andrew Paterson
 Brother Thomas Smith
 Brother Andrew Smith
 Brother Douglas Nicol
 Brother Ronald W. A. Forbes
 Brother John Drummond
 Brother Michael McAdams
 Brother David Reid
 Brother Morris Downie
 Brother Douglas Duncan
 Brother William Innes
 Brother Alexander Galbraith
 Brother Stewart Lamb
 Brother Charles I. R. Wolrige Gordon
 of Esslemont

Proxy Grand Superintendent

Brother Charles Stewart
 Brother John Muir
 Brother Alec Shuttleworth
 Brother Raymond MacKeddie

STRATEGIC VISION AND PRIORITIES

The Committee considered and discussed the relevance of current and future Committee activity and how this sat with the Strategic Vision and Priorities of the Scottish Constitution.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

There was no other competent business.

CLOSE

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was approved.

DISTRICT GRAND MASTERS AND GRAND SUPERINTENDENTS COMMITTEE**19th January 2025**

Present - Brother Kalpesh Shah (East Africa) Chairman, Brother Andre Harding (Barbados), Brother Christopher Wong (Far East), Brother Paul Villata (Gibraltar), Brother Sean Noel (Guyana), Brother Martin Weekes (Bermuda), Brother Courtney Palmer (Jamaica), Brother Maurice Feghali (Lebanon), Brother Gary Dinham (Newfoundland and Labrador), Brother Ken Tucker (Kwazulu Natal), Brother Crispin Deigh (Sierra Leone and the Gambia), Brother Douglas Ironside (Zambia), Brother Robert Fisher (Zimbabwe).

Brother W. Ramsay McGhee Grand Master Mason, Brother William M.S. Semple, Grand Secretary and by invitation Brother Thomas Davidson, Grand Almoner.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated from Brother Anthony Bostwick (Bahamas), Brother Anthony Ford (New Zealand North Island), and Brother Arthur Anderson (Western Australia Goldfields).

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to all present. He acknowledged the presence of the Grand Master Mason Brother W. Ramsay McGhee, the Grand Secretary Brother William M. S. Semple and Grand Almoner Brother Thomas Davidson.

MEETING OF 20th OCTOBER 2024

The minute of the meeting held on 20th October 2024, having been circulated, was approved.

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTE CHAIRMAN FOR THE COMMITTEE

The Chairman informed the Brethren that there was a need to appoint a Depute Chairman for the Committee so that the work can continue in the event that he is unable to attend. Grand Secretary informed the members that the appointment would be done by the Governance & Strategy Board at their next meeting but if there was any Brother interested in the position to come forward. Brother Maurice Feghali (Lebanon) indicated that he may be interested after having a conversation with the Chairman and to see what was required.

UPDATE ON THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL SCOTTISH MASONIC CONFERENCE BY THE DISTRICT GRAND MASTER OF ZAMBIA.

The District Grand Master of Zambia Brother Douglas Ironside informed the members that preparations for the 5th International Scottish Masonic Conference from 29th May to 31st May 2025 in Livingstone, Zambia are well underway. The Theme for the conference shall be *"Enlightened Horizons: Charting the Future of Freemasonry"*. He further informed the members that approximately 130 Brethren have already registered and that the early bird discount has been extended. He requested all District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents to encourage their members to attend the conference. The program is being finalised and it was further noted that on Wednesday 28th May 2025 there would be a centenary celebration and rededication meeting for Lodge David Livingstone, No. 1321.

PRESENTATION ON PROSTATE CHAMPIONS BY GRAND ALMONER, BROTHER THOMAS DAVIDSON

Grand Almoner, Brother Thomas Davidson delivered an informative presentation to the committee on Prostate Champions and the need to spread awareness of the disease. The presentation documents and other papers have been circulated to all District Grand Masters and Secretaries, Grand Superintendents and where possible their secretaries.

The Chairman thanked Brother Thomas Davidson for taking the time to attend the meeting and present the important works on Prostate cancer and further recommended to all members to bring awareness in their Districts and Superintendencies.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

The Grand Secretary, Brother William M.S. Semple informed the members that Grand Lodge was streamlining the method of Annual Reports by District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents. He stated that all reports will now be due no later than the end of June every year and would be structured around the Grand Lodge strategic priorities. This process would also fall in line with the Governance & Strategy Board timelines. He further reminded the members that Quarterly Returns are due at the end of January and unfortunately the response from Lodges overseas has been poor. He urged the members present to ensure that their Districts and Grand Superintendencies comply by submitting the quarterly returns on time.

The Grand Master Mason, Brother W. Ramsay McGhee, stated that he was a little disappointed with the attendance at the meeting as this group was formed to bring the Districts and Grand Superintendencies closer to Grand Lodge. He reiterated that if the District Grand Master or Grand Superintendent was unable to attend there should be a senior member from his District or Grand Superintendent's region to represent so that ample feedback could be received or communicated. He further endorsed the presentation by the Grand Almoner and stated that although a lot has been done there is a need to do more. He acknowledged that some Districts have various sets ups regarding Prostate cancer while others need to look into it.

Brother Paul Villata (Gibraltar) brought to the attention of the committee the need to review Law 133 (c). This law seems to affect many of the Districts due to the multiple constitutions that exist in their regions. After a short discussion, Grand Secretary informed the members that he will investigate the matter and raise it at the next Governance & Strategy Board meeting.

Administrative issues were raised by District Grand Masters and Grand Secretary has taken note and will investigate appropriately.

The Chairman, Brother Kalpesh Shah, informed the members that the next meeting is scheduled for Sunday 20th April 2025. He informed members that the day falls on Easter Sunday and suggested moving the meeting to Sunday 27th April 2025. He also raised the issue of the attendance of members and investigate holding the meetings on a weekday. The members agreed.

CLOSING

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was approved.

PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTERS COMMITTEE

5th December 2024

Present - Brother Andrew E. Forsyth, Chairman; James Bell, Ian H. Cameron, Peter Taylor, Alan Dickson, Ronald E. Fraser, Alan S. Balfour, William B. Rocks, James S. Anderson, Scott J. McLean, David Wemyss, Stuart J. Robertson, Raymond A. MacKeddie, David S. Irving, Robert Law, Michael Taylor, Ronald J. Gemmill, Thomas S. Graham, John W. Black, and William M.S. Semple, Grand Secretary.

Brother John K. Bryce and James McMillan were present to represent their Provincial Grand Masters.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Brothers Gordon W. Sewell, Thomas Wood, John D. Stewart, and Andrew D. Millar.

MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th October 2024 were approved.

MATTERS ARISING

5th ISMC

The Chairman will be attending the conference in Zambia and has been asked to deliver a presentation on the Young and New Masons Initiative.

OSCR

The Provincial Grand Master of Midlothian provided an update on the review and a report will be submitted to the Grand Secretary when complete.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents Committee have produced a document pertaining to the three Strategic Priorities with suggested actions for each. This document is a potential starting point for creating local guidance. The Provincial Grand Masters short-life working groups will provide an update to the next committee meeting.

ATTENDANCE OF GRAND STEWARDS

An attendance record is held in Grand Lodge which can be referenced at any time by Provincial Grand Masters.

MEDIATION GROUP

A programme is currently being piloted in the Province of Forfarshire which, if successful, will prevent Brethren unnecessarily falling into the Disciplinary system. Documentation has been produced which outlines the roles and responsibilities of the mediation group. This documentation will be fine-tuned during the pilot process, prior to being submitted to The Grand Secretary for approval. The Disciplinary Chairman will monitor the pilot program on behalf of Grand Lodge.

LODGE INACTIVITY AND DORMANCY

The Administration Committee are currently reviewing the Constitution and Laws pertaining to this subject and are seeking Provincial Grand Masters to assist in gaining an insight into the current corporate approaches when Lodges go Inactive and Dormant.

Brother Alan Dickson, Ian H. Cameron, and Alan S. Balfour volunteered to assist.

OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**Lodge Open Days**

Discussion was entered into regarding Lodge open days / evenings and how they may be a useful tool to encourage the local community into Lodges.

Annual Report

The Grand Secretary informed the Committee that his office is currently formulating a standardised template for Provincial and District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents to use for the Annual Report they submit to Freemasons' Hall. This template will be structured around the Strategic Vision and Priorities.

Bank Charges

Banks are now applying service charges on accounts. Online savings accounts may be a cost- effective alternative.

Grand Stewards

The Committee recommend that Induction / onboarding packs should be made available to newly appointed Grand Stewards to ensure they are aware of their duties. This will be referred to the Information and Communications Committee for consideration.

Collections

Clarity was provided in that collections when a candidate is initiated do not need to be paid into the Lodge Benevolent Fund.

CLOSE

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was approved.

PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTERS COMMITTEE

22nd January 2025

Present - Brother Andrew E. Forsyth, Chairman; Ian H. Cameron, Peter Taylor, Alan S. Balfour, William B. Rocks, James S. Anderson, Scott J. McLean, Stuart J. Robertson, Raymond A. MacKeddie, Robert Law, Michael Taylor, Ronald J. Gemmill, Thomas S. Graham, John W. Black, Thomas Wood, James Moodie, Gordon Sewell, and William M.S. Semple, Grand Secretary.

Brother John K. Bryce was present to represent his Provincial Grand Master.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Brothers, John D. Stewart, Andrew D. Millar, Gary Taylor, James Bell, Alan Dickson, and David Irving.

MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 5th December 2024 were approved.

MATTERS ARISING

No matters arising.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Chairman of the Committee and the Provincial Grand Master of Orkney and Zetland have both produced a paper with suggestions on the Strategic Priorities allocated to them. The Provincial Grand Master of Dumfriesshire is finalising his paper on “Placing Membership at the Heart of Scottish Freemasonry” and appealed for points of common practice to be submitted to him from other Provincial Grand Masters. When these documents are complete they will be sent to the Grand Secretary for review prior to circulation.

The Provincial Grand Master of Glasgow shared his findings from the Recruitment, Retention, and Re-engagement working group. He suggested that when these papers have been finalised the Provincial Grand Masters from Provinces of a similar geographic nature and size, could be grouped together to form working groups to review the varying dynamics in their areas of jurisdiction and explore the challenges they commonly face.

The Information and Communications Chairman informed the Committee of the various work streams and comprehensive documents that his Committee are in the process of producing, which are structured around the three Strategic Priorities. He also suggested that Provinces should make Grand Lodge aware of significant community events happening within their Provinces, particularly those where the Freemasons are actively participating, so that Grand Lodge can have a presence at these events.

The Grand Secretary made the Committee aware that the Strategic Priorities will be standing item on the Committee agenda.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

Annual Report

The Grand Secretary re-informed the Committee that Grand Lodge is currently formulating a template for Provincial and District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents to use for the Annual Report they submit to Grand Lodge. This template will be structured around the Strategic Vision and Priorities of the Scottish Constitution.

Communication

The Provincial Grand Master of Orkney and Zetland made the Committee aware of the lack of Communication between Provincial Grand Lodges. He suggested that Grand Lodge share all celebratory events of which they are aware with all Provinces to make Brethren aware of these and maximise attendance. The Grand Secretary agreed to having the Grand Lodge Deputation calendar circulated to all Provincial Grand Masters and Secretaries.

Sharing Good Practice

The Provincial Grand Masters of Midlothian informed the Committee of a successful initiative within his Provincial Grand Lodge. Each Lodge in his Province has two Provincial Grand Office-bearers allocated to it as representatives.

CLOSE

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was approved.



PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTERS COMMITTEE

11th April 2025

Present - Brother Andrew E. Forsyth, Chairman; Ian H. Cameron, Alan S. Balfour, Scott J. McLean, Raymond A. MacKeddie, Robert Law, John W. Black, James Moodie, David Wemyss, Michael Ross, Ray Wilson, John D. Stewart, Ronald Fraser, Andrew D. Millar, James Bell, Gordon Sewell, and William M.S. Semple, Grand Secretary.

Brother Lawrence Cooper, Callum Colquhoun, and Robert Cheyne were present to represent their respective Provincial Grand Masters.

Brother Alexander C. G. Moncrieff, Depute Grand Master, was in attendance by invite of the Chairman.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Brothers, Stuart J. Robertson, Thomas Wood, Alan Dickson, William Rocks, Michael Taylor, David Irving, and Thomas S. Graham.

MINUTES

Minute of the previous meeting held on 11th January 2025 was approved.

MATTERS ARISING

Leadership Development Day

The agenda and paperwork are currently being finalised and will be circulated to the attendees one week prior to the event. If a Provincial Grand Master is unable to attend, his Depute or Substitute should in order to ensure that the Province is represented. The dress code for the day will be smart / casual.

5th International Scottish Masonic Conference

Several Scottish based Brethren have confirmed that they will be making the trip and look forward to a full and thorough itinerary.

Strategic Priorities

Papers on each Strategic Priority have been formulated. The Provincial Grand Masters who have written the papers welcome any additions and feedback prior to completion. These papers are living documents which will continually evolve over time. When approved the documents will be made available for wider consumption.

Recruitment, Retention & Re-engagement (3R's)

The Provincial Grand Master of Glasgow appraised the Committee of the work the 3R's working party has been carrying out. A lot of the work generated through the 3R's working group overlaps the work being carried out by the Provincial Grand Masters on the Strategic Priorities. These papers will form the basis for actionable points to be implemented.

ANNUAL REPORTING TO GRAND LODGE

A draft Annual Report template has been circulated to the Committee for their perusal. This template is centered around the three Strategic Priorities and how they are being implemented in the various areas of jurisdiction. The final version of the Annual Report will be submitted annually in June in compliance with the Constitution and Laws and

will be made available in a digital format. There will also be areas for free text and uploading images.

PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT GRAND MASTERS AND GRAND SUPERINTENDENTS' APPLICATION PROCESS

Having been tasked by the Governance & Strategy Board, the Overseas, External Affairs & Special Purposes Committee had prepared a draft application process for Provincial and District Grand Master and Grand Superintendent roles. The Committee constructively critiqued the draft submission and felt that the format would not necessarily encourage suitable candidates to come forward and may in fact discourage good candidates. The Committee did not support the draft in its present format. The Chairman will provide feedback to the next meeting of the Governance & Strategy Board.

FREEMASONS' HALL STRUCTURE AND STAFFING

The Grand Secretary updated the Committee that a Heritage & Collections Manager had been recruited and will commence in post during July 2025. The recruitment process had been facilitated through Glasgow University to ensure a suitably qualified and capable individual was identified to take on this significant role for the Scottish Constitution as we approach the 300th anniversary of Grand Lodge in 2036.

The use of office space in Freemasons' Hall is also changing with the entire Grand Lodge staff shortly to be located on the first floor to further improve service delivery and collaborative working practices.

OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

Lodge Amalgamation and Dormancy

The Provincial Grand Master of Perthshire East and Orkney and Zetland met with a Member of the Administration Committee as part of a small working group to look at Lodge Amalgamation and Dormancy. A paper has been produced and will be submitted for approval.

Fees

A common barrier for Brethren seeking to return to Freemasonry is paying three years' test fees. A suggestion was made to have another amnesty for fees to re-engage lapsed Members. This suggestion will feature in a general review of financial management being undertaken by the Administration Committee.

Visitation between the three Home Grand Lodges

The three Home Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland have agreed to streamline interjurisdictional visitations. A joint statement of guidance will be issued to the three Constitutions at the end of April 2025. It was emphasised that this new procedure only applied to the Home Grand Lodges and visitations to other overseas jurisdictions still required to be approved by Grand Lodge via the Province, District or Superintendency, as appropriate.

CLOSE

The Chairman was thanked for presiding.

The report was approved.

GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGY BOARD

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EXPERT WORKING GROUP

The Governance and Strategy Board reviewed the IT Expert Group's report highlighting significant advancements in the Grand Lodge of Scotland's IT strategy. The establishment of the IT Expert Group has been pivotal in supporting the strategic objectives of the Scottish Constitution. Key achievements include an interim refresh of the Grand Lodge website resulting in increased web traffic and improved functionality for non-members to make contact, and for membership enquiries to be efficiently directed. The Board also discussed the recent appointment of an IT supplier manager advising Grand Lodge on supplier selection criteria, and exploration of Software as a Service solution. This will now move towards an invitation to tender process in order to select a preferred supplier which meets the requirement needs of the organisation. The progress of Phase 1 and 2 of the IT strategy was reviewed, with stakeholder engagement completed and requirements identified, while Phase 2 continues with a focus on technical requirements and end-user case scenarios to ensure the final delivery meets our core requirements.

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND RE-ENGAGEMENT (3R's)

The 3Rs sub - group has discussed the rolling out their initial thoughts to the Scottish Constitution to collate the examples of good practice and circulate accordingly.

The sub - group provided an update on the development of core messages to share through Provincial and District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents, in respect of recruitment, retention and re-engagement.

MASONIC LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The leadership development programme for Provincial Grand Masters will commence within Freemasons' Hall on Saturday 26th April 2025. Following evaluation, the programme will be extended to District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents.

INVITATION TO JOIN THE COUNCIL FOR FREEMASONRY IN GREAT BRITAIN

Upon receipt of recommendation, it was agreed to move Grand Lodge to accept an invitation to join the Council for Freemasonry in Great Britain and be represented by the Grand Master Mason and Grand Secretary, both of whom have been attending the Council as observers since its inauguration.

RECOMMENDATION OF PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT GRAND MASTERS AND GRAND SUPERINTENDENTS

The Chair of the Overseas, External Affairs and Special Purposes Committee updated the Board on the draft document which had been circulated for comment in respect of recommending future Provincial and District Grand Masters and Grand Superintendents. Following initial feedback, further dialogue would take place through that Committee and the matter would be reported at a future Board meeting.

AMALGAMATION

Upon receipt of recommendation, it was agreed to move Grand Lodge that Lodge Macduff, No. 940, and Lodge Earl Haig, No. 1260, in the Province of Fife and Kinross be amalgamated and be known as Lodge Earl Haig, No. 1260.

BOARD OF GRAND STEWARDS

Upon receipt of a recommendation from Brother Ronald Fraser, Provincial Grand Master of the Province of Renfrewshire East, it was agreed to move Grand Lodge to appoint Brother Gary John Upchurch, as a Grand Steward to represent the Province of Renfrewshire East and to replace Brother Andrew McFadden.

Upon receipt of a recommendation from Brother David J. Williams, Provincial Grand Master (elect) of the Province of Sutherland, it was agreed to move Grand Lodge to appoint Brother Charle I. Z. Lawson, as a Grand Steward to represent the Province of Sutherland and to replace Brother David J. Williams.

PROXY DISTRICT GRAND MASTERS AND PROXY GRAND SUPERINTENDENTS

Upon receipt of a recommendation from the Chairman of the Oversees, External Affairs and Special Purposes Committee, it was agreed to move Grand Lodge to appoint the after shown Brethren as Proxy District Grand Masters and Proxy Grand Superintendents: -

DISTRICT GRAND LODGE

Bahamas
Barbados
Botswana
Central South Africa
East Africa
Eastern Province COGH
Far East
Gibraltar
Guyana
India
Jamaica
Kwazulu Natal
Lebanon
Middle East
Namibia
Newfoundland & Labrador
New Zealand North Island
New Zealand South Island
Nigeria
Sierra Leone & The Gambia
Trinidad, Tobago and Grenada
Western Australia
Western Australia Goldfields
Western Province COGH
Zambia
Zimbabwe

RECOMMENDATION

Brother Thomas Davidson
Brother Craig Thompson
Brother Mervyn Mitchell
Brother Gordon Mather
Brother Ramsay McGhee
Brother Charles Winston
Brother John White
Brother William Semple
Brother David Niven
Brother George Donnelly
Brother James Bell
Brother David Irving
Brother Andrew Paterson
Brother Thomas Smith
Brother Andrew Smith
Brother Douglas Nicol
Brother Ronald Forbes
Brother John Drummond
Brother Michael McAdams
Brother David Reid
Brother Morris Downie
Brother Douglas Duncan
Brother William Innes
Brother Alexander Galbraith
Brother Stewart Lamb
Brother Charles Ian Wolrige Gordon

GRAND SUPERINTENDENCY

Bermuda
Sri Lanka
Panama
Malawi

Brother Charles Stewart
Brother John Muir
Brother Alec Shuttleworth
Brother Raymond MacKeddie

REPRESENTATIVES TO SISTER GRAND LODGES

Upon receipt of recommendation, it was agreed to move Grand Lodge to appoint Brother Nadar Heyat to serve as a representative from the Grand Lodge of Scotland near to the Grand Lodge of Azerbaijan.

Upon receipt of recommendation, it was agreed to move Grand Lodge to appoint Brother Querlin Baudilio Sanchez as a representative from the Grand Lodge of Scotland near to the Grand Lodge of the Dominican Republic.

DISTRICT GRAND LODGE OF GIBRALTER AND LODGE ST ANDREW, No. 966, MALTA

Upon receipt of recommendation, it was agreed to move Grand Lodge approve Lodge St Andrew, No. 966, Malta, currently under the direct supervision of Grand Lodge, should be moved to become part the jurisdiction of the District Grand Lodge of Gibraltar, and that the District Grand Lodge of Gibraltar be renamed the District Grand Lodge of the Western Mediterranean.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

Grand Secretary informed the Board that there had been a poor response from Provincial and District Grand Masters regarding Lodges within their jurisdiction that had been declared inactive.

CLOSE

There being no further business the Chairman was thanked for presiding.

