



Province of Yorkshire West Riding

Role Profile: Lodge Almoner

Role Title: Lodge Almoner

Reports To: *Provincial Almoner*

The job of Almoner is often regarded as a bit of a sinecure, but to discharge the office properly as it now is, it entails some little work. There have been recent significant changes in what is expected of an almoner, and these changes are likely to be added to in future years.

The Almoner's job is no longer simply a matter of delivering a bottle of scotch or flowers every now and then when a brother or his partner is under the weather, but has expanded greatly, and it is a much more proactive role than it has been in the past. It is a practical requirement of the Almoner's office that he must be able to access and use the internet as, both within the province but more importantly in the Masonic Charitable Foundation ("MCF") and West Riding Masonic Charities Limited, ("WRMCL"), there has been a move to digital by default and the use of e-mail and scanning by way of communication. Similarly, the extensive resources that are available to assist applicants are substantially accessible through the internet.

As you will be aware, UGLE have initiated several initiatives to attract new members and keep up our engagement with those existing members whose interest may be waning.

These initiatives will involve the Lodge Membership Officer, Mentor and Almoner, and require a proactive response to any fall off in attendance by lodge members. This duty is specifically laid upon the Almoner who is specifically asked to contact those whose interest appears to be waning and to seek out remedies to help the brother overcome whatever it is that has caused his interest in freemasonry to falter.

As we attract a more age diverse membership, we must also be aware of the problems of these younger members of the lodge. Whilst our older members have issues relating to their advancing years, the world has changed in many ways, particularly in employment, it is not as easy for young professionals to take time off to get to our meetings as it was in previous years, and they have other problems of which those “of a certain age” are not aware. It is the Almoner’s responsibility to keep in touch with such junior members and give what assistance and encouragement they require.

The Almoner’s pages include information designed to assist brethren generally, the MCF “Yellow Book”, issued to all our initiates, and probably never looked at again, which contains details of various masonic funds and organisations that may be of assistance in time of need.

The Confidential helpline pages provides an easy route to obtaining help in the knowledge that all details will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence and to obtaining assistance for vulnerable or at risk individuals through the dedicated Provincial Support officers.

Finally, you will be aware that there has been a coordinated effort within the province to address the issue of mental health problems and an aide memoire on how to deal with issues you find within your lodge, or wider network. This may be of help, but you may also refer such matters to the almoner’s office if you are unsure or uncertain what to do yourself.

Building Together

You may well have heard of ‘Building Together’.

For some time, there has been concern over resignations which can occur due to issues which could be dealt with if spotted early. In addition, if a brother resigns and contact is maintained, they may return later.

We believe that the skills possessed by almoners are best used in the retention and retrieval arm of the **Building Together** project. This would mean that it is simply an extension of the work already being done in looking after the physical, mental and financial health of brethren. The almoner is ideally placed as he is the one who a brother can talk to on a confidential basis at any time. In addition, we would advocate a more proactive approach which would involve checking attendance and contacting brethren if they miss 2 meetings with no apologies, keeping an eye out for warning signs at festive boards and considering working with assistant almoner to cover all the brethren, particularly in larger lodges.

If a brother resigns, consider keeping in contact, as the reason they resigned, may have changed, allowing reattendance. Do they have transport issues, can they afford the subscriptions? Could another Lodge or Chapter be more appropriate?

Preventing resignations is not just about numbers, but more about supporting the general welfare of our brethren and almoners are ideally suited to this, undertaking the duty in a caring and confidential manner

Learn more about Building Together, especially the ‘Respond’ hub.

Building Together
Click here or use the barcode

Bar Code