

PROVINCIAL GRAND CHAPTER OF ESSEX



Notes for the guidance of THE CHAPTER SCRIBE EZRA

Produced and distributed by the
Provincial Grand Chapter of Essex

INTRODUCTON

This booklet is a recommended system of administration for a Chapter Scribe Ezra and is in a loose leaf form so that amendments and notes can be easily inserted.

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GENERAL INFORMATON

- 1 The Three Principals, Scribe Ezra, and Director of Ceremonies, as the responsible Officers of the Chapter, should be aware of the following procedures. They also are responsible for the reception and entertainment of distinguished visitors.
- 2 It is recommended that you compile a personal file listing the Chapter Scribe Ezra's general duties and those required to comply with the Royal Arch Regulations in the Book of Constitutions (2003 edition), the Essex Provincial Grand Chapter By-Laws (see Essex Handbook) and the Chapter By-Laws.
- 3 **CORRESPONDENCE** – Copies of all Supreme Grand Chapter and Provincial Grand Chapter instructions and correspondence should be kept on file and read periodically and should only be destroyed on replacement and ultimately handed to your successor as part of the Chapter records.
- 4 **BALLOTS** – there are three types of ballot:
 - a) Ballot Box) classified as
 - b) Ballot Slips) 'Secret Ballots'
 - c) Show of hands
 - a) Ballot Box – for Exaltations, Joining Members, Rejoining Members, Honorary Membership and Exclusions under Rule 181 Book of Constitutions
 - b) Ballot Slips – usually for the election of the Principals and Treasurer
 - b) Show of hands – all that is necessary for the election of the Janitor, unless appointed by the Principals, and all domestic matters, i.e. motions, recommendations and proposals as printed on the summons
- 5 **EXCLUSIONS** – Royal Arch Regulation 71, Rule 181, Book of Constitutions and appropriate Chapter By-Law. For arrears in subscriptions for a period of less than two years the following must be complied with for the exclusion to be effective:-

A notice in writing to the member concerned, forwarded by Registered/Recorded Post.

A written notice to all members, or an item on the relevant summons of the intention to propose such a resolution.

A vote by ballot (NOT show of hands). The resolution shall not be carried unless two-thirds of the members present vote in favour of it. If carried the effective date of exclusion will be the date of the meeting.
- 6 **RETURNS** – Supreme Grand Chapter and Provincial Grand Chapter Returns must be made as soon as possible and no later than ONE MONTH of them being due, i.e. Returns dated 31 December together with the appropriate dues must be received by Supreme Grand Chapter and Provincial Grand Chapter by 31 January at the very latest. Supreme Grand Chapter and Provincial Returns should both be sent to the Provincial Office.
- 7 **DISPENSATIONS** – a Provincial Grand Chapter Dispensation can normally be issued within a few days. It is recommended that you contact the Provincial Grand Scribe E as soon as a need for a possible dispensation is identified.
- 8 **EMERGENCY MEETINGS** – Royal Arch Regulation No 59 provides for the Principals to call an Emergency Convocation if there is good cause. A dispensation is not normally needed, but for the sake of protocol please keep the Provincial Grand Scribe E informed of the details and ensure copies of summons are issued in the normal way. This facility is useful if a Chapter has a long waiting list of candidates.

- 9 MINUTES – these must contain full details of what transpired during a Regular or Emergency Convocation, including the names and initials of all members and visiting companions present. It is recommended that minutes, if the Chapter so resolves, be copied and circulated to all members prior to the next meeting and not read in full in Open Chapter.
- 10 BY-LAWS – the By-Laws of the Chapter MUST be set out in accordance with Model By-Laws from time to time issued by the First Grand Principal in which they can be amended, and the procedure laid down and which should be followed. All proposals for amendment, before being put for approval by the Chapter, should be agreed with the Provincial Grand Scribe E, with the exception of amendments to the annual subscription. They do not become effective until approved by the ME Grand Superintendent on behalf of the First Grand Principal. The Province will supply three copies, one to be returned for the Chapter records, one will be sent to Supreme Grand Chapter and one retained by the Province.
- 11 UNITED GRAND LODGE MASONIC YEAR BOOK – this is normally published each year in the autumn. A Scribe E, who is not also a Lodge Secretary, can obtain a free copy of the Masonic Year Book on application to Grand Lodge.
- 12 REGISTRATON FORM P (FORM P) – this form is required for candidates for exaltation and joining/rejoining and supplies should be ordered from Supreme Grand Chapter. This form together with a cheque payable to Supreme Grand Chapter (Exaltees and Joiners from Foreign Constitutions only) should be forwarded to the Province for onward transmission.
- 13 THE MEZ SCEPTRE – the MEZ only offers his Sceptre to the ME Grand Superintendent, Deputy Grand Superintendent, Second or Third Provincial Grand Principal or an Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals when they are on an official visit.

THE SUMMONS

GENERAL – the summons convening the meeting should be circulated at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

In addition to copies of the summons for members, visitors and the minute book, **SIX** copies should be sent to the Provincial Office, the address can be found at the front of the current handbook.

Should an official visit be planned for your Chapter then the Officer concerned will write and inform you of his intended visit with the name and address of his DC.

DISPENSATONS – if a dispensation has been issued then this should be the first item of the agenda following the opening of the Chapter.

EXALTATON or JOINING MEMBERS - Royal Arch Regulation No 66 Book of Constitutions must be observed – see pages 4 and 6.

REGULAR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA – there are regular items that appear on an agenda annually, viz:-

- a) Receive and if approved adopt Statement of Accounts and Treasurers report for year
- b) Elect the Three Principals
- c) Elect the Treasurer
- d) Appoint Auditors
- e) Elect Companions to serve on the Chapter Committee

To ensure that any regular item is not missed, the previous year's corresponding copy of the summons should be used and dates etc. amended

EXALTATION

- 1 Before any Form P is issued, the Chapter Committee should consider any Candidate for Exaltation. It is advisable to compile a list in order of application, together with the names of the Proposers and Seconders.
- 2 Form P should be completed by the Candidate in a clear and coherent manner. Always keep a copy on the Chapter file.
- 3 In accordance with the requirements of Regulation 66 and 67, every Candidate for Exaltation must produce, for inspection by the Scribe E, his Grand Lodge Certificate and clearance certificates from ALL Lodges of which he is or has been a member. A Candidate who is a member only of a Lodge not under the English Constitution, the Certificate of Eligibility, issued by the Grand Secretary in accordance with Regulation 67, shall be attached.
- 4 **PROPOSAL** – the Candidate must be duly proposed and seconded by subscribing members of the Chapter or by Honorary members who have served as First Principal of the Chapter, to whom the Candidate is known personally. Such propositions may take place either at a regular convocation or by notice in writing communicated by the proposer to the Chapter Scribe E at least 14 days before the next convocation.
- 5 **BALLOT** – no ballot shall take place until the following information shall have appeared on the summons to the members of the Chapter:

Full name of the Candidate – all forenames in FULL.
His occupation (if any). This information is now again required on Form P, but **MUST** be shown on the summons.
His normal place of abode.
The names of his Proposer and Secunder.
The name and number of every Lodge of which he is or has been a member.
The date on which he was raised.

Normally no Candidate can be accepted for Exaltation if on the ballot two black balls appear against him. (to be enacted as the Chapter by-Laws)
- 6 **THE CANDIDATE** – the Candidate should be advised in writing in plenty of time of the date, time, location and dress code for the Exaltation ceremony.
- 7 **FEES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS** – fees and subscriptions should be collected from the Candidate on arrival and passed to the Treasurer. A cheque should be obtained (see “After Exaltation”, page 5) from the Treasurer for the Supreme Grand Chapter registration fees.
- 8 **ELECTION VOID** – if the Candidate is not Exalted within one year after his election, the election shall be void.
- 9 **LECTURES** – the Mystical lecture must always be given in full at an Exaltation ceremony, the Historical and Symbolical lectures are optional. However care must be taken if a Chapter decides to mix and match parts of the Traditional Ceremony and parts of the new permissive alternative variations to ensure that the explanation of the signs are not either given twice, or, worse not at all.

AFTER EXALTATION

- 1 The certificate of the First Principal and Scribe E (part C) on the reverse of Form P must be duly completed.
- 2 Complete the Scribe E entries on the reverse of Form P and send to the Provincial Office for onward transmission to Supreme Grand Chapter with the cheque (see table below) for the appropriate Registration fee
- 3 Before despatching this form abstract all the information required for the Chapter register of subscribing members (Royal Arch Regulation 61)
- 4 After the receipt of the candidate's Supreme Grand Chapter Certificate, arrange for this to be presented in Open Chapter and the fact recorded in the Minutes.

SUPREME GRAND CHAPTER REGISTRATION FEES

From 1st January each year

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Amount	£23.50					
+VAT @ 20%	£ 5.30					
TOTAL DUE	£28.20					

NOTE:

The cheque should be made payable to: Supreme Grand Chapter of England

Envelope addressed:

The Provincial Grand Scribe E
Provincial Grand Chapter of Essex
2 Station Court
Station Approach
Wickford
Essex
SS11 7AT

JOINING MEMBERS

- 1 Ensure he has been proved – his Supreme Grand Chapter Certificate must be inspected before Form P is issued or accepted. Make a note of the Royal Arch Membership number. In the case of a candidate who is a member only of a Chapter not under the English Constitution see paragraph 8. The following also applies to rejoining members:
- 2 A copy of Form P should be completed by the Joining Member. This should be sent to Supreme Grand Chapter via the Provincial Office. It is recommended that a further copy be made for your Chapter records.
- 3 Clearance Certificates are required from every Chapter of which he is or has been a member.
- 4 PROPOSAL – as for Candidate for Exaltation (page 4, paragraph 4)
- 5 BALLOT – no ballot shall take place until the following information shall have appeared on the summons to the members of the Chapter:
Full name of the joining member – all forenames in FULL
His occupation (if any). This information is again required on Form P, and **MUST** be shown on the summons.
His normal place of abode.
The names of his proposer and seconder.
The name and number of every Chapter of which he is or has been a member.
Normally no candidate can be accepted for joining if on the ballot two black balls, or some other number specified by the Chapter By-Laws, appear against him.
- 6 After a successful ballot, the newly elected member should be readmitted, welcomed and presented with a copy of the Chapter By-Laws, He must pay the Joining fee and Chapter subscription either at this or the next convocation.
- 7 Complete Scribe E entries on the reverse of Form P and obtain the signature of the Chapter First Principal. Send the original Form P to Supreme Grand Chapter via Provincial Grand Chapter. No fees are required by Supreme Grand Chapter, or by Provincial Grand Chapter if the member Joining or Rejoining is from the English Constitution.
- 8 In the case of a candidate who is a member only of a Chapter not under the English Constitution his Grand Lodge Certificate must be sent to the Grand Scribe E for inspection (Royal Arch Regulation 67). The Grand Scribe E will advise if the candidate is eligible for election (Certificate of Eligibility).
- 9 The Candidate must not be proposed for election until consent has been obtained from the Grand Scribe E. A Supreme Grand Chapter fee for registration is payable when submitting Form P at the rate as that for Exaltation (see table on page 5).

INSTALLATON CONVOCATON

- 1 You will be sent Form LP and A4 from Supreme Grand Chapter and the Provincial Installation Return from the Provincial Grand Scribe E.

Form LP and A4 and the Provincial Installation Return (Appendix B) should be completed immediately after the Installation. Form LP and A4 to be sent to the Grand Scribe E via the Provincial Office and the Provincial Installation Return to the Provincial Grand Scribe E. It is advisable to keep a copy for your Chapter records.

- 2 As these forms are used for compiling records, it is essential you either type or print clearly in CAPITALS.
- 3 It is recommended that you complete the forms BEFORE the Installation Meeting in order for the new Chapter First Principal to sign them on the Installation evening, to enable them to be posted within a couple of days.
- 4 As Scribe E you are responsible for ensuring the Returns are sent promptly. On retiring from Office the outgoing Scribe E remains responsible for completing the forms for that particular Installation Convocation.

AFTER INSTALLATON

This is the time for the Chapter records to be revised.

- 1 The list of members for mailing, if not updated on an ongoing basis, should now be updated adding details of New and Joining members and taking note of any changes of address, telephone numbers or names to delete. If the Scribe E receives news of a Companion's death, resignation or changes of address he should inform the Provincial Grand Scribe E without delay.
- 2 Copies of these updated lists should be sent to the following:

The Chapter Treasurer
All other Chapter members if not printed on the back of the summons
Update the list of Officers on the summons
- 3 When a member finishes his Provincial year in active Office, amend his rank to Past Rank (eg ProvGSN to PPGSN)

ANNUAL RETURNS

- 1 Prior to the end of the Chapter financial year, you will be sent by Supreme Grand Chapter three copies of the Computer Sheets AR1 listing the members of the Chapter and a request for payment of Grand Chapter dues. Provincial Grand Chapter will also send you a copy of the Provincial Returns.
- 2 These lists should be checked for accuracy, it should contain the names of all the Companions who were during the year, subscribing members of the Chapter.

Add any member not shown on the list – usually recently Exalted/Joining members. Enter details in the Arrears and Remarks columns as appropriate.

- 3 Return two copies to Supreme Grand Chapter via the Provincial Office with cheque for the dues payable (see table below) within 30 days of the end of the Chapter's financial year.
- 4 Return the Provincial Returns, again within 30 days of the financial year end to the Provincial Grand Scribe E, with a cheque for the Provincial dues payable (see table below). Keep a copy for yourself.
- 5 Retain the third copy of Supreme Grand Chapter Return for the Chapter records.
- 6 As soon as the current Statement of Chapter Accounts has received confirmation by the Companions, send a copy to the Provincial Grand Scribe E. (Provincial By-Law 12)

Annual Dues to Supreme Grand Chapter and Provincial Grand Chapter
(Insert figures when received from SGChapter and ProvGChapter)

Rate per member	2010	2011	2012	2013
Grand Chapter Dues	£3.15			
+VAT @11.75%	£0.37			
Total Due	£3.52			
Provincial Dues	£5.50			

NOTE:

The cheques should be made payable to: Provincial Grand Chapter of Essex or Supreme Grand Chapter as appropriate.

As the Chapter Scribe E you are responsible for these Returns. It is strongly recommended that you obtain the cheques promptly from the Treasurer and submit them as soon as possible, Failure to send these Returns could result in the Chapter losing its Charter.

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

- 1 A Chapter has the power, after notice has been placed on the summons, to elect as an Honorary Member any companion of good standing and worthy of such distinction by reason of his service to Royal Arch Masonry in general and to his Chapter in particular. The Companion concerned must be or within the previous year have been a subscribing member of a regular Chapter.
- 2 Before the proposition is made, it is essential to make sure that the Companion in question is fully aware of what rights and privileges he loses as an Honorary Member (see Book of Constitutions, Rule 167 for details).
- 3 The motion for his election shall be voted on by ballot and declared carried unless three or more black balls appear against it, or two if enacted by the Chapter By-Laws.
- 4 Notify Provincial Grand Chapter of the details when a honorary membership is conferred upon a member, as soon as possible so that in future years the Chapter will not be charged for him.

OFFICIAL VISITS
VISITS BY THE ME GRAND SUPERINTENDENT (Grand Supt)
DEPUTY GRAND SUPERINTENDENT (DepGSupt)
SECOND/THIRD PROVINCIAL GRAND PRINCIPALS ASSISTANT TO THE PROVINCIAL
GRAND PRINCIPALS (APGP)

It is recommended that a copy of this page is given to the Chapter DC.

- 1 A programme of visits is planned at the beginning of the Masonic year and the Scribe E is informed when any Official visit is to be made.
- 2 The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, his Deputy/Assistant will contact the Chapter Scribe E and DC about a week before the visit to discuss arrangements.
- 3 After the Chapter is opened a report is received by the MEZ, to the effect that the Provincial DC requests admission.

The MEZ accedes to this request and on admission the Provincial DC announces that the Visiting Officer is outside the door of the Chapter and requests admission.

The MEZ accedes to this request, the Companions are upstanding whilst the Visiting Officer enters the Temple, greeted by the MEZ, who offers him his Sceptre of Office.

The Visiting Officer graciously acknowledges this reception and hands the septre back to the MEZ.

- 4 At the close of the Convocation the Provincial DC/Chapter DC will form up the outgoing procession with the Visiting Officer alongside the MEZ.
- 5 At the Festive Board the Provincial DC will take responsibility for:
 - a) Their Excellencies will take wine with you all
 - b) Their Excellencies will be honoured if the Visiting Officer will take wine with them
 - c) The Visiting Officer will be pleased to take wine with you all
- 6 At the Festive Board it is usual for the candidate to sit between the Second Principal and the Visiting Officer.

SUMMARY

- 1 All applications to the ME Grand Superintendent must be made through the Provincial Grand Scribe E.
- 2 A good rule of thumb is that whenever you make a Return to Supreme Grand Chapter, then the Province also requires a Return. All Provincial Returns, unless indicated otherwise, must always be sent to the Provincial Grand Scribe E.
- 3 Adopt the policy of keeping a Diary in which you can record the proposed programme of the MEZ elect and salient dates by the Chapter Committee.
- 4 Check the Annual Return for any companion who is coming up to 50 years since they were Exalted into the Royal Arch. The Provincial Office may already have this matter well in hand, but there is no harm in keeping abreast of the situation.

- 5 Deaths, resignations, exclusions/cessations of Companions should be advised immediately to the Provincial Grand Scribe E as should changes of address.
- 6 Two excellent sources of reference are recommended for the Chapter Scribe E:
- a) the Essex Freemasons' Handbook
 - b) the Supreme Grand Chapter Regulations (part of the Book of Constitutions) especially relating to Private Chapters.
- 7 The Scribe E is the backbone of the Chapter and it can be a very rewarding Office, involving you in all matters relating to the Chapter. In the interests of continuity it is advisable to keep the Assistant Scribe E (if the Chapter has one) fully briefed on all Chapter business. This ensures adequate backup is available in the unavoidable event of absence and to help groom a potential successor. In almost every activity in life there is usually an exception to the rule, therefore if the solution to a difficulty or doubt is not mentioned in this booklet, please consult either the Royal Arch Chapter Regulations in the Book of Constitutions or the Provincial Grand Scribe E.

Further Advice to Chapter Scribes E, Scribe E's Please Note

In issue **49** dated December 2005, I wrote an article in the Essex Mason, advising those Chapters who are finding it difficult to get Officers to perform ritual for an Exaltation ceremony to make contact with the Scribe E of Essex Provincial Grand Stewards Chapter No. 8665 who may be able to assist.

I again produce in full that article and would urge interested Scribe Es to make contact with E.Comp. Charles Ager who will advise and assist.

" It is quite obvious that some Chapters are struggling for membership and therefore those Companions within such a Chapter are finding it difficult to undertake the work the various ceremonies demand.

To this end the ESSEX PROVINCIAL GRAND STEWARDS CHAPTER are endeavouring to build up a team of Provincial Stewards or experienced Companions, who will be **paying guests**, to perform various parts of ceremonies to assist those Chapters who require help.

E.Comp. John Davies, MEZ of the Stewards Chapter in 2004, has devised a simple form for volunteers to complete so that a database of talent can be formulated. These forms can be obtained from the Scribe E of the Stewards Chapter, E.Comp. Charles Ager 6 Roberts Road , Laindon, Essex, SS15 6AZ
Tel 01268-456112

If your Chapter wishes assistance to carry out parts of the ritual or if you wish to be part of the volunteer team, please contact Charles Ager chasager@blueyonder.co.UK who will do all he can to assist you."

PLEASE RING IF YOU NEED HELP

Balloting for a Candidates

When balloting for a Candidate for admission into a Chapter the following description should be followed as per Royal Arch Regulation 66 part of which is described below:-

"Candidates for admission into a Chapter must be duly proposed and seconded by subscribing members of the Chapter or by Honorary Members who have served as First Principal of the Chapter, to whom the candidate is known personally. Such proposition may take place either at a regular convocation or by notice in writing transmitted by the proposer to the Scribe E. at least fourteen days before the next convocation. But no ballot shall take place unless the full name of the candidate, with his occupation (if any) and place of abode as well as the names of his proposer and seconder shall have appeared on the summons to the members of the Chapter. The remainder of this regulation should also be observed by the Scribe E.

REGULAR MEETINGS OF SUPREME GRAND CHAPTER

Some Chapters are still quoting on their summons's that Supreme Grand Chapter meet three times a year. This is not correct.

On the 13th February 2002 it was approved by Supreme Grand Chapter that two Regular meetings would be held each year, namely on the second Wednesday in November and the day following the Grand Festival of Grand Lodge, at which convocation shall be held the annual investiture of Supreme Grand Chapter Officers.

ELECTION TO THE THIRD PRINCIPALS CHAIR

"No Companion shall be eligible for election to the Third Principals chair unless he has served the office of Scribe, Principal Sojourner or Assistant Sojourner of a private Chapter either for a full year or from the regular period of election or appointment to such office to the period of election as Principal , provided that the First Grand Principal may grant dispensation from compliance with this regulation on receipt of a petition setting forth the circumstances of the case and the special reasons for seeking his intervention."

All as quoted under Royal Arch Regulation No. 49.

ELECTION OF PRINCIPALS AND TREASURERS

There has been confusion over whether the Principals elect and the Treasurer can be elected in the same manner as that adopted in Craft Lodges, that is to say, "can they be declared".

The answer to this is that they **CAN**

I quote from the minutes of the Regular Convocation of Supreme Grand Chapter held on the 10th November 2004.

" In June 2004 the Book of Constitutions was amended to permit the ballot for Master or Treasurer of a Lodge to be dispensed with if the election should be uncontested, subject to the right of any member to demand that a ballot be conducted and certain other safeguards.

The Committee considers that it would be beneficial to make a similar procedure available to Chapters, but stress that, as in the Craft, the changes would be permissive only and Chapters remain free to continue the current practice if they so wish"

A notice of motion appeared on the paper of business for that meeting and was subsequently approved on the 28th April 2005.

If a Chapter decides to use the permissive method then the names of the Principals and Treasurer to be elected must appear on the summons.

A suggested method of wording is given below to assist you :-

Election of Principals.

E.Comp.....being the only nomination for MEZ.

E.Comp.....being the only nomination for H.

Comp. being the only nomination for J.

The MEZ will declare them so elected should no Companion request a ballot.

Election of Treasurer

E.Comp.....being the only nomination.

The MEZ will declare him so elected should no Companion request a ballot.

Appointment of the rest of the Officers still remains in the hands if the Principals elect, in accordance with Rule 48 and subject to the customary item appearing on the agenda for the election meeting.

QUORUM FOR CHAPTER CONVOCATIONS

Extract from the paper of business of Supreme Grand Chapter on 8th November 2000.

" The Committee has been asked to give an opinion on the number of Companions required to open a Royal Arch Chapter and work any of the ceremonies."

The response is as follows.

" After careful consideration of the requirements of the Royal Arch ritual and a comparison with the position in the Craft, the Committee recommends to Grand Chapter that no Chapter should be opened unless there are 5, and no ceremony of Exaltation worked unless there are 7, Companions present (excluding the Janitor and Candidate), of whom 2 must be members of the Chapter and 3 must be qualified to occupy the respective Principals chairs. Further, that no conclave of Installed First or Second Principals should be opened unless at least 2 such Principals are present (excluding the Janitor and Principal elect).

ESSEX PROVINCIAL GRAND STEWARDS CHAPTER No. 8665.

It is quite obvious that some Chapters are struggling for Membership and therefore those Companions within such a Chapter are finding it difficult to undertake the work the various ceremonies demand.

To this end the Essex Provincial Grand Stewards Chapter are endeavoring to build up a team of Provincial Stewards or experienced Companions, who will be paying guests, to perform various parts of ceremonies to assist those Chapters who require help.

E.Comp. John Davies, who was MEZ of the Provincial Stewards Chapter in 2004, has devised a simple form for volunteers to complete so that a database of talent can be formulated. These forms can be obtained from the Scribe E of the Provincial Stewards Chapter:-

E.Comp. Charles Ager 6 Roberts Road , Laindon, Essex, SS15 6AZ and can be reached on telephone Tel 01268-456112

If you are a struggling Chapter and wish for assistance to carry out parts of the ritual or if you wish to be part of the Volunteer team, please contact Charles Ager who will do all he can to assist you.