Web Site Creation Policy Document

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For Daughter Lodges of
The Provincial Grand Lodge of Aberdeenshire East

1. Introduction

This policy document is intended to guide Daughter Lodges within the Province of Aberdeenshire East in the development, launch, and maintenance of their own official websites. It draws on the successful approach taken by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Aberdeenshire East (PGLAE) in early 2025 to re-establish its digital presence through the creation of www.pglae.co.uk.

Establishing a professional, informative, and accessible online presence is vital for effective communication, public engagement, and recruitment. This document outlines best practices, structural guidelines, and recommendations to ensure consistency, quality, and alignment with Masonic values.

2. Domain Name and Hosting

2.1 Domain Name Selection

- Choose a domain name that is short, memorable, and clearly associated with your Lodge.

- Avoid overly complex or lengthy domains.

- Recommended format: www.lodgename.co.uk or www.lodge[number][location].co.uk

2.2 Hosting Provider

- Use a reliable hosting provider with a proven track record.

- PGLAE uses 123-REG which has proven stable and user-friendly.

- Alternatives include GoDaddy, SiteGround, or Bluehost.

3. Planning and Development

3.1 Objectives

Before beginning development, clarify the goals of your website:

- Communicate Lodge news and events

- Provide educational content

- Promote Freemasonry in the community

- Facilitate contact with interested individuals

3.2 Content Planning

- Develop a content map based on your Lodge's activities. Suggested sections:

- Home Page – Welcome message, values, and mission

- Calendar of Events – Key meetings and social gatherings

- Lodge Office Bearers – Profiles and contact information

- News & Updates – Regular blog or bulletin

- Become a Member – Information on joining

- History – Overview of the Lodge's heritage

- Charity – Highlight charitable work

- Gallery – Photos from events

- Contact Page – For enquiries or visitors

4. Design and Structure

4.1 Layout and Navigation

- Keep navigation simple and intuitive.

- Use a consistent structure across all pages.

- Ensure mobile responsiveness and accessibility for users with disabilities.

4.2 Branding and Imagery

- Include Lodge crest or badge where appropriate.

- Use high-quality images that represent your Lodge's values and community.

4.3 Tone and Language

- Use respectful, formal language in keeping with Masonic tradition.

- Ensure all text is grammatically correct and free from slang.

5. Compliance and Content Standards

5.1 Masonic Conduct Online

- Follow the guidance in the "Freemasonry and Social Media" section of the PGLAE website.

- Avoid content that could be seen as commercial, political, or religious in nature.

5.2 Privacy and Data Protection

- Comply with the UK GDPR and data privacy laws.

- Avoid publishing personal contact details without permission.

- Use contact forms rather than displaying email addresses directly.

5.3 Accuracy and Updates

- Ensure that all published content is accurate and regularly reviewed.

- Assign a web officer or small team to manage updates.

6. Linking and Community Integration

- Include a link to the Provincial Grand Lodge website (www.pglae.co.uk).

- Consider linking to relevant Masonic bodies and nearby Lodges.

- Foster a sense of shared identity and connectivity.

7. Hosting and Technical Maintenance

Ensure SSL certification (https://) is in place for security.

Backup your site regularly.

Monitor uptime and performance through your hosting provider.

8. Support and Resources

- Lodges can reach out to the Provincial Grand Lodge Recruitment and Retention Committee for:

- Advice on getting started

- Web development support

- Access to shared content or templates

9. Conclusion

This document is designed to ensure all Daughter Lodges are empowered to build a digital presence that upholds the values of Freemasonry while meeting the expectations of a modern audience. A well-maintained website can significantly enhance recruitment, engagement, and visibility.

By following this guide, your Lodge can contribute to the collective strength and unity of Freemasonry in Aberdeenshire East and beyond.

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Approved by:

The Recruitment and Retention Committee

Provincial Grand Lodge of Aberdeenshire East

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