

# Discover Freemasonry in Suffolk

INTEGRITY  
FRIENDSHIP  
RESPECT  
SERVICE



# What are your guiding principles?

Freemasons use four important guiding principles to help define their path through life: integrity, friendship, respect and charity.

In today's world filled with uncertainty, these principles ring as true as they have at any point in the organisation's history.

One of the oldest social and charitable organisations in the world, Freemasonry's roots lie in the traditions of the medieval stonemasons who built our cathedrals and castles.

*"I was encouraged into Freemasonry by my neighbour having been kindly invited to his Ladies' Night. I loved the formality, traditions and warmth of friendship. Unlike many, I have no known family members as Freemasons, but as you would expect, immediately welcomed in to the fraternal arms of Freemasonry."*



DORIC LODGE, WOODBRIDGE

Membership is open to people from all backgrounds and the

organisation's aim is to empower members to be the best they can be – it's about building character, supporting members as individuals, and helping them make a positive contribution to society.

*"Freemasonry provides a unique environment for people from all backgrounds to learn skills, form lasting friendships, achieve their potential and above all, have FUN."* PHOENIX LODGE, STOWMARKET



Freemasonry provides a structure for members to come together under these common goals, enabling people to make new friendships, develop themselves and make valuable contributions to charitable causes.

# INTEGRITY:

## Building good people

Rather than working on buildings like the masons of old, today's Freemasons focus on building themselves as people of integrity, and membership provides the structure to help achieve that goal.

*“By being around just and upright people who apply the teachings of Freemasonry to their daily lives, you naturally follow their example and learn to also apply those teachings to become a man of integrity.”*



COLNEIS LODGE,  
FELIXSTOWE

*“I’ve met fascinating people and heard wonderful tales. I was worried that I had joined too young, and that I would be unable to relate with older brethren but the basis of Freemasonry gives me an opportunity to begin conversations with anyone. This past year has been so interesting and I’ve learned so much, but the*

*anticipation of so much more understanding is quite something.”*

BRETT VALLEY LODGE,

HADLEIGH



At an individual level, being a Freemason gives members a sense of purpose, supporting and guiding them on their journey

through life. Collectively, members are bonded through a sense of unity and equitability – principles fundamental to Freemasonry.

## THE HISTORY OF THE HANDSHAKE

Historically, stonemasons travelled from place to place to secure work. At this time, handshakes were commonly used as a means for stonemasons to identify themselves, proving their level of experience and indicating what position they held. Today, in recognition of this practice, handshakes are used ceremonially as a way of identifying the various levels within Freemasonry.

# FRIENDSHIP:

## Building together

One of the oldest social organisations in the world, Freemasonry is not defined by an ideology.

It is open to people from all religions and political persuasions, and provides the common foundation for friendships between members, many of which will last for life.

*“Although we are known for significantly helping others, we have an awful lot of fun in the process. Normally after each Lodge Meeting, we have a time for socialising and refreshment, known as the Festive Board. It can vary from lodge to Lodge but the meal includes a few formalities such as Toasts*

*and Acknowledgments. It is a truly enjoyable way to relax and enjoy excellent company, good food and who knows, maybe a glass or two of your favourite tippie.”*

LODGE OF UNITY, LOWESTOFT



Being a Freemason means something different to each person who joins, but whether looking to make acquaintances or develop their own potential, all members share a sense of togetherness that strengthens their ability to succeed and grow.



*“Becoming a Freemason gave me the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends and provided an opportunity to develop and expand my social life as well as that of my partner and family.”*

CHRISTCHURCH LODGE,  
IPSWICH

## BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS FOR LIFE

From university schemes, to new masons clubs, to special interest Lodges, Freemasonry gives members many opportunities to make friends for life. Finding bonds with people who share common interests and meeting people from all different backgrounds are only some of the ways Freemasonry can help cultivate lasting friendships.

# RESPECT:

## Building unity

With a membership of more than 200,000 people drawn from communities across the UK, Freemasonry brings people together irrespective of their race, religion or any other perceived differences that can divide us as a society.

*"I joined because I love the traditions and want to learn more about the 300 years of our history. For others in my lodge, it's given them the chance to get involved in an organisation that makes a considerable contribution to society."*



ST. MARYS LODGE,  
GT. YARMOUTH

*"Through our ceremonies, Freemasonry allows me to reflect on myself and the principles I value in my life. My experiences have helped me to have respect for others and the importance of*



*integrity in my day to day life.”*

BOSMERE LODGE,  
STOWMARKET

Our members  
are proud to be

Freemasons, and they are encouraged to talk openly about what the organisation does and what it means to be part of it.

## FEMALE FREEMASONS

There are two female-only Grand Lodges, the Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons (HFAF) and the Order of Women Freemasons (OWF). The HFAF and OWF follow exactly the same ritual and wear the same regalia as male Freemasons – and they often work closely with community and charity projects.

Female Freemasons Annie Besant and Charlotte Despard were prominent figures in the push for universal suffrage in the early twentieth century. Besant was a British theosophist and women’s rights activist who also established the first UK lodge of the International Order of Co-Freemasonry (Le Droit Humain) in 1902. Despard, an Anglo-Irish suffragist, pacifist and novelist, was a founding member of various reformist organisations whose presence lives on today in the North London pub named in her honour.

# CHARITY:

## Building compassion

Kindness and charitable giving are deeply ingrained within the principles of Freemasonry. The organisation provides a support structure that helps members make positive contributions to communities and worthwhile causes through fundraising events or volunteer work.

*"Becoming a Freemason has been a fantastic opportunity for me to 'give back' by donating to charity through my lodge and really make a difference to the lives of those facing the toughest challenges in life."*



LODGE OF PRUDENCE,  
HALESWORTH

Individuals can  
make an  
important  
contribution at  
local, national

and global level by giving both their time and money. Thanks to their efforts, Freemasonry is one of the largest charitable givers in the country, contributing more than £48m to deserving causes in 2018 alone. Freemasons don't only donate money – over 5 million hours of volunteer work was undertaken by Freemasons in 2018.

*“The values of Freemasonry are based on integrity, kindness, honesty and fairness. Freemasons characteristically practice charity and care, not only within their own membership but also amongst the community as a whole. From its earliest existence Freemasonry has been committed to caring for others, something that still continues today.”*



ADAIR LODGE, SAXMUNDHAM

## FREEDOM OF THE CITY

In 1894, facing financial crisis, Manchester City Football Club was offered a helping hand by the Freemasons. In

acknowledgement of the organisation's act of charity, the club adopted Masonic colours, giving them the light blue shirts that are so recognisable to football fans today.

# Membership

Becoming a Freemason means you'll be joining more than 200,000 members throughout England and Wales as well as Districts overseas. Membership is open to any man over the age of 21 irrespective of their race or religion, and women are invited to join one of two female-only Grand Lodges: The Order of Women Freemasons and the Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons.

In total, we have more than 7,000 Lodges, with students over 18 able to join one of the 81 University Scheme Lodges.

*"I enjoy the seriousness of the Ceremony, but I also enjoy socialising with all the other members together with their friends and families."*

COPPERFIELD  
LODGE,  
GORLESTON



Lodge meetings are typically held in two parts. The first involves more administrative procedures, such as proposing and balloting for new members and receiving news about charitable fundraising.

The second part focuses on ceremonies, which might relate to areas such as the admittance of new members or the installation of the Master of the Lodge and his officers – a process made up of three degrees, or stages, each one marked by a special ceremony.

True to the sense of friendship and togetherness among Freemasons, meetings are also social events, providing an occasion for members to dine together.

Outside of the Lodge, activities include community fundraising and volunteering activities as well as a varied programme of events where spouses, partners and families are welcome.

## FINDING THE RIGHT FREEMASONRY FOR YOU

The Province of Suffolk is made up of almost 3000 Freemasons from 68 Lodges based at 20 locations spread over the county. There are even some that meet just across the border in Norfolk. So, there should be a Lodge in one of the main towns near you.

# Discover Freemasons' Hall

Originally built as a peace memorial to honour the thousands of Freemasons who fought during the First World War, Freemasons' Hall is the home of the United Grand Lodge of England.

The stunning Grade II listed Art Deco building sits in the heart of London's West End and welcomes more than 200,000 people from across the world through its doors every year, including members visiting for meetings and guests attending special events.

## TRIP ADVISOR QUOTES:

*'An absolutely superb guided visit'*

*'Join one of the free tours for an unforgettable visit'*



## TRIP ADVISOR QUOTES:

*'Beautiful architecture and very interesting displays'*

*'It's a great place to visit'*

*'An amazing experience'*

*'A stunning building and a very interesting museum'*



*'A magnificent building, very friendly, helpful and informative staff and volunteers and an excellent (free) tour. Lots to see and a really interesting insight into the world of Freemasonry'*

Members of the public can visit Freemasons' Hall from Monday to Saturday, with guided tours showcasing the architecture and history of the building, which comprises 22 Lodge Rooms, the Museum of Freemasonry, Letchworth's shop, Board and Committee rooms and administrative offices.

An in-demand venue, Freemasons' Hall has been hired as a location for many major films and television programmes in recent years, including Spectre, Sherlock Holmes, Assassin's Creed and Spooks.

## AN ART DECO MASTERPIECE

Freemasons' Hall is one of the last remaining Art Deco buildings in England still used for its original purpose. Did you know, the mighty bronze doors to the Grand Temple weigh one and a quarter tonnes each and the original cloakroom can hold 1,700 coats, bags and top hats?

The building and Museum of Freemasonry are open to the public Monday-Saturday; be sure to take a guided tour to discover all that Freemasons' Hall has to offer.



To find out more about Freemasonry  
in Suffolk or for information on how  
to become a member visit our website  
[www.suffolkpgl.org.uk](http://www.suffolkpgl.org.uk)

or email  
[pgl@suffolkfreemason.org.uk](mailto:pgl@suffolkfreemason.org.uk)

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