

# Bridgend Masonic Lodges Charitable Trust

Registered Charity No. 515337

*Secretary to the Trustees:*  
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To All Lodge Secretaries

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

Bridgend 28 August 2014

Dear Bro Secretary,

## **Re: Rentals for January to December 2015**

The main aim of the Trustees of the Bridgend Masonic Lodges is to ensure, on behalf of the Brethren, that the continuation of Freemasonry can be enjoyed by all at Bridgend and to this end that the maintenance of the hall and the temple and the associated running and ongoing costs are closely monitored and controlled.

The basic running costs of the Bridgend Masonic Centre are approximately £43,500 per year. This amount includes fixed costs such as rates, water rates, insurance, rubbish disposal, professional fees, wages, heating and lighting and minimum costs for ongoing repairs and maintenance at £2,500 per annum. These costs do not include any capital expenditure for the hall, temple or kitchen – they are the basic running costs and cannot be considered generous or indulgent. Against this the income received from rents, the catering franchise and social events is approximately £36,000.

The rental charged to the lodges using the building has not increased since 2008. In that 6 year period there has been a substantial increase in the costs of running the building. The Brethren will be aware from their own household budgets, the increased costs of electricity and gas. Since 2008 gas has increased by some 40% and electricity by 27%.

It is immediately apparent that there is a current shortfall of approximately £7,500 per annum. This deficit clearly has to be filled.

To ensure this objective, we write to notify you that as of 1st January 2015, the rental for the period January to December 2015 will need to be increased to an average of 10%.

That decision has not been taken lightly, it has been made after a number of meetings and careful analysis of the facts, figures and potential options. This letter whilst notifying the increase is also designed to explain the rationale behind the

decision. The increase is the best solution to spread the burden across all. We would be grateful if the facts herein could be made known to the Brethren so that they understand the difficulties presented.

Whilst the Trust is endeavouring to make a modest profit from the Square & Compasses Bar and to use the same to offset against the shortfall and cost of works, the margins are very fine.

The Trustees have to take into account that costs are rising and that the building is ageing and that their responsibility is to ensure that adequate funds are available to meet these costs in future years without asking the Craft Lodges and side degrees to meet any sudden and unplanned shortfall that could incur. The Trustees are endeavouring to keep all work and expenditure to an affordable and realistic level.

In making this decision the Trustees are well aware of the effect of increased charges to the Lodges and especially to those who are seeing a decrease in membership. It is also recognised that many Brethren have a set income. It is recognised that the increase will impact differently on the lodges dependant on their numbers and use of the building. However, the trustees have endeavoured to be fair to all whilst recognising there is no perfect solution.

Whilst a 10% increase may cause concern it is as low as possible and when analysed carefully has a small impact on the Brethren. By way of illustration: Ewenny Lodge, with 73 members will experience an increase of £5.27 per member per annum, which works out at 10 pence per week. South Wales Jurists, which has 18 members, will experience a £21.38 per member per annum increase, which works out at 41 pence per week. An illustration more in the middle is Ogmore Lodge with 42 members. The members will experience an increase of £9.16 per member per annum, which equates to 17pence per week.

As mentioned earlier, tight controls on costs and expenditure are now in place and you have already been requested to ask the Brethren for volunteers to assist with maintenance and repairs of the building so that wherever possible running costs can be minimised by not using outside contractors for work that can be carried out in-house.

Many Lodges contain a number of tradesmen who have the talents to assist and enable the financial burden for all to be minimised. We invite, and would be most grateful for, the Brethren who are painters, decorators, electricians, plumbers, tillers, gardeners, ground workers, builders, to come forward and give some of their time for free. That will assist us all in ensuring the building is safe and enjoyable for us all and thus enabling us to avoid the expense of contractors.

In order that your treasurer has all the necessary information to answer any queries that arise from the Brethren regarding this decision, the Trustees will shortly be inviting them to meet to provide the full financial information that led to this increase and the plans that are in place to control future income and expenditure.

Yours sincerely and fraternally

Jan Deenik

Secretary to the Trustees