**Privacy Policy**

**Electronic Communications and Websites Information & Communications**

 Committee Revision 5 March 2014 8 Privacy Lodge Gleniffer No. 1219 (herein after referred to as the ‘Lodge’) recognises the importance of protecting the privacy of the visitors to the Lodge Website. Any personal data collected through the Lodge Website will be regarded and treated as confidential and in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. However, the collection of such data is unintentional as the Lodge has not designed or consciously put in place any system designed to collect personal information. Disclaimer The Lodge intends that the information published on the Lodge Website is up to date and accurate. However, the information on the Website does not constitute legal or professional advice, guidance or recommendation and the Lodge, its Office-bearers, Trustees, and members, and each of them, will not accept any liability for actions arising from its use nor will they be held responsible for the contents of any Website or other source referenced by any external link.

 **Cookies**

 A cookie is a small data file that certain Websites write to a hard drive when a user visits that Website.

The only personal information a cookie can contain is information a user personally supplies. A cookie cannot read data from a user’s hard disk or read cookie files created by other Websites.

Cookies, however, enhance a Website’s performance in several ways including providing a secure way to identity verification during a visit to a Website and personalising the user’s experience with the Lodge Website while making it more convenient for the user. The Lodge may therefore use cookie technology to track or record information about visitors to the Lodge Website.

These cookies are “session specific” and are not used to record personal information or to associate personal information with the use of the Lodge services. Privacy and security are not compromised when the user accepts a cookie from the Lodge Website. Users can refuse cookies by turning them off on their web browsers (see under “Tools” and then “Internet Options”) and users do not need to have cookies turned on to successfully use the Website.

 Social Media Web Sites Since the advent of the internet the main content has been web sites. These can be 'static' information sites which supply information which is updated as and when required but does not happen in 'real time'. Social media web sites are interactive and discussions between individuals and groups can take place instantly. Compared to static web sites social media web sites are dynamic and instantaneous and are more like phone conversations than, say, posters.

 **For this reason, they are impossible to monitor.**

Information (including images) can be added, amended, or deleted within seconds. Electronic Communications and Websites Information & Communications Committee Revision 5 March 2014.

The Grand Lodge of Scotland has no wish to stifle communication between Freemasons but exactly what can and cannot be discussed remains the same as before existence of the internet. Freemasons are prohibited from discussing matters that are the preserve of Grand Lodge. That is, subjects on which Grand Lodge is the final arbiter. A few examples might assist in illustrating this point.

Relationships (including recognition) between Grand Lodges should not be discussed. Matters of internal discipline (including accusations of misconduct) and the guilt or innocence of any individual is not for public debate. Proposed changes to the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge (or Provincial GL's or Daughter Lodges) should not be discussed in public (and therefore not on social media web sites. A final example is canvassing for votes for election to a particular position (at any level) is prohibited. Freemasons, or body of Freemasons such as a Lodge, are not permitted to express opinions on matters of Religion or Politics. Nor are Freemasons, or body of Freemasons, permitted to express opinions on matters which are reserved for Grand Lodge. If there is any doubt in the mind of any individual as to the validity of any discussion it is best to err on the side of caution and not participate in discussion where there is any doubt as to the legitimacy of the subject.

The guidance offered above regarding web sites is equally applicable to social media web sites. This is particularly important regarding images. Images of individuals or groups of individuals which identifies them as being Freemasons must not be posted on any web sites without prior permission from all the individuals concerned. Each has the right to privacy and if they do not wish to publicly identify as being a Freemason their wish must be respected. The office of the Grand Secretary is always willing to provide guidance on any matter and in all cases of doubt and should be contacted before engaging in discussions where the subject might be the preserve of Grand Lodge and/or its Office-bearers. In general, then, Grand Lodge believes, that deciding on what material should be placed on the internet (regardless of the type of site) is a matter of common sense and if there is any doubt whatsoever Freemasons should not become involved.

Questions or Suggestions If ANYONE has any questions or suggestions regarding this policy or considers the Lodge is not properly adhering to it then the Lodge invites information and contents to be sent to the Lodge through the undernoted contact: -

 **gladmin@grandlodgescotland.org**