



Sussex Freemasons - West Group

'The West Wing'  
(Bognor, Chichester, Clapham, Littlehampton,  
Midhurst, Pulborough, Steyning and Worthing)

'The West Wing' Learning and Development Team.

# *'The West Wing'*



# *Masons Notebook*



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## 'The West Wing' Learning and Development Team.

### Introduction.

An opportunity to make your own collection of 'Masonic Gems' that will enhance your knowledge of the ritual and its meaning.

Every month you will receive some 'Masonic Gems' that will build into an amazing notebook that will last a lifetime.

The 'Gems' are sourced from a variety of authors that will give you, the learner, a balanced outlook on Masonic ritual and symbolism.

Start your collection and your journey today.

The 'West Wing' Learning and Development Team.



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## Lesson 7

## The First Degree Working Tools

### Lesson /Tutorial Aim

To enable the student to understand how the ancient operative tools of an Entered Apprentice are used to moralise upon and given a modern application.

### Objectives

- At the end of this lesson/tutorial the student will be able to:
- Identify the First Degree Working Tools and their operative use.
- Moralise upon their symbolic use.
- Apply their findings to modern living.

## The First Degree Working Tools

### Ritual.

I now present to you the working tools of an Entered Apprentice Freemason: they are the 24-inch Gauge, the common Gavel, and Chisel.

The **24-inch Gauge** is to measure our work, the common **Gavel** to knock off all superfluous knobs and excrescences, and the **Chisel** to further smooth and prepare the stone and render it fit for the hands of the more expert workman.



But, as we are not all operative Masons, but rather free and accepted or speculative, we apply these tools to our morals. In this sense, the 24-in Gauge represents the twenty-four hours of the day, part to be spent in prayer to Almighty God, part in labour and refreshment, and part in serving a friend or Brother in time of need, without detriment to ourselves or connections.

The **common Gavel** represents the force of conscience, which should keep down all vain and unbecoming thoughts which might obtrude during any of the



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aforementioned periods, so that our words and actions may ascend unpolluted to the Throne of Grace.

**The Chisel** points out to us the advantages of education, by which means alone we are rendered fit members of regularly organised society.

## What does this mean?

### 1. From Operative to Speculative

The text acts as the foundational pivot of the Masonic system. It moves the initiate from the realm of the tangible—the dusty construction site of the Operative Mason—to the internal cathedral of the Speculative Mason.

The text utilizes a distinct "As... So..." logical structure to achieve this. It first grounds the student in physical reality ("measure work," "knock off knobs," "smooth the stone") and then immediately transposes those actions into the metaphysical realm ("apply these tools to our morals").

The significance of these being the *first* tools presented cannot be overstated. In construction, before a stone can be cemented into a wall (which implies unity with others), it must first be quarried and shaped. Similarly, the Entered Apprentice degree is deeply introspective. These are tools of **preparation**, not construction. The Apprentice is not yet building the Temple; he is preparing *himself* to be a living stone within it. The transition from "rendering the stone fit" to "rendering us fit members of society" suggests that an unpolished man is a liability to the social structure, just as a rough stone is a liability to a wall.

### 2. Deconstruction of the Tools.



#### **The 24-inch Gauge: The Architecture of Time**

The text defines the Gauge not merely as a ruler, but as a moral clock. It divides the day into three distinct parts: spiritual devotion ("prayer"), sustenance and duty ("labour and refreshment"), and altruism ("serving a friend or Brother").



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Crucially, this tool teaches that time is the one resource that is absolutely finite. The analysis of the text reveals a command for **balance**. It does not demand 24 hours of prayer, nor 24 hours of labour. It demands a distinct tripartite structure. The caveat "without detriment to ourselves or connections" is a profound ethical guardrail. It teaches that martyrdom is not a Masonic virtue; one cannot serve a brother effectively if one destroys their own stability or neglects their own family ("connections") in the process.

### **The Common Gavel: The Force of Conscience**

The Gavel is defined as an active force used to break off "superfluous knobs and excrescences." In the speculative explanation, these physical deformities are equated to "vain and unbecoming thoughts."



This implies that the "perfect" version of the man is already there, hidden beneath layers of vices and ego. The Gavel represents **subtraction**. It suggests that moral perfection is not about *adding* virtues, but about *removing* the impulses that obscure our true nature. The text explicitly links this internal cleaning to spiritual efficacy: we clear our minds so that our words may "ascend unpolluted to the Throne of Grace." A cluttered mind cannot pray effectively; a rough stone cannot fit in the building.



### **The Chisel: The Refinement of Education**

In this specific working (English/Emulation), the Chisel is the bridge between the raw self and the community. The text explicitly links the Chisel to "education."

While the Gavel removes the gross vices (the heavy knocks), the Chisel performs the fine, detailed work. This distinction is vital. A man may be moral (he has used the Gavel to remove vice), but without the Chisel (Education), he remains unpolished, dull, or uncultured. The text states that by this tool alone are we rendered "fit members of regularly organised society." This suggests that morality makes us good, but education makes us useful. It transforms the stone from a rough block into a finished ashlar ready for the builder's use.



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### 3. The Workflow.

The order of these tools—Gauge, Gavel, Chisel—is a roadmap for psychological maturation. It follows a strict logical necessity:

1. **Measurement (The Gauge):** Before one touches the stone, one must know the plan. One must organize their time and priorities. Action without planning (Gauge) is chaos.
2. **Rough Shaping (The Gavel):** Once the plan is set, the heavy lifting begins. One must remove the major obstructions (vices, ego, anger). You cannot perform fine carving on a rock covered in mud and jagged spikes.
3. **Fine Polishing (The Chisel):** Only when the rough knobs are gone can the Chisel do its work. Education and refinement are most effective on a mind that has already disciplined its base passions.

This sequence teaches the Apprentice that he cannot bypass the hard work of self-discipline (Gavel) to simply appear sophisticated (Chisel). Character must precede culture.

### 4. Modern Application

To the modern man, these 18th-century allegories offer a potent antidote to 21st-century chaos.

#### **The Gauge and "Burnout":**

In an era of "hustle culture," the 24-inch Gauge is a reminder of necessary boundaries. The instruction to spend part of the day in "refreshment" is not a suggestion; it is a ritual obligation. The phrase "without detriment to ourselves or connections" is the Masonic equivalent of "put on your own oxygen mask before assisting others." It warns against the toxic altruism where a man neglects his wife and children to serve his job or even his Lodge.

#### **The Gavel and Mindfulness:**

The "vain and unbecoming thoughts" of the text can be likened to the modern struggle with distraction, anxiety, and the noise of social media. The Gavel represents the active practice of mindfulness—the "force of conscience" that



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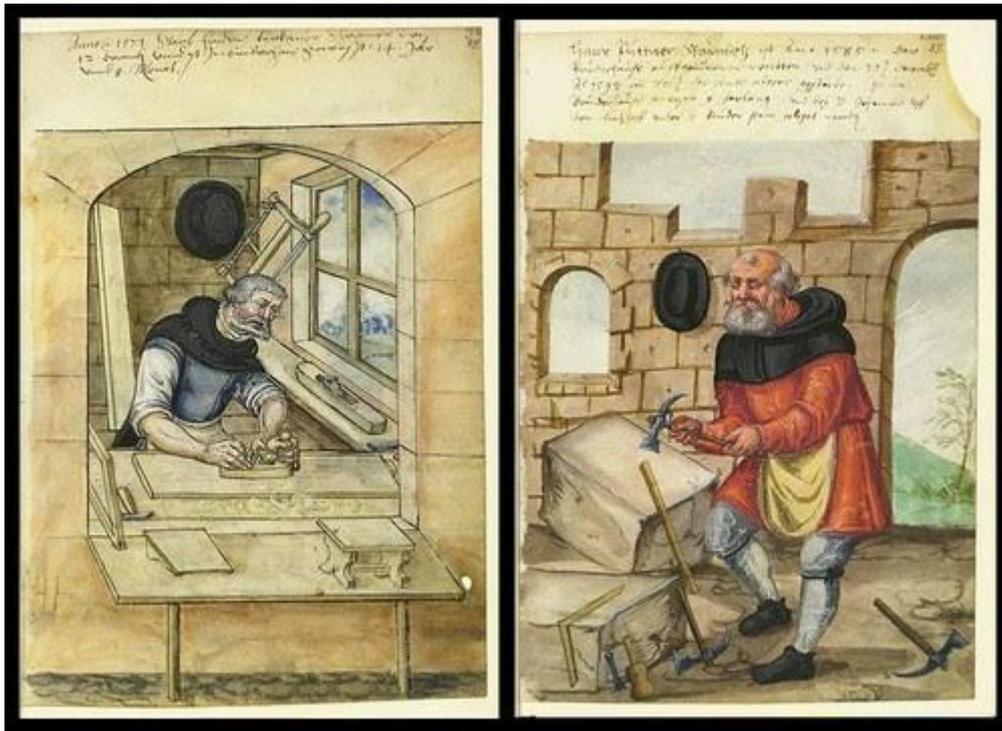
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catches a negative or distracting thought and knocks it away before it takes root.

### The Chisel and Soft Skills:

Today, the Chisel represents "Soft Skills" and Emotional Intelligence. It is not enough to be technically proficient (Operative); one must be able to navigate "regularly organised society." This means continuing one's education not just in facts, but in behaviour, rhetoric, and empathy, ensuring that we are not just rough stones taking up space, but polished components contributing to the stability of our community.





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## Questions.

### Part 1: Literal Knowledge

*Questions focusing on specific definitions and phrases found in the ritual text.*

**1. According to the ritual text, how does the 24-inch Gauge divide the day?**

- A. Eight hours for work, eight for sleep, and eight for recreation.
- B. Part in prayer to Almighty God, part in labour and refreshment, and part in serving a friend or Brother.
- C. Part for the Lodge, part for the family, and part for our vocation.
- D. Twelve hours for day and twelve hours for night.

**2. What specific faculty does the Common Gavel represent in the speculative sense?**

- A. The force of will.
- B. The authority of the Master.
- C. The force of conscience.
- D. The power of education.

**3. According to the text, the Chisel points out the advantages of which concept?**

- A. Hard work.
- B. Education.
- C. Geometry.
- D. Charity.



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## Part 2: Conceptual Understanding

*Questions focusing on the symbolism, logical structure, and the "Why" behind the tools.*

**4. Why are these specific tools presented to the Entered Apprentice rather than the Trowel or Square?**

- A. Because they are the simplest tools to operate.
- B. Because an Apprentice is a "living stone" requiring preparation and shaping, not yet a builder cementing walls.
- C. Because they are the oldest tools in history.
- D. Because they represent the three principal officers of the Lodge.

**5. The text describes the Gavel as a tool of "subtraction." What does this imply about the Masonic view of moral perfection?**

- A. We must constantly add new virtues to our character to become better.
- B. Perfection is impossible, so we should only focus on the Gauge.
- C. The "perfect" version of the man is already there, hidden beneath vices and ego that must be removed.
- D. We must break our spirit to rebuild it.

**6. What is the vital distinction made between the work of the Gavel and the work of the Chisel?**

- A. The Gavel removes gross vices (making us moral), while the Chisel refines the mind (making us useful/cultured).
- B. The Gavel is for spiritual matters, while the Chisel is for physical matters.
- C. The Gavel is used by the Apprentice, while the Chisel is used only by the Master.
- D. There is no difference; they both do the same thing.

**7. According to the "Workflow" analysis, why must the Gauge be the first tool applied?**

- A. Because it is the longest tool.
- B. Because action without planning is chaos; one must know the plan and priorities before shaping the stone.



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- C. Because it is the only tool that doesn't break the stone.
- D. Because it symbolizes the 24 hours we have to finish the work.

### Part 3: Modern Application

*Questions focusing on applying these 18th-century symbols to 21st-century life.*

**8. In the context of "Hustle Culture" and burnout, what is the "ethical guardrail" provided by the 24-inch Gauge?**

- A. We should work as hard as possible to impress the Brethren.
- B. We must prioritize prayer over all other activities.
- C. We must serve others "without detriment to ourselves or connections."
- D. We must divide our day into strict 8-hour segments.

**9. How does the "Modern Application" section reinterpret the "vain and unbecoming thoughts" removed by the Gavel?**

- A. As criminal intent.
- B. As specific religious doubts.
- C. As distraction, anxiety, and the noise of social media.
- D. As political disagreements.

**10. If the Operative Chisel smooths the stone, what does the Speculative Chisel represent in the modern workforce?**

- A. Technical certification and degrees.
- B. Physical fitness and health.
- C. Soft Skills and Emotional Intelligence.
- D. Financial literacy.



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## Answers.

**1. Correct Answer: B**

**Rationale:** The text explicitly states the division is: "part to be spent in prayer to Almighty God, part in labour and refreshment, and part in serving a friend or Brother in time of need."

**2. Correct Answer: C**

**Rationale:** The text states: "The common Gavel represents the force of conscience, which should keep down all vain and unbecoming thoughts."

**3. Correct Answer: B**

**Rationale:** The text states: "The Chisel points out to us the advantages of education, by which means alone we are rendered fit members of regularly organised society."

**4. Correct Answer: B**

**Rationale:** Section 1 ("From Operative to Speculative") explains that before a stone can be cemented (unity), it must be quarried and shaped. These are "tools of preparation, not construction."

**5. Correct Answer: C**

**Rationale:** Section 2 ("The Common Gavel") states that the Gavel implies "moral perfection is not about adding virtues, but about removing the impulses that obscure our true nature."

**6. Correct Answer: A**

**Rationale:** Section 2 ("The Chisel") explains that while the Gavel removes "heavy knocks" or vices, the Chisel performs the fine work. "Morality makes us good, but education makes us useful."

**7. Correct Answer: B**

**Rationale:** Section 3 ("The Workflow") argues that the order is a logical necessity: "Measurement (The Gauge): Before one touches the stone, one must know the plan... Action without planning is chaos."



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**8. Correct Answer: C**

**Rationale:** Section 4 ("The Gauge and Burnout") identifies the phrase "without detriment to ourselves or connections" as a warning against toxic altruism, likened to putting on your own oxygen mask before assisting others.

**9. Correct Answer: C**

**Rationale:** Section 4 ("The Gavel and Mindfulness") likens "vain and unbecoming thoughts" to the modern struggle with distraction and social media noise, suggesting the Gavel represents mindfulness.

**10. Correct Answer: C**

**Rationale:** Section 4 ("The Chisel and Soft Skills") explicitly states: "Today, the Chisel represents 'Soft Skills' and Emotional Intelligence... not just in facts, but in behaviour, rhetoric, and empathy."



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## Royal Arch Corner.

### The Royal Arch Jewel.



When I was a young Freemason, that was a long time ago, I looked around my 'Craft' Lodge and saw many brethren wearing a number of jewels on their breast but the one that struck me most I later learned was a jewel associated with the Royal Arch. But what confused me was that some had white ribbons, some crimson ribbons and others, on more senior brethren, had tri-coloured ribbons. I came to wonder what it all meant. This was the start of my deeper understanding and learning.

I learned that in my 'Craft' Lodge I was on a journey of personal discovery. I was to learn about being a moral, educated and reflective man. Those three steps of my development to becoming a good citizen. What intrigued me was the discovery that those wearing the white ribbon were completing their third step in their personal development. A journey to find their spiritual centre. The crimson ribbon identified those who had succeeded in that journey and were now teachers and mentors, helping those wearing the white ribbons on their journey of spiritual discovery. Those Freemasons wearing the tri-coloured ribbons were the elders of what I learned to be a Royal Arch chapter.

I knew that a church 'chapter' was a group of clerics that formed a moral body to promote divine worship. They enjoyed each other's company spending communal time together. I later also learned that those on that spiritual journey called each other 'companions' which interested me because a 'companion' is someone who spends time with or travels with others. A perfect description of these Freemasons who were completing or had completed their third step or fourth ceremony.

Exploring more thoroughly into this jewel I discovered triangles, circles and a thing called a 'triple tau'. The way the triangles were interlaced to form a six pointed star I thought must mean something. This led me into the amazing world of 'Sacred Geometry'.



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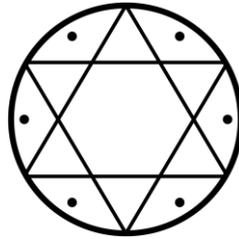
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The Royal Arch is considered to be the 'essence' of Freemasonry. The 'Jewel' marks that status and is worn in Craft Lodges to indicate that the wearer is completing or has completed his Masonic journey in Pure Ancient Freemasonry.

Within the 'jewel' are clues as to where the spiritual centre concludes. It uses the ancient culture of **sacred geometry**, which has been in existence for thousands of years, to guide the Companion to '**spiritual enlightenment**'.

**Seal of Solomon.**



**Inscriptions.**



On the jewel there are various inscriptions which tell the story of the Royal Arch. The inscription that I particularly enjoy, as it is the essence of Royal Arch and Masonry is:

**"Si talia jungere possis sit tibi scire satis"** - "If though canst comprehend these things, though knowest enough"



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It shows that the Royal Arch is the finale of Pure Ancient Freemasonry. Its Key is the Triple Tau which hangs at the bottom of the jewel.



To know more about the Royal Arch ask your Lodge Royal Arch Representative and complete your journey.

**Stephen J. Goulding. SLGCR.**

**The West Group Royal Arch Deputy Lead.**





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## Help us help you.

In 2026, the Learning and Development Team will be completing their 'Road Show' calling at Charmandean, Worthing and Pulborough. See details below.

**The Purpose of Freemasonry, Brethren, is 'to instruct'. (William Preston)**

The best way to learn is to teach. Enrol on these workshops so you can go back to your Lodges and teach the Brethren about the philosophical and personal development aspects of the ritual, that is what the ritual is for. To teach and to learn.

- **Mentors Workshop.**  
Pulborough, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2026.
- **Royal Arch Representative Seminar** for RA Reps and all those brethren interested in joining the Royal Arch.  
Charmandean. 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2026.
- **Chichester Chapter of Improvement .**  
For ALL RA Masons.  
Chichester. Commencing 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2026.

To Enrol please contact:

W. Bro. Stephen J. Goulding. ProvSGD, SLGCR.

Email: [stevegoulding@sussexmasons.org.uk](mailto:stevegoulding@sussexmasons.org.uk)





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## Cornerstone (Miscellaneous bits)

Learning Programs:

[Learning and Development Web Page.](#)

**ALL West Group Masons and particularly Lodge and Personal Mentors please note - Contents of the Learning and Development (L&D) section of the West Group Web Page. ([www.wgsm.co.uk](http://www.wgsm.co.uk)).**

Members: PW 357Steps?!? L&D Tag

### Contents.

Solomon and Mentors Notes Courses on:

- The Entered Apprentice Program.
  - The Fellowcraft Program.
  - The Master Mason Program.
  - The Holy Royal Arch Program.

The West Wing Learning and Development (Video) program.

Royal Arch Representatives Program.

'The West Wing' Masons Notebooks.

Lodge and Personal Mentors Program.

The West Wing Lodge of Instruction Program.

The West Wing Chapter of Improvement

"Ask and will be given. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and the door shall be opened unto you," Mathew 7:7



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## 'The West Wing' Learning and Development Programs.

Freemasonry is a Lifestyle Choice. Learn more through your Lodge Mentor, the West Group web page or the L & D Team.

**Solomon** <https://solomon.ugle.org.uk/>

**Mentors Notes:** <https://www.thesquaremagazine.com/mentorsnotes/>

**West Group Web Page:** <https://www.wgsm.org.uk>

ONLINE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT



Start your journey  
<https://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

mentor's notes



self paced guided learning

the SQUARE ACADEMY



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Web Page  
[www.wgsm.org.uk](http://www.wgsm.org.uk)

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## Facebook.

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<https://www.facebook.com/share/Tx388jyGJiYKfd4q/?mibextid=K35XfP>

## West Sussex Light Blues Club



<https://www.westsussexlbc.org/>

Are you a new Mason in the West Group of Sussex? Click on the QR Code and enjoy your journey into an exciting aspect of Freemasonry.

### Membership Benefits

- Monthly Social Events Across The Province
- Curated masonic events, just for club members
- Learn more about the craft in a relaxed setting
- Access to a private Facebook page & WhatsApp group
- Socialise with & meet likeminded Freemasons in your area
- Future planned benefits including a masonic passport, lapel pins, a role within the club and more...



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## The Chichester Royal Arch Chapter of Improvement

A different approach to teaching the mysteries of the Royal Arch has been adopted in the Chichester Chapter of Improvement. It combines education of both the philosophical meaning and the personal development application of the ritual alongside traditional teaching methods of the Royal Arch ceremonies.

*"Tell me I will forget. Show me I will remember.*

*Involve me I will understand".*

### Part 1 Royal Arch Course

Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2026 10am – 12 noon

Chichester Masonic Hall, 7 South Pallant, Chichester,  
PO19 1SY

### *Prospectus*

1. The Sojourners Journey Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2026
2. The Vaulted Chamber Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2026

To Enrol or if you would like a prospectus please contact the Chichester Chapter of Improvement Secretary Ex. Comp. Stephen J. Goulding, SLGCR:

.Email: [stevegoulding@sussexmasons.org.uk](mailto:stevegoulding@sussexmasons.org.uk)



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## Sussex Royal Arch Masonry launches new BLOG

<https://www.sussexroyalarch.co.uk>



The **BLOG** is a standalone communication platform which operates separately but in conjunction with the Sussex Royal Arch Website. The **BLOG** is *updated daily* and is easily accessible, simply visit <https://www.sussexroyalarch.co.uk>

*A One Journey – One Organisation BLOG*



*Conveying information about*

*Royal Arch Masonry* and how to join.

Future *Exaltation and Installation Ceremonies* taking place local to you.

*Royal Arch Events* taking place in Sussex Chapters and beyond.

*Royal Arch Articles* and *Announcement's*.

*Membership and Mentoring.*



*Archway Support*

*UGLE- Solomon Royal Arch Virtual Learning Platform Guidance*



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## Actions Not Words.



Lodges within the West Group regularly support St Wilfrid's Hospice, Chichester a fantastic local service.

On Saturday 13th June the West Group will be entering a team in the 'Moonlight Walk' for the second year running.

West Group Ambassador Bro Sam Weber and John Spence met with CEO Lois Howell to discuss engagement with Sam's upcoming Yukon 1000 fundraising challenge. Sam's initiative will be supporting not only St Wilfrid's but also St Barnabas, Chestnut Tree House and The Martlets.

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### Charmandean Centre extends the hosting of the UKHarvest Community Food Hub to 2027!

Another fantastic monthly Community Food Hub at the Charmandean. The event hosted an array of support services including the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service offering advice on home fire safety. Centre Manager Trevor England was delighted to extend the continued hosting of the Worthing Community Food Hub serving the local community until April 2027





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## 'The West Wing' Learning and Development Team.



The West Group Ambassador, Bro **Sam Weber** visited the Football Lodge of Sussex and delivered a gripping account of his 2025 trans-Atlantic row. He went on to describe his next challenge in July 2026, The Yukon 1000. The world's longest endurance Kayak race. Covering 1,000 miles through the Canadian wilderness to the finish line in Alaska with his son in their Kayak 'The Pride of Sussex Freemasonry' Huge thanks to the Football Lodge of Sussex for their £430 donation last night

### Watch this Space.

Any Brother wishing development in any area of Craft or Royal Arch Masonry that we have not covered please let us know. We will try to put a learning plan together for you.

**Tell me I will forget**  
**Show Me I will remember**  
**Involve me I will understand**

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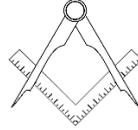
Enquiries: [stevegoulding@sussexmasons.org.uk](mailto:stevegoulding@sussexmasons.org.uk)



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If you are not willing to  
learn no one can help  
you.

If you are determined  
to learn, no one can stop  
you.

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Notes.