

This note is one of a series placed in the Clerks' Almanac by the Livery Committee. Most are written by its chairman, of whom you may read more at the foot of the [Contact page](#). They are intended to be of guidance to livery clerks, especially new ones, or those seeking advice on a particular topic. They are not prescriptive, and how individual companies choose to conduct their affairs is, of course, entirely up to them.

### **Guidelines for the setting up of a Past Masters' Association (PMA)**

There will, inevitably, be considerable interest in and discussion about the setting up of a Past Masters' Association in the time that the year group of Masters spend at Ironbridge (particularly in the bar after the two dinners). Names for the association will be suggested, there may be some jockeying for office and there will be any number of offers to set up events – mostly based on those events that Masters have arranged for their respective Companies.

There may be moves by the Mistresses, Masters' Ladies or Consorts to set up a parallel organization.

There is no formal slot in the Ironbridge programme to get the matters sorted out but the opportunity will arise on the Sunday morning before Masters either set out on the final activities of the weekend or make an early dash for home.

It is suggested that you might wish to take the following points into consideration at the meeting:

- At lunch on the Saturday someone from the Ironbridge Organizing Committee will take the opportunity to talk about the events for the afternoon and evening. This should be the cue for one of your number to take the microphone and announce that a meeting (or two depending on how the Consorts wish to play their hand) will be convened following breakfast on the Sunday.
- It will be sensible for someone to talk with the Hotel management to book two rooms for this / these meetings so that the timing and location of the meeting(s) can be added into the above announcement.
- The recommended course of action is to ask either the Lord Mayor or a Sheriff to take the chair at least until there is a call for nominations for the post of Chairman of the Association.
- Once He / she is elected, other officers – Vice Chairman, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer and Committee Members are then proposed and elected.
- The Lord Mayor and Sheriffs should be asked (probably in advance) if they are willing to take on the Presidency and Vice Presidencies of the Association. It is likely that they will not all be present for the meeting due to duty calls back in London or elsewhere. Their appointments will be advised to and ratified by the meeting.

- Next up the Name of the Association. There will be any number of ideas emerging from late nights in the bar – some daft – and the favourite should emerge without too much blood letting.
- It will be impractical to get everyone's details on the day – suggest that cards addresses etc be passed to the Hon Secretary of Chairman to facilitate the early compilation of a database.

That is probably all you will have time (or the appetite) for at the inaugural meeting. However, the chosen committee will need to convene an early meeting to discuss all or some of the following and whatever else they can think of:

- A start date for the Association – 1 August might be suitable.
- The drafting of a constitution – there are plenty of models available – you might wish to contact the Chairman of the most recent association who will have attempted at least to distill the best from previous examples or look on the Livery Committee website.
- Establish a joining fee and an annual subscription rate. The former may not be necessary but allows a bit of cover in case of the need to make pre-payments for venues etc and for any disasters with events. It also gets a bit of cash in the bank for future needs such as a desire to support your Aldermanic Sheriff should he progress to the Mayoralty.
- Set up a Bank Account(s). Try to pick a bank with which both Chairman and Hon Treasurer have accounts – this will save time and effort.
- It will come as no surprise to learn that there is an Association of Past Masters' Associations. The point of contact is Hew Dundas who can be contacted on [dundas.energy@btinternet.com](mailto:dundas.energy@btinternet.com). Hew will make sure that your existence is notified to the editor of the Blue Book and will notify the Chairman etc of the date of the annual gathering of this group.
- In case you were wondering there is no need (under current legislation) to register under the data Protection Act.
- Public Liability Insurance is also an issue. It is suggested that you give thought to this and, if necessary, contact Perkins Slade who insure a number of Livery Companies and related organizations. As a guide, the most recent association holds cover for £2 million at an premium of £265 / year (another reason to have reserve funds), although some long standing PMAs do not have insurance
- Try to find someone with graphic skills to devise a logo and house style (if these things are important to you) and also try to find someone who can handle the occasional newsletter.
- Establish the basis of the relationship between the Association and the Consorts group. Some associations have the majority of their events just for members, others include consorts in all events.
- If agreed, establish a date for the AGM (and Lunch). A November date

following the standing down of the Lord Mayor is an option.

- Establish the range of events required by members.
- The golfers among you may congregate and make their own arrangements. Establish as early as possible who will be their 'leader' – this information probably finds its way into the Blue Book. Establish also if there is a desire to set up other groupings.

You will want to think about a programme of events for each year, including for example, the AGM, an annual dinner, formal or informal lunches, visits, UK and overseas trips. Your predecessor PMAs will no doubt be happy to let you know what they get up to, whilst the reports of a series of annual informal lunches where representatives of each active PMA advise what they have done and are planning are available on request from Dave Smith, Chris Hodgkinson or Hew Dundas."

Finally, you may wish to consider setting up a 'Tontine'. Some associations have done so and one in particular suggests the setting up of a ring-fenced fund established by an initial contribution of (say) £5 per eligible member from the general fund and the sum of £1 per full member per annum be placed in a fund to provide a party for the last surviving ten such members.

Dave Smith, Chris Hodgkinson, Hew Dundas  
LPMA

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Was this note helpful? Do you have comment? Email [nrpullman@btinternet.com](mailto:nrpullman@btinternet.com)