



# NEWSLETTER

## A Message from the Chairman

Welcome to the May 2026 newsletter, where we keep you informed of the many things that have been happening at Cole Court since our previous newsletter last December.

The TDMC annual general meeting (AGM) was held on 26<sup>th</sup> January and offered an opportunity to update the Unit Representatives on our finances, whilst enabling the group working on "Cole Court 2030" to share some of their initial findings since commencing their work. There are more detailed updates in this newsletter.

Looking ahead, our financial year ends on 31<sup>st</sup> August (which isn't too far away) and we hope that before then, we will be able to provide you with further information about the steps we are taking to enhance Cole Court.

Finally, I delighted to announce the appointment of a new director, James Pomeroy, who replaces Peter Harper who stepped down from the board at our AGM.

## 2025/26 Year-to-Date

As we are over 2/3 of the way through the 2025/26 financial year, we are developing a clearer picture of how our business is performing. Year-to-date performance suggests we are on target to meet or beat our budget forecast for 2025/26 and very likely to return TDMCL to profitability. The main reasons behind the improvement are strict cost control, specifically wages, and improved external income. Ending the year with a surplus is great news for all of us however, any surplus will simply allow us to build up our depleted cash reserves or fund much needed (unbudgeted) maintenance at Cole Court.

The Board are extremely grateful for the efforts of everyone involved at Cole Court and the understanding and support of our members as we make the much needed changes.

## Cole Court Bar

Julia is making a change to our drinks offering.

To provide capacity to sell more draft beer, non-alcoholic drinks which will now be available in cans and bottles. This will also ensure members drinking non-alcoholic beers and lagers enjoy them at their best.

Draft Old Speckled Hen will soon be available. Now brewed by Greene King, this beer originated in Abingdon-on-Thames at the Morland Brewery to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the MG car factory in 1979.



We will always listen to constructive member feedback and make changes which make sense for the majority.

## Additional Unit Meetings

The Capitation Fees paid by all Units which meet at Cole Court contributes almost 50% of the running costs of Cole Court. Currently, the remainder of the running costs are covered by External Income. With a view to encouraging Units to hold more meetings and events at Cole Court, the Board recently approved a new tier of Capitation charges for additional meetings. An additional meeting is any meeting held at Cole Court which is over and above the number of meetings detailed in the By-Laws of that Unit. For example, a Unit which has 4 meetings may wish to hold a 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. In this instance, should the Unit wish to hold a meeting followed by a festive board, the Capitation Fee charged will only be 25% of the applicable charge and should the Unit only wish to dine (i.e. not use a Temple), no Capitation Fee will be charged.

## 2026/27 Budget

We have been approached by a number of Units for information on likely charges for the next Masonic year. The Board will shortly commence planning for the next financial year but in order to assist Units with their budgeting we can confirm the following.

- Capitation Fees will rise in line with inflation (which is estimated at 4%), meaning an individual Capitation Fee will rise by 70p to £17.20 per meeting and a large Unit Capitation Fee will rise by £35 to £860.
- Bar and Catering charges will rise, but as current world events may ultimately lead to an increase in food and drink supply costs, we are unable to predict what our resultant charges will be in 4 months time. We will of course do everything we can to minimise cost increases for our members but as a minimum, we expect catering and drinks prices to rise in line with inflation.

## Board News

At our AGM on 26th January we bade farewell to Peter Harper who had been our IT Director since last March. He stepped down because of work pressures (he is employed full time and is also a councillor on Wokingham Borough Council). He also lives 30 miles from Cole Court. We are very grateful to Peter for all his hard work and support with IT and other matters during a very busy time for the Board.

We are also very pleased to welcome James Pomeroy to the Board as our co-opted IT Director. James brings a wealth of IT experience, including extensive work with global banks and major retail organisations. Alongside his commercial career, he also chairs the board of a trust comprising 15 schools, giving him a broad perspective on managing diverse user needs, balancing budgets, and delivering reliable, accessible technology in demanding environments. He has already begun implementing a number of important improvements to our systems (see below).

There was also a change to the TDMC trustees at the above AGM, with the retirement of John Burch as a trustee after many years of service in that capacity, for which we are most grateful. The current trustees are John M. Taylor, Simon Reay and Martin Kemble

## Cole Court 2030

We are delighted to update our members on progress being made by the Steering Committee on this strategic project.

As our members will know, the Cole Court 2030 study is being undertaken jointly by TDMCL, London Stone Chapter, and the Provincial Executive with a view to regenerating Cole Court to meet the needs of Freemasonry in 2030 and this process enhance the experience for all Units and their guests.

Working with surveyors and architects the Steering Committee have been looking into redesigns of the existing building which will also lead to a growth in external income without detriment to the Masonic experience.

This will not only help put Cole Court on the map for events and celebrations, but will also create an opportunity to show the general public what a wonderful organisation Freemasonry is, and encourage enquiries to join our charity driven brotherhood.

Growing external income is vital to keeping our member costs as low as possible. The Steering Committee are making excellent progress with the first part of the the study and are ensuring that the proposed designs will address everyone's needs. They are looking forward to presenting the progress and ideas at a meeting which is expected to take place during the summer. Watch this space!

**COLE COURT**  
TDMCL

**CONNECTED.  
SMARTER.  
STRONGER.**

New WiFi. Enhanced AV.  
Better for meetings,  
members and business.

**NEW WIFI**  
Strong, reliable coverage across the ground floor and most of the first floor. Perfect for conferencing, working and browsing.

**CONNECTIVITY**  
Stay connected throughout the building. Presentations, rituals and meetings can now be accessed anywhere.

**ENHANCED AV**  
Easier wireless projector setup and roaming TV screens make presentations simple and seamless.

**BETTER TOGETHER**  
A modern, welcoming environment for brethren, business users and visitors. Hot-desk, meet and make the most of Cole Court.

**TECHNOLOGY THAT BRINGS US TOGETHER**

- Better meetings**  
Clearer presentations and smoother collaboration.
- Better working**  
Hot-desk, meet or focus in a comfortable environment.
- Better experience**  
Modern facilities that support our members and guests.

**TRADITION MEETS TECHNOLOGY**  
COLE COURT - CONNECTED FOR THE FUTURE

We welcome your ideas and feedback.  
Email [james.pomeroy@tdmcl.co.uk](mailto:james.pomeroy@tdmcl.co.uk)

## IT Update

TDMCL has recently completed a significant upgrade to the Wi-Fi provision across Cole Court, with a new system now delivering strong, reliable coverage throughout the ground floor and across most of the first floor. This is an important step forward for the building, not only in improving day-to-day connectivity but in making Cole Court a more practical and modern environment for members, visitors and business users alike.

The improved wireless coverage now means the building is far better equipped for business conferencing, hybrid meetings, and presentations. It also opens up new possibilities for Masonic use, making it much easier to display presentations, refer to rituals digitally and support more flexible meeting formats anywhere in the building. In short, technology is becoming less of a barrier and more of an enabler.

We also hope these improvements will encourage more members to make greater use of the site during the day, whether for hot-desking, informal meetings, or simply dropping in to work from a warm and welcoming environment. Cole Court should not only be seen as a meeting venue, but as a useful and inviting base for the wider membership.

We are also enhancing the Audio/Visual setup within the building. This includes roaming TV screens and simpler wireless projector connectivity, helping to create a smarter, more flexible setup for meetings, events, and presentations. The aim is to make using the technology at Cole Court easier, more professional, and far less dependent on complicated cabling or ad hoc arrangements.

We're working through the next round of IT upgrades which will include making booking meals much simpler. We're always keen to hear from members on how we can continue to improve Cole Court. If you have any suggestions, ideas, or feedback on the recent changes — or anything else you feel could enhance the experience — please don't hesitate to get in touch. You can contact James directly at [james.pomeroy@tdmcl.co.uk](mailto:james.pomeroy@tdmcl.co.uk), and he'll be very happy to hear your thoughts.



## Cole Court - Did you know?

- 17th Century The existing site is on land named after Thomas Cole who founded a brewery on London Road which continued to serve the local public for over 200 years.
- 1892 The brewery was sold by George Cole to Brandons of Putney and remained on the site for some 14 years. At that time the brewery land extended from the River Crane at Cole's Bridge to the railway line on the west side of London Road.
- 1906 The land was used by Royal Mail as a sorting office.
- 1920s George Cole laid out an estate of 140 detached houses on Cole family land east of London Road that was serviced with electricity which had newly arrived in Twickenham. Those houses comprise what is now called Cole Park Road.
- Concerning Cole Court itself:
- 1905 Cole Court was originally named Ivy Lodge and served as a private residence.
- 1920s Ivy Lodge was repurposed and renamed as Cole Court Hotel and served as such during both world wars.
- 1945 During the latter part of the Second World War, the ballroom at Cole Court (now the Norman Moore Temple) was popular with American soldiers stationed at Bushey Park Garrison in the lead up to D-Day, but soon after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War its fortunes declined, in large part because the American troops returned home after the war.
- 1950 Cole Court remained unoccupied until 29<sup>th</sup> November 1950 when the premises were acquired by local Masonic Lodges. There is a lot of interesting information about the Masonic acquisition of Cole Court that will feature in our next edition.

# Facilities Report

To ensure the smooth running of Cole Court, two items have been implemented. Firstly, an "issues" book (kept in the bar office) which is for Secretaries to record any broken/missing items and, secondly, a Tyler's What's app group. Tylers are now regularly reporting items needing attention e.g. Lights not working (42 light bulbs have been replaced and more to be done soon).

While we endeavour to correct items listed a.s.a.p., we are mindful of costs and therefore a handyman/repairman is only employed when we have a number of items requiring attention and thus some repairs may not be done immediately. However, we do respond immediately to emergencies occurring as happened recently the cellar cooling system failing and air conditioning in Temple 1.

Many "behind the scenes" projects are also taking place e.g. re-organising the cellar and disposing of items which have been there decades, servicing essential equipment and ensuring safety certificates are in place. We have contracted a new gardener with a view to improving the appearance of bushes and trees along the car park.

Looking ahead, we will continue to have an on-going programme of repairs and look at ways to improve Cole Court: tidying the car park, repairing waste-bin gates, repairing potholes in the car park etc.

While the gardener will carry out regular grass cutting, we can improve the appearance of areas such as the patio with the help of any "green-fingered" volunteering Masons, so please do contact Gwyn Evans if you can assist.



Thank you to the Royal Hanover, Great Lights Lodges and John Eynon and Chris Albrow for their generosity in sponsoring 5 trees. There are still a number of trees which are in need of sponsorship. We are required by the local authority to replace trees which were removed for safety reasons a few years ago. If you or you Unit would like to sponsor a tree and have a sign placed at the foot of the tree in memory or recognition, please contact Gwyn Evans.

# SUFFERING FROM PAIN OR TIGHTNESS ?

## Sports Massage Therapy

Helping you move better, feel better and stay active.



## DOES THIS SOUND LIKE YOU?

- Lower back pain
- Neck & shoulder tension
- Tight hips & legs
- Aches from work or daily life
- Old injuries that keep coming back
- Not moving as freely as you used to
- General stiffness

## THIS IS HOW I CAN HELP YOU !

- Identify what's causing your pain or stiffness
- Hands on treatment to reduce tension & improve movement
- Postural assessment to highlight imbalances & restrictions
- Simple, practical advice to keep you improving between sessions

### Session Pricing:

**30 minutes (£30)**- Ideal for treating one area such as legs or shoulders.

**60 minutes (£50)**- Ideal for more than one area, back & shoulders or hips & legs

## INTERESTED IN HAVING REGULAR TREATMENT AVAILABLE AT COLE COURT?

I'm currently assessing demand for offering regular sports massage therapy services on site.

If this is something you'd be interested in, register your interest by emailing the below with your name.

[paul.neale@ptnperformance.co.uk](mailto:paul.neale@ptnperformance.co.uk)

