

The Freemasons Fortnight Challenge

by The Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim

**Be smart, be safe,
be kind, stay healthy**



Give, Be Active, Connect, Keep Learning, Take Notice

Join your fellow Freemasons in a daily challenge to inspire positive actions every day and enjoy a happier, more fulfilled life for you and your loved ones...

DO YOU ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE?

A message from John McLernon, Provincial Grand Master of Antrim.

“Though times have been tough, our brotherhood of men has stood strong and supportive. We are delighted to have established a partnership with local charity, Age NI, and I would encourage you all to take note of the services on offer and make use of the invaluable help this charity can provide for you and your family. The ‘Freemasons Fortnightly Challenge’ is a project that I hope we can all have a bit of fun with, setting ourselves daily challenges to help us continue to see the positives in life and look forward to brighter, more sociable days ahead. It is a simple challenge that we are all capable of completing and I hope that you will all enjoy taking part and reconnecting while doing so. Please share this with your loved ones and ask them to take part too – we are all in this together and we will stand strong against the challenges that life throws at us!”



The Provincial Grand Lodge Antrim partnership with Age NI...

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim is delighted to have teamed up with Age NI to create an exciting new project which aims to alleviate loneliness and isolation.

The “Freemasons Fortnight Challenge” is here to inspire, you, your loved ones, and your local community to reach out to one another. It is designed to promote a positive outlook on life, build confidence, encourage connectivity, activity and ultimately reignite and nurture friendships.

We all need one another, and we can all help one another!

In response to the difficult times, the officers at Provincial Grand Lodge Antrim sought to secure a partnership that would help facilitate meeting the needs of the members even though lodges cannot currently hold meetings.

Isolation and loneliness have been identified as key issues which are affecting the nation as a whole and it was agreed that a plan to tackle these concerns

would not only assist our members to continue with a positive mindset, but that it could easily be shared with our loved ones and neighbours, ultimately helping our local communities too.

For Freemasons, there are four important values that help define our path through life: Integrity, Friendship, Respect and Charity. In today’s world filled with uncertainty, these principles ring as true as they have at any point in the organisation’s history and we are encouraged to continue to hold these special values dear throughout this time.

Many brethren across the province have been helping and supporting local communities in practical ways and all are encouraged to continue to do so where possible. The partnership with Age NI is a chance for Freemasons to spend some time looking inward and focussing on personal wellbeing mental health.

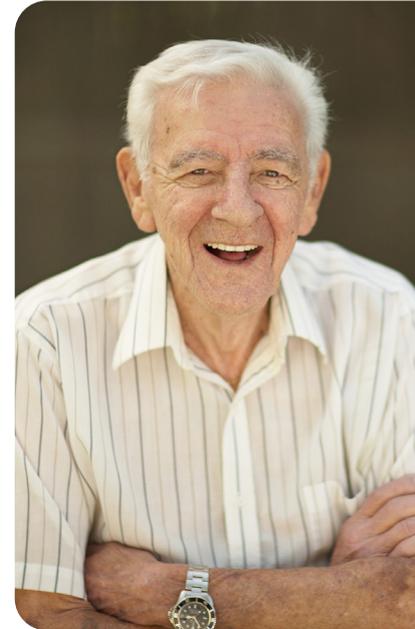
About Age NI

Age NI is the leading charity for older people in Northern Ireland. Our mission is to help people enjoy a better later life and we do this by listening to and working with older people, to understand the things that matter to you.

Along with providing a range of care and wellbeing services, our Advice Line is open to everyone.

Each year, our Advice Line responds to over 10,000 calls and we are here to help you on:

- **Money Matters** – ensuring older people are receiving all the benefits they are entitled to, advice on pensions, rates relief, tax, and winter fuel payments. Financial peace of mind means you can get on with enjoying the later life you have worked hard for.
- **Health & Care** – expert advice on accessing community care, housing support and health and wellbeing services, as your needs change in later life.
- **Wellbeing** – get advice on eating well, staying active and moving regularly for balance, strength, and confidence, along with ideas and activities to keep you mentally alert and staying positive.
- **Connection** – we have a range of services to keep you connected to others and your community, particularly if you live alone or if you are isolated through caring for a partner or relative.





If you or an older person you know needs advice, information, or practical support, contact the free Age NI Advice Line:

Freephone 0808 808 7575

Available Monday – Friday 9am-5pm

Visit www.ageni.org

Personal Alarm – wearing a button alarm gives you confidence to get on with life, particularly if you live alone. It will connect you directly to help in the event of a fall or accident.

For more information, go to **ageni.org/personalalarms** or call the NI Personal Alarms Customer Services team on **0800 012 1321**.

Lines are open Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm



Message from Linda Robinson, CEO, Age NI

We know the past few months have been hard for older people. As the charity dedicated to improving later life, we have lots of services, advice and tips and we are here to help.

Over the winter, it will be more important than ever to look after yourself and each other, to keep active and to stay connected. This can make such a difference to how you feel.

We are pleased to partner with the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim to support this excellent Freemasons Fortnight Challenge. We share the same spirit, that everyone can use a little help from their friends and community occasionally.

You are fortunate to have a supportive community around you and this Fortnight Challenge will provide a tremendous focus to help you take care of yourself and mind each other throughout the winter.

If you need help, the expert team at Age NI are at the end of the phone: no-one should ever feel they have no-one so get in touch.

Enjoy the Daily Challenge!





Get involved... It is simple...

- Follow our fortnightly step-by-step guide to completing the challenge and mark off each challenge that you complete
- Take a picture or a short video of you completing your task and post to our Facebook page ([facebook.com/Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim](https://facebook.com/ProvincialGrandLodgeofAntrim))
- Reach out and share the challenge with your friends, family, and neighbours, get them involved too
- Keep a diary/journal of what you have done and how it makes you feel

If every Freemason in Antrim does this and encourages just two others to get involved, we can reach 15,000 people across Antrim – spreading love, happiness and positivity!

Turn that frown upside down!!

Day	Daily Challenge	Completed?
1	Carry out three acts of kindness to help others, however small!	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Phone someone you have not spoken to for over one month	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Play a game that you enjoyed when you were young	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Plan to meet up with others again in the new year	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Send a letter or message to someone you cannot be with	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Cook something from scratch	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Make some progress on a project that matters to you (Degree work)	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Call a loved one to catch up and really listen to them	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Connect with and appreciate nature. Breathe deeply and notice life continuing	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Contact a neighbour or friend and offer to help them	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Learn something new or do something creative	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Thank three people you are grateful to and tell them why	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Contact a Lodge widow	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Keep active even if you are stuck indoors. Move and stretch	<input type="checkbox"/>

Still unsure?

Here are just some of the reasons you should get involved!

Spending at least 120 minutes a week in nature is associated with good health and wellbeing!

Be active

Go for a walk or run, cycle, play a game, garden or dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity that you can enjoy safely; one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Keep Learning

Don't be afraid to try something new, rediscover an old hobby or sign up for a course. Take on a different responsibility, fix a bike, learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy. Learning new things will make you more confident, as well as being rewarding and fun.

The process of cooking and baking is proven to improve your mood and generate a feeling of satisfaction – seeing and enjoying the end product naturally enhances happiness!

Ditch the email and pick up a good old pen and paper – Writing a letter to a friend will make you feel great, it will promote mindfulness by allowing you to slow down and be in the moment, it will allow you a period of self reflection as you take the time to consider how to share your story and ultimately it will bring the recipient great joy, knowing that you have taken the time to think of them in this way.

Connect

Connect with the people around you: family, friends, colleagues and neighbours at home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these relationships as the cornerstones of your life and spend time developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

Give

Do something nice for a friend or stranger, thank someone, smile, volunteer your time or consider joining a community group. Look out as well as in. Seeing yourself and your happiness linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and will create connections with the people around you.

Take Notice

Stop, pause, or take a moment to look around you. What can you see, feel, smell or even taste? Look for beautiful, new, unusual or extraordinary things in your everyday life and think about how that makes you feel.

Your PGL Charity officers are also here to help and guide you, if you need any help or guidance please get in touch and they can help direct you or your family to the right person to help within the Age NI Charity.

PGL Charity Officer	Contact details	Assigned Charity District
Grahame Todd	07515 956748	Seven Towers
Brain Morrison	07918 664035	Carrickfergus
Andrew Bingham	07880 733414	Cary & Dunluce
Ainsley Steele	07753 137768	Six Mile Valley
Mark Henderson	07761 105121	Lisburn
Allen Mercer	07871 969236	Seven Towers
Brian Hampton	07857 877861	Arthur Square
Dennis Wheavil	07833 691445	Arthur Square
George Peden	07475 721383	Seven Towers
Alistair McKay	07818 455908	Cary & Dunluce

Smiling is infectious,
you catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me today,
I started smiling too.
I passed around the corner
and someone saw my grin.
When he smiled I realized
I'd passed it on to him.
I thought about that smile,
then I realized its worth.
A single smile, just like mine
could travel round the earth.
So, if you feel a smile begin,
don't leave it undetected.
Let's start an epidemic quick,
and get the world infected!
Spike Milligan