

8 April 2022

Dear Colleague,

Hopefully, it may be possible for Cinque Ports ceremonial and social functions to resume after 21 June. Although the current plan is for all legal restrictions on gatherings to be removed from that date, it seems increasingly likely that public health professionals will advise the continuation of “social distancing” and/or the wearing of face coverings for the foreseeable future, especially when groups meet indoors.

The suggestion has been made that if the representatives of member towns at ceremonial events, like Speaker’s Day, wore matching face coverings, rather than an assortment of surgical masks, scarves etc., the effect would be more pleasing and professional. With the agreement of the Joint Solicitors, I have, therefore, investigated the possibility of obtaining a supply of masks, screen printed with the coat of arms of the Cinque Ports for purchase by the member towns etc. Attached is an illustration of the product which I have in mind. This is made from 3 layers of soft material, with adjustable ear straps and nose grip. It is very comfortable to wear and fits more closely than many of the disposable, surgical type masks to which most of us have become accustomed over recent months. It is a “face covering”, rather than a formally certified FFP product. It is reusable and the manufacturer states that it can be washed up to 25 times at 60 degrees C.

In the absence of authority from the Standing Joint Committee, it is impossible for the Confederation to purchase a stock of masks for resale to members (as happens with ties, lapel badges etc.) but, if member towns wish to pre-order for their own requirements, masks could be purchased in time for the Lord Warden’s Walmer Weekend, Speaker’s Day etc. This is the same procedure which was adopted a few years ago in arranging the supply of Cinque Ports umbrellas. The price of the masks would vary according to the total quantity ordered to cover the requirements of all member towns. If orders total 50 or more, the unit cost would be approximately £5.75, but this would reduce to about £4.75 if orders totalled 100 or more.

If the masks are to be available for the Walmer Weekend and other events from early July onwards, an order would have to be placed with the manufacturer by the middle of May. My purpose in writing to you, at this stage, is to ask you to indicate whether your town would wish to order a supply of these masks and, if so, the number required. Depending upon the response, I would then write to you again with a firm price and a request for payment in advance. Please will you indicate your requirements, without obligation at this stage, by 30 April at the latest.

Best wishes,

*Ian*

Ian Russell  
Registrar & Seneschal of the Cinque Ports

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