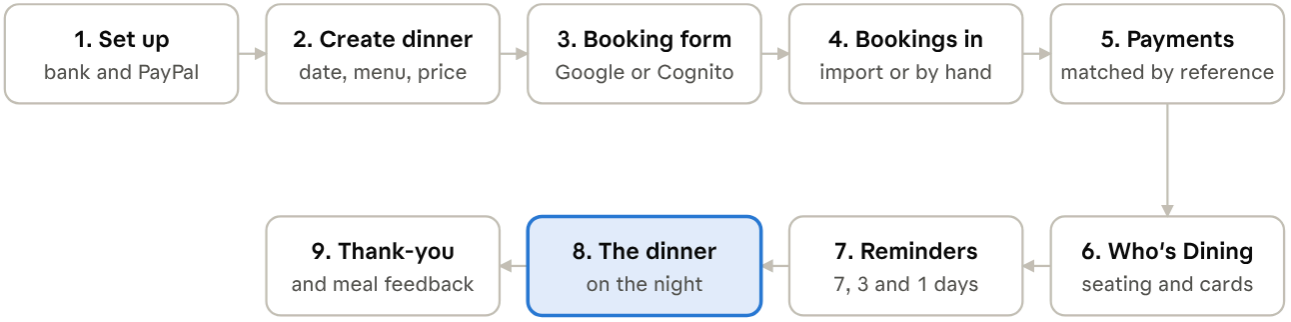
Lodge Secretary — Dining Manual

Nov 1, 2026 · @Nick.Lockett@gmail.com

> This manual describes **version 3.0.8** and later. In 3.0.7, **Print Tables (Visual Layout)** prints a simpler drawing than the screen, and visitors booked for a dinner aren't added to E-Attendance automatically. Versions 3.0.3 and earlier also lack the pencil (edit) button for diners, course choices for visitors, the service charge and booking reference on invoices, menu updates from Edit Form Questions, the bank import's Skip button and correctly folded table cards.

At a glance

A dinner runs from set-up to thank-you in nine steps



dining workflow · 9 steps

Every dinner follows the same nine steps. Steps 1–5 happen in the weeks before; reminders and the thank-you are sent for you once the Messenger is set up (section 9). The sections below follow the same order.

1. Before your first dinner

Do these once. They take about ten minutes and every dinner uses them afterwards.

1. **Connect the lodge's Google account.** Go to **Settings → Google Drive Backup** and press **Connect Google Account**. Sign in with the **lodge's own Gmail address**, not your personal one. Lodge Secretary creates the Google booking forms, sends e-mails and keeps backups in this account. A form created under the wrong account can't be opened by the Brethren, so Lodge Secretary blocks it and tells you.
2. **Choose the booking form.** Go to **Settings → Forms, Payments & Messages → Dining booking forms** and pick **Google Forms** (free, created for you automatically) or **Cognito Forms**. This is only the default for new dinners; any dinner can be switched

on its own page.

3. **Switch on PayPal (optional).** In the same section, under **Online payment**, tick **Offer "Pay with PayPal"** and enter the e-mail address of the lodge's **PayPal Business** account. Payments go to that account, and PayPal can pass them on to the lodge bank automatically. Bank transfers cost nothing; PayPal charges the lodge a fee per payment.
4. **Set up the Messenger (optional, recommended).** Still in that section, under **Automatic e-mails (Messenger)**, choose what to send, then press **Create the Messenger**. It opens in your browser. Choose **install** in the list of functions at the top, press **Run**, and allow access when Google asks. Back in Lodge Secretary, click **tell Lodge Secretary it's done**. (If Google says the Apps Script API is off, switch it on at script.google.com/home/usersettings and press Create again.)
5. **Check the lodge details.** Each dinner needs the lodge e-mail, telephone and bank details. You type these on the dinner itself (section 2), so have them to hand.

Only the **Secretary's computer** can change these settings. If the lodge has a Dining Secretary, see section 10.

2. Creating a dining event

Open **Dining** from the dashboard and press **New Dining Event**. Fill in the form and press Create Event at the bottom (it needs at least the date and venue). Everything can be changed later, and changes save automatically (you'll see **Saved** at the top).

Field	What to enter	Needed for the Google form?
Festive Board Date	The date of the dinner	Yes
Dining Venue	The venue's name, e.g. Freemasons' Hall	Yes
Festive Board Location	The full address	Yes
Dining Time	e.g. "7:00 PM for 7:30 PM"	Yes
Lodge Email Address	The lodge Gmail address (must match the connected Google account)	Yes
Lodge Telephone Number	A contact number for questions	Yes

Field	What to enter	Needed for the Google form?
Three-Course Menu	Up to three starters, three mains and three desserts. Leave a course empty if there is no choice	No, but strongly recommended
Meal Cost	The price per head, e.g. 45.00	Yes
Service Charge (%)	e.g. 10. Lodge Secretary adds it to the meal cost everywhere (45 + 10% = 49.50)	No
Last Payment Date	The date payment must arrive by	Yes
Bank Details	Account name, sort code, account number	Yes
Online Payment Address	Only if the lodge uses another payment link. Not needed for PayPal (set in Settings)	No
Notes	Anything the Brethren should know; shown on the booking form	No

The new dinner appears under **Upcoming Events** on the left. Click it to open its page. Dinners whose date has passed move to **Past Events**.

To delete a dinner, click the small **×** at the top right of its card and confirm. This deletes its diners too and can't be undone.

3. The Google booking form

Lodge Secretary builds the booking form in the lodge's Google account, publishes it, and gives you the link to send out. Each diner, member or guest, fills in the form once for himself.

Creating the form

1. Open the dinner and check the details in **Festive Board Details** are complete (section 2).
2. Press **Create Google Form** at the top of the dinner's page. If anything required is missing, Lodge Secretary lists it; fill it in and press again.
3. The **Create RSVP Form** window shows the menu and the payment details that will appear on the form. Change the menu here if needed.

4. Press **Create Form Automatically**. After a few seconds you'll see **RSVP Form Created!** with the form link and its response spreadsheet. Press **Done**.

The form asks for: the diner's name, who invited him (guests only), e-mail, telephone, his lodge, the non-alcohol option, his starter, main course and dessert, dietary restrictions (None, Vegetarian, Vegan, Kosher, Gluten-free, Allergy, Other), allergy details, and agreement to pay. It also tells him his name and menu will appear on the Who's Dining list.

Sending the link to the Brethren

Quickest way: when the form is created (or updated), the **RSVP Form Created!** window has a red **Send to all Lodge Members by email** button. It asks you to confirm (telling you how many members will get it and how many have no e-mail address), then sends each member this short message from the lodge's Google account:

> Lodge Secretary has created a festive board on *[date]* at *[venue]* and you can now book your meal using this link — *[link]* — Thanks, Lodge Secretary

Keep the window open while it counts through ("Sending… 12 of 40"); it then shows how many were sent and names anyone it couldn't reach. Deceased and inactive members are left out, and a shared e-mail address only gets one copy.

At any time afterwards, the dinner's card under **Upcoming Events** shows these links:

- **Link for Members to book** opens the form, as a member would see it.
- **Send dining link by email** sends a fuller invitation to every member with an e-mail address, from the lodge's Google account: addressed to each member by name, with the venue, time, cost, payment date and a Book Your Place button. It tells you how many it will send to, and how many members have no e-mail.
- **Copy Form URL** copies the link, to paste into a summons, a message or WhatsApp.
- **View Form Responses** opens the response spreadsheet.
- **Link for Secretary to edit form** opens the form in Google Forms.
- **Update form title & description** refreshes the form's details after you change the venue, price, time or deadline.

Changing the menu after the form is made

Press **Edit Form Questions** on the dinner's page, change the dishes, and press **Create Form Automatically**. The form keeps the same link. The dishes are updated in place, so bookings already received still import correctly. If you remove a whole course, it is left on the form (so earlier answers aren't lost); remove it in Google Forms if you wish.

Recreating the form

Recreate Google Form makes a brand-new form with a new link. Only do this if the old one is beyond repair: the old link stops being used, and anyone who already booked on it must be imported first.

If members can't open the form: Google now creates forms closed to the public until they're published. Lodge Secretary publishes every new form automatically. For a form made before version 3.0.2, press **Update form title & description** once, or press **Publish** in Google Forms.

4. The Cognito booking form

Use Cognito instead of Google if the lodge prefers it. Cognito's free plan is enough. The difference: Cognito won't let other software build forms, so you build the form in Cognito yourself once, and bring the bookings in by downloading a spreadsheet.

Building the form (once)

Build it in Cognito by following the **Cognito Dining Form — Build Specification** document, which lists every question with its exact wording. Keep the wording exactly as written: Lodge Secretary reads the bookings by the question wording. For later dinners, copy the form in Cognito and change the date, menu and price.

Using it for a dinner

1. Open the dinner. In the **Booking form, payment & feedback** panel, choose **Cognito form**.
2. Paste the Cognito form's public link into the box and press **Save**. This is the link Brethren use to book.
3. Send the link to the Brethren (by e-mail, in the summons, or by WhatsApp with **Share this dinner**).
4. Make sure Cognito's own confirmation e-mail shows the diner's booking reference and the payment details (see the build specification).

The **Create Google Form** buttons are hidden while a dinner is set to Cognito.

Bringing the bookings in

1. In Cognito, open the form's **Entries**, then choose **Export → Excel**. Save the file.
2. In Lodge Secretary, open the dinner and press **Import from Excel File** (in the **Import from Cognito** box).
3. Pick the downloaded file. Lodge Secretary shows **Cognito download recognised** and a preview of the bookings.
4. Press **Add new bookings**.

Only **new** bookings are added. Diners already on the list, and their paid status, are left exactly as they are, so you can repeat this whenever you want the latest bookings. Entries someone started but never submitted are skipped. A re-import never overwrites a diner already on the list, so if someone changes his menu in Cognito after you've imported him, see section 6.

Optional: automatic import. Lodges on Cognito's paid Pro plan can create a Cognito API key and paste it in **Settings → Forms, Payments & Messages**. Lodge Secretary can then fetch the bookings itself, without the download. Most lodges won't need this.

Please note: this has been tested with sample Cognito downloads. The first time you use it with a real Cognito form, check the imported diners against Cognito's entries.

5. Bringing in bookings

There are three ways to get bookings onto a dinner's diners list. Use whichever matches how the Brethren booked.

Way	Use it when	What it does to the list
Import Bookings from Google Forms	Brethren booked on the dinner's Google Form	Adds new diners; keeps everyone already listed
Import from Excel File, with a Cognito download	Brethren booked on the Cognito form	Adds new diners; keeps everyone already listed
Import from Excel File, with any other spreadsheet	You have a list from elsewhere (an older Lodge Secretary export, a Google sheet)	**Replaces** the whole diners list

From the Google Form

1. Open the dinner and scroll to **Import from Google Forms**.
2. Press **Import Bookings from Google Forms**.
3. Lodge Secretary reads every reply and adds anyone not already on the list (matched by name). It tells you how many it added and how many were already there.

Replies where the diner didn't tick **Yes, I agree to pay** are skipped and listed under the button, so you can follow them up. Each new diner gets his booking reference: the same one the Messenger e-mailed him when he booked (section 7).

Automatically. If the dinner's **Who's Dining** list is published with **Add new dining-form replies to the diners automatically** ticked, Lodge Secretary imports new Google Form replies every 5 minutes while it's open, so you don't need to press the button (section 8).

From a spreadsheet

Press **Import from Excel File**, pick the file (.xlsx, .xls or .csv), check the preview, and confirm. The preview tells you whether the file will be **added** (a Cognito download) or will **replace** the current list (any other spreadsheet). The spreadsheet needs a column for the diner's name; Lodge Secretary also picks up e-mail, telephone, lodge, who invited him, starter, main course, dessert, non-alcohol, dietary needs and allergies when there are columns for them.

After any import, check the list. Lodge Secretary marks **possible duplicates** in red (two very similar names) and tells you which names it couldn't match to the membership list. Those are fine if they are guests.

Members and guests. A booker whose name matches someone on the membership list is recorded as a **member** and linked to his record. Anyone else is recorded as a **visitor**. If a visitor filled in **Who invited you?**, the Who's Dining list shows him under that member. A member's name typed differently from the membership list (e.g. "Bill" for "William") may come in as a visitor; check the list after importing.

Visitors go onto E-Attendance by themselves. Every visitor booked for a dinner (from a booking form, an import or added by hand) is put on the **E-Attendance** record for the same date, with his lodge and who invited him, and marked as dining. If you change his booking, the attendance record follows; if you remove him from the dinner, he comes off the attendance record too. Cancelled bookings are left out, and a visitor you've already typed onto the attendance record yourself isn't added a second time. If there's no attendance record for that date yet, the visitors are added as soon as you create it. If two records share the date (say a meeting and a committee), they go on the lodge meeting. To take a dinner visitor off the attendance record, remove him from the dinner: deleting him on the attendance record alone won't last, because the dinner adds him back.

6. Adding diners by hand

Use this for anyone who booked by telephone, by e-mail or in person at the lodge. The buttons are at the top of the **Diners** list on the dinner's page.

Adding a member: Add Member

1. Press **Add Member**.
2. Choose him from **Select a member**. Only members not already on this dinner are listed. His e-mail is filled in from his membership record; add or correct his telephone number if needed.
3. Pick his **Starter**, **Main Course** and **Dessert**. (If the dinner has no three-course menu, pick a **Food Option** instead: Meat, Fish, Vegetarian or Celiac.)

4. Tick **Non-alcohol option** if he wants it.
5. Tick any **Dietary Restrictions** (Vegan, Vegetarian, Kosher, Gluten-free), type anything else in the box below, and enter any **Allergies**.
6. Press **Add Member**. The button stays greyed out until a member is chosen.

Adding a guest: Add Visitor

1. Press **Add Visitor**.
2. Type his **Visitor Name**. Add his e-mail and telephone if you have them: the e-mail lets him receive his payment details and reminders.
3. Enter his home lodge in **Diner's Lodge**, and choose the member who invited him from **Inviting member** (optional, but it puts him under his host on the Who's Dining list and in the seating plan).
4. Pick his starter, main course and dessert, then any non-alcohol, dietary needs and allergies, as for a member.
5. Press **Add Visitor**. It stays greyed out until a name is typed.

Every diner added by hand gets his own booking reference straight away (section 7).

What each diner's row shows

His name, **member** or **visitor**, his menu choices (S, M, D), who invited him and his lodge, any dietary needs and non-alcohol, any allergy in red, and on the right:

- **Paid**: tick when his payment has arrived. Ticking it also adds a Dining Income entry to the Cash Book. Bank and PayPal payments can tick it for you (section 7).
- **Confirmed**: tick once he has been sent his confirmation. It shows ⚠️ **Confirm** in orange for anyone paid but not yet confirmed.
- **×** removes him from the dinner (you'll be asked to confirm).

Changing a diner's details

Click the **pencil** icon on his line (next to the red **×**). The same window opens, filled in with his details. Change his name, contact details, lodge, who invited him, course choices, dietary needs or allergies, then click **Save Changes** (or **Cancel** to leave everything as it was). His **booking reference, receipt number and Paid / Confirmed ticks stay the same**, so nothing needs re-sending.

7. Payments

Booking references

Every diner has his own **booking reference**, such as `MEAL141126JS-K7Q2MX`: MEAL, the dinner's date (14 11 26), his initials, and six characters. He gets it however he booked. He uses it as the reference when he pays, and Lodge Secretary uses it to recognise his payment on the bank or PayPal statement and mark him paid. It's shown on his invoice, his payment-details e-mail and his reminders.

Telling diners how to pay

- **Google Form bookings:** if the Messenger is running, each booker automatically receives an e-mail within about 15 minutes, with the amount, his booking reference, the lodge bank details and (if switched on) a **Pay with PayPal** button.
- **E-mail payment details to unpaid diners:** in the **Booking form, payment & feedback** panel. It e-mails the same details to every unpaid diner with an e-mail address who hasn't been sent them yet. **resend to all unpaid** sends them again to everyone unpaid.
- **Generate Confirmations:** at the top of the dinner's page. It makes an **invoice** for each unpaid diner (amount including service charge, his booking reference, the bank details and a PayPal link) and a **receipt** for each paid diner. **Invoice/Receipt** downloads it; **Send Email** sends it from the lodge's Google account. Use **Select All** for everyone at once.

PayPal

Switch it on once in Settings (section 1). Each dinner then shows **Offer "Pay with PayPal" for this dinner**, ticked; untick it for a dinner where you don't want PayPal. The PayPal button fills in the amount and the diner's booking reference for him. The money goes to the lodge's PayPal Business account.

Marking diners paid

- **By hand:** tick **Paid** on his row (for cash, cheques, or anything not on a statement).
- **From the bank statement (Treasurer):** download the statement from the bank's website as a CSV file. In **CashBook**, press **Import Bank Statement** and pick the file. Lines containing a booking reference show as **Auto-matched** with the diner's name and "dining". Press **Import**: those diners are marked paid ("Bank transfer") and a reconciled Dining Income entry is added to the Cash Book. Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds, Halifax, Bank of Scotland, NatWest, RBS, Santander, Nationwide, TSB, Monzo and Starling are supported.
- **From the PayPal statement (Treasurer):** in PayPal, choose **Activity → Download → CSV**, then import it the same way. Matched diners are marked paid ("PayPal").

If someone paid a different amount from what he owes, the review screen shows **owed £…** in orange beside him.

Don't count PayPal money twice. PayPal passes its money to the lodge bank as one lump sum. **When you import the bank statement, press Skip on that PayPal transfer line, because those payments were already counted from the PayPal statement. (Skip works on any incoming line you don't want imported; Include puts it back.)**

The totals under the diners list show **Total Diners**, **Paid**, and **Collected** (paid diners × meal cost including service charge).

8. Who's Dining, seating plan, dining cards and exports

Who's Dining list

A read-only list the Brethren can open to check they, and their guests, are booked, and what they ordered. It shows names, guests under their host, each person's lodge, course choices, a ✓ if dietary needs were given, and paid/unpaid (optional). E-mails, telephone numbers and the dietary details themselves are never shown.

1. In the **Who's Dining list** panel on the dinner's page, press **Publish a Who's Dining list**.
2. Copy the link it shows and send it to the Brethren. It's also added automatically to the dining e-mails and invoices.
3. Untick **Show paid / unpaid** if you'd rather not show it. Leave **Add new dining-form replies to the diners automatically** ticked to have Google Form bookings imported every 5 minutes while Lodge Secretary is open.

Update now refreshes it at once; **Open the sheet** opens it in Google Sheets; **Take down now** removes public access. It's taken down automatically 7 days after the dinner. **Make it live (optional)** sets up a small Google page that shows new bookings the moment they arrive, even with your computer off; the panel walks you through it.

Seating plan

Press **Seating Plan** at the top of the dinner's page.

1. Choose the **Type of table** (E or U Masonic table, Ladies Night tables, or Ladies Night with a head table), and the head-table and per-table seat numbers.
2. Press **Import Diners** to bring in this dinner's diners (or **Import Excel** / **Add Diner** for others).
3. Use the columns to guide the seating: **Group** seats people near each other; **Link #** keeps a couple or party together; **Avoid** keeps two people apart; **VIP** marks guests of honour. The lodge's officers are placed at the head table by their office. To fix someone to a particular seat, type it in the Position column. Capitals and hyphens don't matter: a1r1, A1-R1 or A1-r1 all become A1-R-1 when you press Enter or click away. The same goes for h3 (H-3), a3end (A3-END) and 2 4 (Table 2, Seat 4). If what you typed isn't a seat the plan knows, the box turns red; hover over it for examples.

4. Press **Allocate Seats**. Review any warnings, then adjust a seat by hand if needed (type e.g. 2-4 to move someone to Table 2, Seat 4). **Regenerate Tables** redraws the tables after changing their number or size.
5. **Save**, then **Print**: the full plan, an alphabetical list, table cards, or Print Tables (Visual Layout). The visual layout prints exactly what the Visual Layout screen shows (head table, arms with their table bars, END seats, each diner's menu and the legend) on one A4 page, turned whichever way prints it largest. **Export Excel** saves the plan as a spreadsheet.

Back to Dining returns to the dinner.

Dining cards

Print Dining Cards (above the diners list) makes a PDF of fold-over place cards, one per diner, with his name, his starter, main course and dessert, and any dietary needs, allergies and non-alcohol. Print on card (160gsm or more), cut at the corner marks, fold along the dashed line with the printing on the outside, and stand each card at the diner's place as a tent with the fold at the top. The top half prints upside down on purpose: once folded, both sides read the right way up. The table cards from the seating plan (Print → Table Cards) fold the same way.

Export Excel

Export Excel (above the diners list) saves the diners, with their choices, dietary needs and paid status, as a spreadsheet for the venue or the Treasurer.

9. Reminders, WhatsApp, thank-you and meal feedback

Lodge Secretary can send e-mails for you automatically, through the lodge's own Google account. It does this with a small helper called the **Messenger**, which runs inside Google (so e-mails still go out when your computer is switched off).

9.1 What the Messenger sends

- **Booking confirmation** — when someone books on the Google booking form, they get an e-mail with their booking reference and how to pay. New bookings are checked every 15 minutes.
- **Reminders** 7, 3 and 1 day(s) before:
  - Lodge meetings — sent to all members
  - Festive Boards — sent only to the people who have booked
  - Lodges of Instruction — sent to all members (this one is **off** until you switch it on)
- **Thank-you** — the day after a Festive Board, everyone who dined gets a thank-you e-mail. If you have made a meal feedback form (9.4), the link to it goes in this e-mail.

If one person has several things due on the same day, they get **one combined e-mail**, not several.

Daily limit: an ordinary Gmail account can send about 100 e-mails a day (a Google Workspace account about 1,500). Anything over the limit is sent the next day.

9.2 Setting up the Messenger (once)

1. Go to **Settings → Forms, Payments & Messages**. Make sure you are signed in to the **lodge's** Google account (the same one you use for the booking forms).
2. Tick which messages you want (booking e-mail, reminders for meetings / Festive Boards / LoIs, thank-you).
3. Choose the **from** hour — the time of day the e-mails start going out (default 9 am; they are sent between that hour and 9 pm).
4. Click **Create the Messenger**. A Google script page opens.
5. On that page choose **install** in the list of functions at the top and press **Run**. Google asks you to allow the script to send e-mail and read the form — click **Allow** (if Google warns that the app isn't verified, choose *Advanced → Go to …*; it is your lodge's own script).
6. Come back to Lodge Secretary and click **tell Lodge Secretary it's done**.
7. To check it works, choose **testEmailToMe** in the same list on the script page and press **Run** — you will receive a sample reminder.

Keeping it up to date: when you change members, meetings or dinners, Lodge Secretary sends the Messenger the fresh details automatically while your computer is on. You can also click **Update now** at any time.

Other buttons: Open the script page (to look at it in Google), **Disconnect** (Lodge Secretary forgets the link). To stop all e-mails completely, open the script page and run **uninstall** first, then Disconnect.

9.3 WhatsApp reminders (tap to send)

WhatsApp messages can't be sent automatically, so Lodge Secretary prepares them and you tap to send:

- In **Settings → Forms, Payments & Messages** there is a list of everything in the next 14 days. Each line has a **WhatsApp** button (opens WhatsApp with the message ready — you choose the person or group and press send) and a **copy** icon (copies the text so you can paste it anywhere).
- If you have saved the lodge's WhatsApp group link, **Open the lodge WhatsApp group** takes you straight there.

- On a dinner's page, **Share this dinner (tap to send)** prepares a message with the date, menu, price and booking link.

9.4 Meal feedback

On the dinner's page, in the feedback panel:

- **Create a Google feedback form** — makes a short form: ratings from 1 to 5 for overall, food, service and value for money, a comments box and an optional name.
- Then you have **Open feedback form**, **See the feedback** (shows the average scores and all comments) and **Copy link** (to send it yourself).
- **Using Cognito instead:** paste the link of your Cognito feedback form and click **Save**. You can change back with **use a Google feedback form instead**.

The feedback link is added to the thank-you e-mail automatically.

10. Dining Secretary, capacity, troubleshooting and common questions

10.1 Letting the Assistant Secretary run the dining

If your Assistant Secretary looks after the Festive Boards, you can hand the dining over to them.

1. On the **Secretary's** computer go to **Settings → Access Control**. Under **Designate Asst Secretary as Dining Secretary** click **Enable**.
2. Tell the Assistant Secretary. Their computer must have the lodge's encryption key (the **.lskey** file) installed, so their dining backups can be uploaded encrypted to Google Drive.
3. The Assistant Secretary now adds dinners, diners and payments on **their own** computer. Only dining data is shared; the Secretary's computer stays in charge of everything else.
4. On the Secretary's computer the dinner shows **Dining managed by Asst Secretary** and is **view only**. To see their latest changes click **Sync from Asst Secretary** on the Dining page.
5. To take control back, go to **Settings → Access Control** and switch the delegation off.

10.2 Limiting the number of diners (capacity)

- When you create the Google booking form, set **Maximum Capacity** (default 66).

- The dinner's page then shows a **Capacity Management** panel with the maximum, the number booked, and whether the form is **Open** or **Closed**. Click **Refresh Status** to update it.
- When the limit is reached the form **closes itself** and stops taking bookings.
- If someone cancels, remove them from the diners list and click **Reopen Form** so new bookings can come in.

10.3 Troubleshooting

Problem	What to do
"Wrong Google account" message	Sign out and sign in again with the **lodge's** Google account — the one that owns the forms. Lodge Secretary blocks other accounts so bookings don't end up in the wrong place.
People say the form won't open, or says it is not accepting responses	On the dinner's page open the form options and click **Update form title & description** (this also re-publishes it), or open the form in Google and switch on **Accepting responses**. Check the Capacity panel too: the form may have closed because it is full.
Messenger or capacity set-up fails with "Apps Script API"	Go to script.google.com/home/usersettings (signed in as the lodge), switch **Google Apps Script API** on, and try again.
A payment wasn't matched automatically	The payer probably didn't use the booking reference. Find the diner and tick **Paid** yourself.
A name appears in red	It's a possible duplicate booking. Check, and remove the extra one.
A member shows as a visitor	Their name on the form didn't match the membership list (e.g. "Bill" instead of "William"). Remove and add them again with **Add Member**.
Cognito import adds nothing	Make sure you downloaded **Entries → Export → Excel** from Cognito. Bookings already on the list are skipped on purpose, so a second import of the same file adds nothing.
You need to change a diner's choices	Click the **pencil** icon on their line, make the change and click **Save Changes**. Their booking reference and paid status stay the same.

10.4 Common questions

Do I have to use a booking form? No. You can add every diner by hand (section 6) and still use payments, Who's Dining, seating, cards and reminders.

Google form or Cognito — which should I use? Google is free, built in and fully automatic (bookings come in by themselves, booking e-mails are sent). Cognito looks more polished and can take PayPal payments on the form, but you bring bookings in by downloading the Excel file.

Does an import ever change or remove diners I've already got? No. Imports only add new bookings. Paid status and anything you typed yourself are never changed.

Where does the money go? Straight to the lodge: by bank transfer to the account you entered, or by PayPal to the lodge's PayPal account. Lodge Secretary never handles money.

What if my computer is off? The Google booking form, booking e-mails, reminders and thank-yous all run in Google and keep working. New bookings are brought into Lodge Secretary the next time you open it.

Can I print everything for the night? Yes: the Who's Dining list, the seating plan, the dining cards and the Excel export of all diners (name, type, lodge, invited by, each course, dietary needs, allergies, contact details and payment status).

Do dinner visitors count in the attendance report? Yes. Because they're added to that date's E-Attendance record automatically, the E-Attendance **Export PDF** counts them, lists who invited them ("J Dunn (3 visitors)") and which lodges they came from, for each meeting, each year and the whole period.