

Building on strong foundations

Our impact 2021/22

The Freemasons' charity

Masonic Charitable Foundation

Building on strong foundations

On behalf of Freemasons, we build better lives by providing grants to individuals in need and charities that help communities in England, Wales, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and internationally.



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Message from
the Chairman and Chief Executive



Welcome to our 2021/22 Impact Report

We are pleased to report another exciting and successful year at the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF, the Freemasons' charity). During 2021/22, new projects have been launched; new partnerships established; we have responded to national and global events; and we have continued to respond to the impact of COVID-19.

One of our biggest activities this year was unexpected: responding to the growing humanitarian and refugee crisis in Ukraine. On behalf of Freemasonry, the MCF reacted within days of the invasion with a grant of £50,000 to the British Red Cross. The MCF and UGLE then launched a fundraising appeal within Freemasonry that raised £500,000 within days with funds allocated to support the work of aid agencies working in the affected areas, as well as initiatives and projects in England and Wales. It has been incredible to see how much Freemasonry has stepped up!

This year we also celebrated our strategic partnership with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award at a special event in Freemasons' Hall in the presence of HRH the Duke of Kent, Grand Master, and HRH the Earl of Wessex. The grant of £300,000 was funded by Freemasons through an appeal in 2021 in memory of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, a Freemason for over 60 years. This funding will allow over 30,000 children and young people with special educational needs to take part in the highly regarded Duke of Edinburgh's Award and we look forward to exploring further opportunities to support them in the future.

As we conclude our first five-year strategy, it is remarkable to think of all that the MCF has achieved. More than 8,000 households have been supported, in addition to more than 3,000 charities across England and Wales that received a grant from the MCF on behalf of Freemasonry. In total, our charitable support over this period has exceeded £100M.

Throughout this time, we have continued to work alongside our partners, including the RMBI Care Co. and its 17 Care Homes across England and Wales – in 2021/22 we provided charitable support for 222 residents. We also stepped up our practical assistance to Lifelites – a charity established by Freemasonry to provide assistive technology to disabled

children using hospice services – by inviting their team to work within our offices. In addition, the MCF continues to support the national coordination of the 47 regional Teddies for Loving Care programmes across England and Wales that donate teddies for children attending A&E departments.

We want to deliver the same scope and scale of support in the future and have started to develop strategic plans that will direct the MCF's charitable activities over the next few years. An important aspect of the strategy development process is the need to compliment the aims and objectives of the United Grand Lodge of England. We look forward to discussing these proposals within Freemasonry – in particular at our AGM and Members' meetings – as well as our partners in the charity sector and beyond.

We will of course be preparing this new strategy during a growing cost-of-living crisis and our Masonic Support team is looking at ways to provide extra help to those hardest hit. As always, the MCF remains here to help people with financial, family, health or care needs and offer funding for charities through our grants programmes. We are very much open for business. If you or someone you know might benefit from our support, please do not hesitate to contact us.

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of our former President, Richard Hone QC. Richard had only recently retired as our President following 19 years of service to the MCF and previously The Freemasons' Grand Charity. Richard made an enormous contribution to our work and will be greatly missed. We welcome James Long TD who was appointed President of the MCF in April 2022 and look forward to working with him as we begin to develop our new strategy. On the wider Trustee board, we marked the retirement of Ian Sabin, Tim Dallas-Chapman and David Watson – we thank them and wish them all the best for the future.

Finally, following the suspension of activities during the pandemic, it has been a pleasure to see Freemasons meeting in Lodges and at social gatherings once more. In particular, we have enjoyed attending the final events of Festival Appeals which continue to raise vital funds for our work – thank you to all our supporters and donors.

We hope you enjoy reading this Impact Report and agree that the Masonic Charitable Foundation, the Freemasons' charity is truly building better lives.

Sir Paul Williams, OBE, KStJ, DL
Deputy President and Chairman

Les Hutchinson
Chief Executive

Our year
in brief 2021/2022

Funded entirely through the donations of Freemasons, their families and friends, we responded to the needs of disadvantaged people and communities across England, Wales, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and internationally.

In 2021–2022 we awarded:

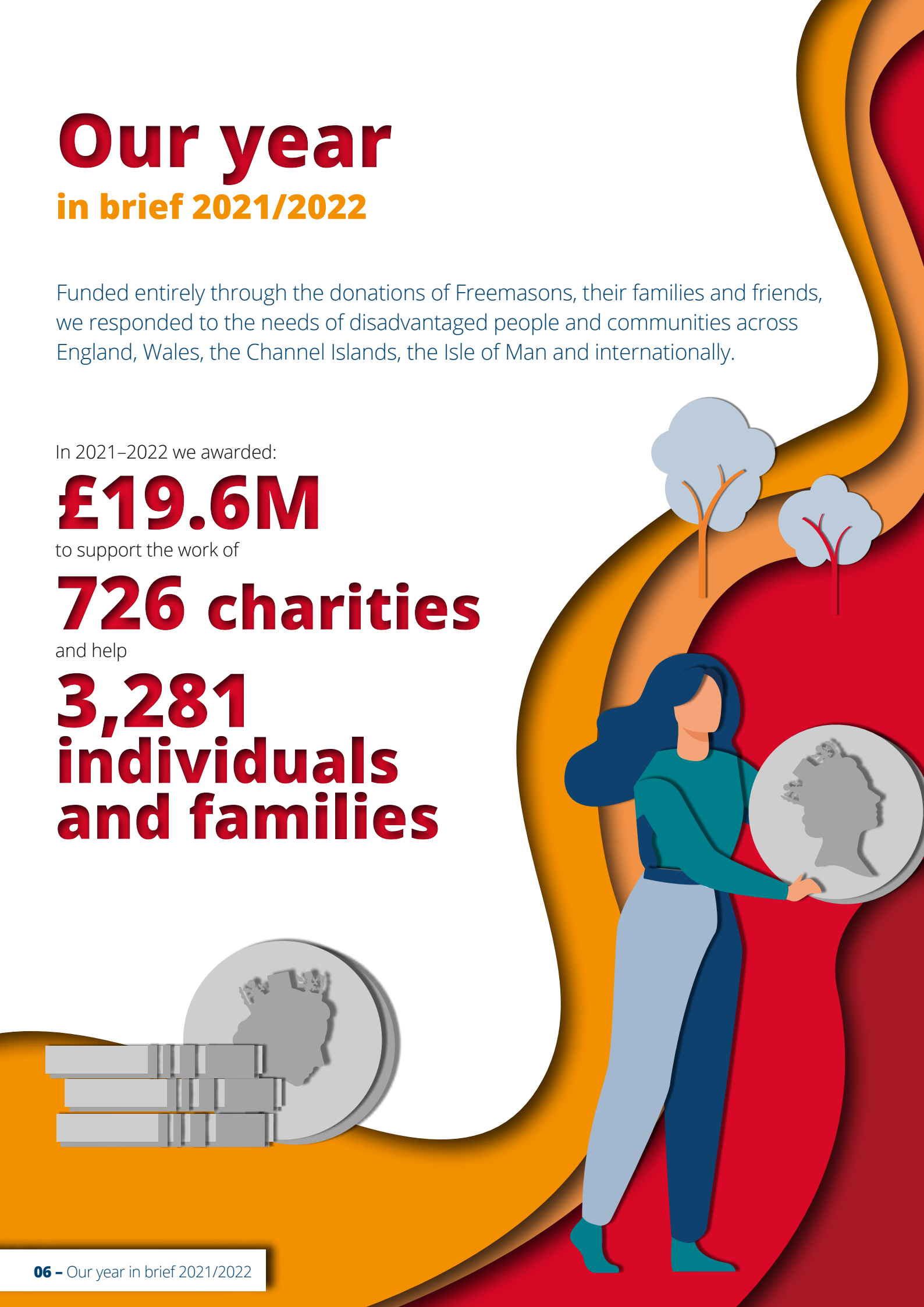
£19.6M

to support the work of

726 charities

and help

3,281 individuals and families



Our year in numbers

798

grants awarded to charities to tackle some of society's biggest challenges

18,290

enquiries answered from people asking for help

4,902

grants awarded to help individuals and families

1,355

visits to applicants completed by **323** trained volunteers



£234,000

given immediately in response to nine natural disasters, to make sure we were helping people when they need it the most

What we said
we would do in 2021/22



Supporting those in need

Goal:
We will review our enquiry service to ensure we can best meet the needs of those approaching us for support.

Why:
We have seen a year-on-year increase in calls and emails to our enquiry service and wanted to ensure we have the systems, processes and people in place to meet this demand.

Status:
Achieved. We started by listening to the needs and experiences of callers to our enquiry line. We then invested in a new telephone enquiry system which gives our staff greater visibility of callers trying to make contact and a much better experience for those waiting to be answered, wanting to leave messages or request a callback. We now know when our busy and quiet times are and can ensure we have trained people available when needed.

Goal:
We will implement an updated package of support for children and young people with mental health illnesses.

Why:
This has been a long held ambition but we were unable fully to achieve the objective during the first year of the pandemic.

Status:
Almost achieved. The complexities of providing support to children and young people with mental health illnesses meant that it proved difficult to offer the consistent, quality service to which we aspire. We are continuing to investigate alternative approaches to how we can help and, in the interim, are providing funding for interventions identified by families in need as opposed to providing a service directly.

People and volunteers

Goal:

We will host a national Metropolitan and Provincial Grand Charity Steward's conference for our regionally-based volunteers.

Why:

We believe that there is value in bringing our volunteers together to offer support and guidance, share experiences and to learn from one another.

Status:

Achieved. We hosted our first in-person two-day conference since the outbreak of COVID-19, bringing together over 100 volunteers in Bristol to support them in their vital work as fundraisers supporting what we do.

Goal:

We will support our staff to adapt to a new hybrid working strategy that allows them to benefit from greater flexibility in how and where they work while continuing to meet the needs of those we are here to support.

Why:

During lockdown we learnt that our staff didn't need to be in the office every day to continue to deliver a high quality service to those we support, our donors and the wider masonic community. We wanted to explore ways that we could embed the perceived benefits of remote working into our weekly routines.

Status:

Achieved. We entered into a year-long trial of hybrid working which allowed for up to two days of working from home for the majority of our staff where their role allowed. The impact of the trial will be evaluated in late 2022.



Supporting charities in partnership with Provinces

Goal:

We will enhance our relationships with Metropolitan and Provincial charity representatives and develop more regular contact and long-term relationships with the local charities that we support.

Why:

We want to do all we can to help build strong, positive relationships between local charities and Freemasons in their communities.

Status:

Almost achieved. Although Provincial and Metropolitan Charity representatives could not visit charities due to COVID-19 restrictions, relationships continue to strengthen through an induction programme and more engaged communication between staff and charity representatives. Further engagement is planned for the year ahead.

Goal:

We will review our application process for charities.

Why:

We want to ensure we have efficient systems in place to shorten the application process timeframe and ensure greater impact.

Status:

Achieved. We introduced a more streamlined, rolling application process which allows more charities to complete a short expression of interest and speak directly with a member of the team, shortening the amount of time and effort charities spend completing application forms. We have also shortened our application time frame with more regular grant panels and committee meetings to provide a quicker outcome for applicants.



Reaching out

Goal:

We will work closely with the United Grand Lodge of England to deliver a shared vision for how the MCF can support those in need and promote the many positive aspects of Freemasonry.

Why:

The MCF is solely funded by the masonic community and they remain our primary beneficiary group. We believe we have a role to play in helping society to better understand Freemasonry and what it gives back to the community.

Status:

Achieved. Through our promotional activity we always seek opportunities to reemphasise the positive aspects of Freemasonry and how these are reflected in our grant making, support and services.

Goal:

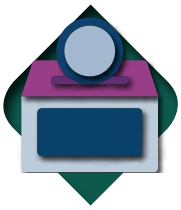
We will introduce Communication Champions across the charity.

Why:

The Champions will bring our teams closer together and increase shared understanding of each other's activities, breaking down barriers and building stronger relationships to make the charity more effective.

Status:

Achieved. We now have 12 Champions meeting regularly and benefiting from dedicated communications workshops.



Fundraising

Goal:

We will develop a donor engagement strategy that will recognise how highly we value our donors.

Why:

It is important that we understand what motivates and engages our supporters to help us to build long-term trust and mutual respect.

Status:

Achieved. Our donor engagement strategy is now in place and helping us to building stronger relationships on an individual and collective basis.

Goal:

We will create a fundraising toolkit for our fundraisers.

Why:

We want to equip our fundraisers with the skills, guidance and best practice to help them maximise returns from their fundraising activities.

Status:

Achieved. The Charity Stewards' Guide, produced in partnership with the United Grand Lodge of England, has become an invaluable toolkit for our fundraisers to learn from and use.

Spectrum
of support

Making the greatest impact at a local and national level, and overseas.

We continue to help support disadvantaged communities and individuals in England, Wales and the Channel Islands, as well as overseas Districts – through our emergency grants.

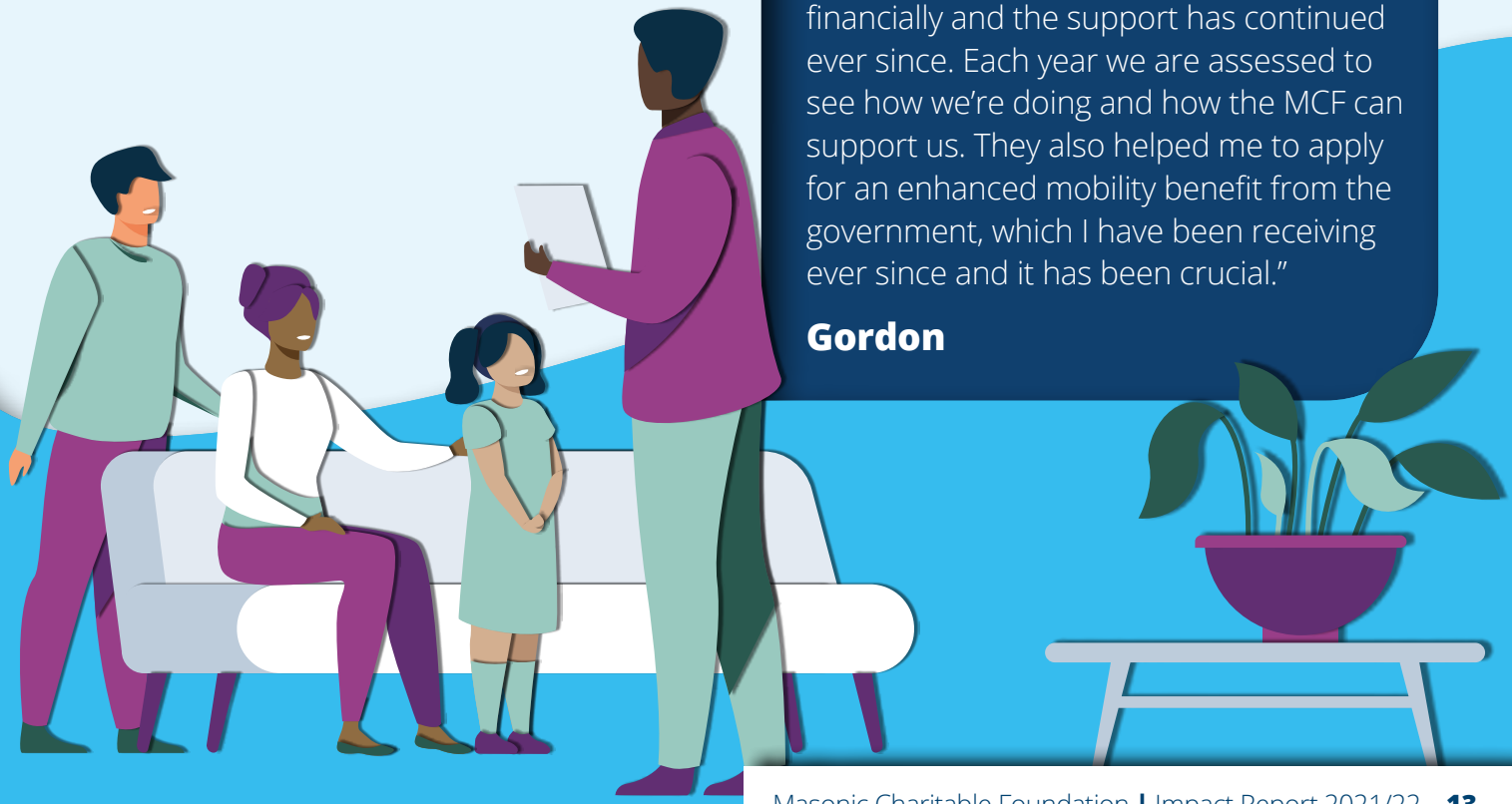
All our work is fully-funded by Freemasons, their families and friends. Without their generosity, we would not be able to respond to need and tackle some of the most important issues by offering daily living, educational, health, care and wellbeing support for the most vulnerable members of society.

Support for daily living

We provided **2,485 grants** at a total cost of **£7,607,612** to **1,741 families and individuals** struggling with the cost of everyday living.

"It got to a point where I didn't know what to do, so I rang up the MCF in a state after reading about the help that was available in their Better Lives magazine. They were brilliant. The lady on the phone really calmed me down and the area representative, Denise was extremely helpful. They returned my call in two days as promised, and put me in touch with my local Provincial Grand Almoner who came over and offered me support. This made the process so much smoother as he went through the form with me, and we kept in touch after this. I cannot thank the MCF enough for what they did for my wife and I – we quickly received a grant to help us financially and the support has continued ever since. Each year we are assessed to see how we're doing and how the MCF can support us. They also helped me to apply for an enhanced mobility benefit from the government, which I have been receiving ever since and it has been crucial."

Gordon



Support for children, young people and education

We provided **837 grants,** amounting to **£1,695,800 to 505 children and young people** to ensure they had access to the same educational opportunities as their peers.

"After my daughter, Amie was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukaemia (AML), I reached out to my Provincial Grand Almoner for financial support as she had no income and we needed to help provide for her and her children who had moved in with us. The grant we were given helped us cover the cost of a laptop and printer for our grandson Giorgio who had to learn from home during the pandemic. The MCF also offered us support for covering the costs for transport which increased massively once the kids went back to their school and had to travel from our home. Amie is now in full remission from AML and has recently moved out with her two sons. Whilst life isn't easy, the ongoing support from the MCF has helped her financially."

Paul and Amie

Support for health, care and wellbeing

We provided **1,580 grants** to **1,035 people** at a cost of **£4,255,238** to help them live healthier and more independent lives.

Of these, **308** were people struggling with life's challenges have accessed our free and confidential counselling service at a cost of **£310,476.**



A dive into our grants to charities

Over the past year, Freemasonry and the MCF have worked together to increase and enhance support for local and national charities in England, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man to help tackle some of society's biggest challenges.

We are proud that Freemasons, through our work, awarded

798

grants to over

726 charities

totalling

£5,866,981



The year's highlights



Age UK

In the last year, we continued to support Age UK by funding their Later Life Goals programme, which delivers individually tailored support to older people going through major transitions in their lives, whether this is a serious health diagnosis, bereavement of a spouse, a partner going into care, or any other key event that will have a serious impact on their wellbeing. The £1 million grant has improved the circumstances and quality of life thousands of older people.

So far, 9,388 older people have been supported with information and advice and over £18m in unclaimed benefits were identified by the Age UK team. Ninety-eight per cent of the people supported said they are satisfied with the services received and 97 per cent found their help useful.

"At Age UK we are incredibly grateful to the MCF for funding our Later Life Goals programme. We've provided these older people with in-depth advice, and where possible, we've done this in their own home. Our advisors have had the time during these visits to really listen and get to know the older person and all the problems they are facing. In addition to the advice provided, the programme has helped people to feel less lonely and isolated. We've helped people with health and care needs, with housing and form-filling, and many more things besides. This support has been life-changing for so many of these older people, who were facing seemingly impossible situations, and they've told us that without Age UK's help they just don't know how they would have coped.

With many of the older people we've supported, there's been an element of financial help, and in total we've identified over £18million of unclaimed benefits. Older people tell us every day that they are worried about being able to pay the bills and buy the basic things they need. This extra money in people's pockets has reduced anxiety and worry and might avoid them having to choose between heating and eating as we move into the colder winter months. Thank you to everyone at the MCF for your donation, which has made a huge difference to the lives of older people."

Alison Ingram, Head of Wellbeing Services

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

In partnership with the United Grand Lodge of England, we have become a strategic partner of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) by funding a new national programme with a £300,000 grant to upskill its team and volunteers. The programme will also help enrol more schools and clubs, to ensure all young people have access to DofE.



The grant will enable the charity to reach at least 30,000 young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) by 2024. The ambition is to increase the number of centres, such as schools and youth groups, offering DofE to young people with SEND and train hundreds of Leaders – trained individuals supporting groups of young people through their DofE journey.

"

By the end of 2026, as set out in our 5-year strategy, we want to give one million young people the chance to participate in a life-changing DofE programme. The grant from the MCF is contributing to this ambition by enabling us to make the Award more relevant and accessible for young people with additional needs.

We have made positive progress within the first year of this 3-year partnership. We have been able to support specialist centres start the DofE for the very first time and have been able to provide additional training to staff, as well as begin a Gold Award expedition pilot programme for young people with additional needs. This first year has been focused on developing strong foundations for our work in this area for the future.

The generosity of the MCF is making a huge difference to the way young people with additional needs view the world and themselves."

Catherine Woods,
Additional Needs UK Development Manager

Refuge

We have responded to another big issue in society: domestic abuse. More than one in four women in England and Wales experiences it at some point in their lifetime and the national charity Refuge, help thousands of survivors to overcome the physical, emotional, financial and logistical impacts of abuse and rebuild their lives.

We provided **£200,000** to fund a vital helpline, which is at the heart of a strategic and coordinated response to domestic abuse. The service is run 24 hours a day, seven days a week by Refuge and delivered by a team of specialist staff and trained volunteers.

The helpline offers a confidential and non-judgmental service, which supports women in both heterosexual and same sex relationships. They deliver emotional and practical help to women as they begin rebuilding their lives following abuse.



"The MCF has provided essential running costs to Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline, helping us adapt to the huge rise in calls since the pandemic from women experiencing abuse, trauma, and fear. Many of these women are in crisis, with nowhere to turn and no one to speak to for help. At Refuge, we listen to survivors of abuse and believe them without judgement. We provide callers with information and advice so that they feel empowered to take the next steps towards rebuilding their lives after abuse.

This generous grant has also meant Refuge can help more women find safe accommodation in a refuge, provide extra support for women whose abusers have used technology to control, stalk, harass and threaten them and support the wellbeing of our Helpline staff and volunteers.

Thank you to the MCF for enabling us to be there on the end of the phone for thousands of women each year."

Abigail Ampofo, Director of Service Delivery



How we supported
your local community

As well as supporting charities, Freemasons play an active role in delivering our services at a local level – from volunteering to help families complete their application forms, to assisting us in identifying local charities about which they are most passionate.



798
grants awarded to **726** charities



£5.8M
in grants given to charities



£234k
given in disaster relief grants



3,281
Individuals and families helped with grants



£13.7M
in grants given to individuals and their families



£7.6M
to help cover daily living costs



£4.2M
to support health, care and wellbeing



£1.7M
to support the education of children and young people



308
people accessed our counselling service

The people
behind the numbers

Nurturing the talents of the future generation: Alex's story

Seventeen-year-old Alex was born with cerebral palsy and has been para-swimming since he was eight years old.

Alex saw success very soon after starting his swimming career. The large cost concerned his parents, Helen and Andrew, who were trying to do everything they could to support their son's talent. As a Freemason, Andrew had heard about the support of the MCF so decided to reach out back in 2016, and the support has continued ever since. The MCF was able to provide a TalentAid grant, helping to cover the costs for his school fees as well as travel, accommodation and entry fees for competitions.

When Alex was just ten, he qualified for the national para-swimming championships, winning silver and gold medals. He initially attended a mainstream school, but his talent was such that he needed to be in an environment which specialises in para-swimming. Mount Kelly school offered him that opportunity, however the fees were more than Alex's parents could afford so they turned to the MCF for support. Our help has continued throughout his time at the school and Alex now hopes to begin the next chapter of his education at Loughborough University.

He has also achieved great success recently, including winning three out of four finals at an International Meet in Aberdeen. Most recently, he discovered that he will soon be moving from the England talent path to the British swimming team, which has always been one of his main goals.



> Alex has reached many milestones in the six years he's been receiving support from the MCF, which wouldn't have otherwise been possible. The MCF helped us pay the fees for his specialist school, where he's been given a fantastic swimming programme that has massively helped him develop. He loves it there as they've really embraced him as a pupil with a disability and nurtured his talent in swimming.
>
> "On top of the school fees, the MCF has supported us with grants that have allowed us to bring him to competitions that are either abroad, or the other side of the UK. One five-day trip can cost around a thousand pounds, so without the support, we would have had to miss out on many competitions which would have hindered his success."
>
> **Helen and Andrew**



Supporting local communities: Carers in Bedfordshire's story

Through our grants to local and national charities, Freemasons are helping to tackle some of the most challenging issues facing society. In 2021/2022, we gave £5.8 million to 726 charities across England and Wales.

One of the charities that we helped is Carers in Bedfordshire, who support over 500 unpaid family carers in and around Bedfordshire, providing tailored support to help improve their mental health and to better support their loved ones. Services provided include wellbeing and counselling sessions, a programme of activities and practical advice.

We gave Carers in Bedfordshire £62,453 over three years to fund a project for former carers by providing them access to support workers and peer support groups. The goal of the project is to tackle loneliness that many older people face after losing a loved one for whom they previously provided care.

> "We were delighted to receive a very generous grant from the MCF. With this funding we are giving former carers practical and emotional support. Loneliness is a big problem for former carers, who may have devoted years to caring for a loved one. With the MCF's help, we are bringing them together to make friends and support each other."
>
> **Jolene Macnaughton, Fundraising and Communications Manager, Carers in Bedfordshire**

Volunteers make up the backbone of a charity: Arwyn's story

Visiting Volunteers play such an important role for the MCF, Arwyn speaks explains what they do.



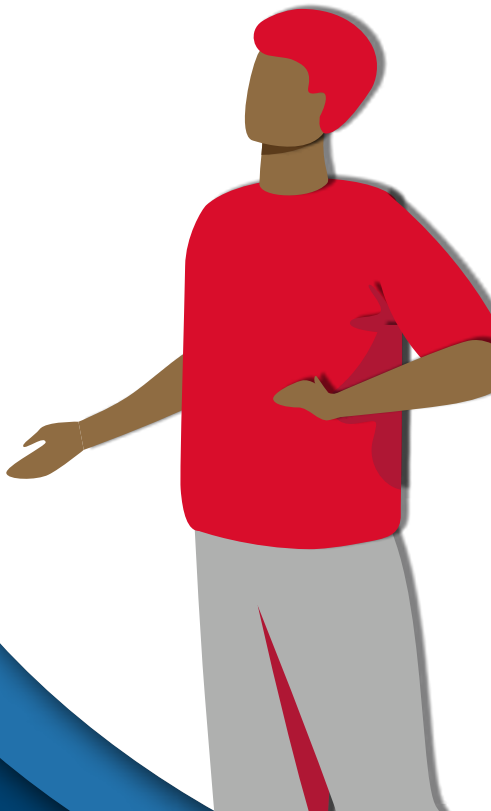
"

Being a Visiting Volunteer requires you to have awareness and understanding. Having an awareness of the people, of the state benefit system and how the local authority can help. We also need to understand the MCF, so we can provide people with the help they need.

The steps involved when helping someone would include a pre-visit phone call. This is an opportunity to build rapport and inform members on what a home visit will entail. The visit itself comprises of a few elements: helping applicants apply for support, collecting important documents and compiling a report for the Grants Team. Occasionally we will arrange a follow-up visit where we will collect additional documents and ensure we have accurate information.

I have been a Visiting Volunteer since 2015, and it has not felt like it's been that long. My greatest satisfaction is understanding the circumstances of people and knowing that the MCF will be able to help and make a big difference to them."

Arwyn



Working in partnership



With Freemasonry

Festival grants

Provinces supporting us through an intensive five-year fundraising period known as a 'Festival Appeal', are now allocated additional funds to support local charities.

22 festival grants awarded totalling **£122,348.**

Matched-funding grants

A Province making a donation can request for their donations (up to a total of £10,000 per year) to be matched-funded by the MCF, thereby doubling the total grant.

392 matched-funded grants awarded totalling **£464,601.**

Regional Group grants

In our final tranche of support offered in response to the impact of COVID-19 on people's mental health in local communities

25 grants were made totalling **£557,813.**

"West Kent launched its 2026 Festival in February 2020. Just six weeks later we went into our first lockdown, potentially disastrous for any fundraising. However not to be beaten we looked to "online" fundraising possibilities and found a new and unusual event 'A Christmas Virtual Balloon Race'. The cost per balloon was set at just £3, with the option to name and decorate the balloon and many members purchased balloons for their children and grandchildren. We could choose the start date and launch area of the race and decided on seven days before Christmas Eve from Father Christmas's Grotto in Lapland to finish at 7pm on Christmas Eve. The event raised just over £5,000 of which we gave £1,250 to two local children's charities, the balance going to our 2026 Festival. The overall outcome was excellent for all involved and we highly recommend it."

Roland Stokes, West Kent Festival team



With the RMBI

In 2021/22, RMBI Care Co. was home to **874 residents**, of whom **222** received additional financial support from the MCF. We increased our annual funding to RMBI Care Co. by **2.8 per cent**, taking our support to **£6.5m** to help ensure the care and safety of all residents, staff and visitors.

"It has been an honour to work with the MCF over the past six years as Provincial Grand Charity Steward for the Province of Devonshire. Devonshire has received generous support from the MCF in recent times including grants totalling over £68,000 from the COVID-19 Community Fund, supporting a range of charities like Samaritans, as well as charitable causes that support foodbanks, victims of domestic abuse, and those living with HIV, and dementia. It has been a true privilege to meet those working with many local charities and to witness, first hand, their hard work, dedication and enthusiasm in supporting those disadvantaged members of our community."

Reuben Ayres, Devonshire Provincial Grand Charity Steward

"An extra helping of festive cheer across Cambridgeshire... In October 2021, the MCF generously offered a matched funding grant for foodbanks and charitable food deliveries over Christmas to help vulnerable people. Lodges in Cambridge, Ely, March, Newmarket and Wisbech following some excellent work by the respective charity stewards, donated towards this grant with matched funding and additional support from the Province of Cambridgeshire's Charity for Care and Relief. The donations were estimated to have helped around 4,500 people across Cambridgeshire during the Christmas period. The MCF was very quick to process the grant applications and all the grants were promptly made ensuring the maximum benefit in time for Christmas."

David G Cameron, Cambridgeshire Provincial Grand Charity Steward

As a Provincial Grand Charity Steward, I am delighted when I receive notice from the MCF that an application from a local charity has been approved, because it reinforces the link between Freemasonry and charity within the wider Cheshire community. It also allows me to fulfil the best part of my role: visiting the charity to make the "official" grant presentations along with leaders of the Province. This allows me to meet some of the most amazing staff and volunteers who dedicate their lives to helping other people, which is a truly humbling experience."

Harry Wright, Cheshire Provincial Grand Charity Steward



With Teddies for Loving Care

Locally-led by Freemasons, MCF provides central support and guidance to the Teddies for Loving Care (TLC) programmes.

After **21 successful years** providing teddies as a source of comfort to children in A&E units, in 2022 we celebrated the total donation of **3M teddies** which helped drive interest from national and local media such as BBC Radio Cambridgeshire and The Peterborough Telegraph.

The engagement on TLC's social media was higher than usual with thousands of people reached through posts celebrating the donation of the teddies.



What our
beneficiaries think

We surveyed 745 individuals to help us understand what our beneficiaries think of our work.



99%

of first-time beneficiaries said that the MCF's staff knowledge and professionalism when responding to their enquiry either met or exceeded their expectations – **3 per cent** increase from the prior year.

77%

felt they were kept informed about the progress of their application and how long the process would take.

91%

of first-time beneficiaries were happy with the length of time it took for their application to be processed – a **6 per cent** increase from the prior year.

90%

of beneficiaries felt the overall process of applying for support was a positive experience.



94%

of beneficiaries felt that, aside from the support they have received, they feel connected or very connected to the MCF – connection is defined as the extent to which they understand the aspects of the wider work of the MCF, outside of Masonic Support.

67%

of beneficiaries feel optimistic often or all of the time following support.

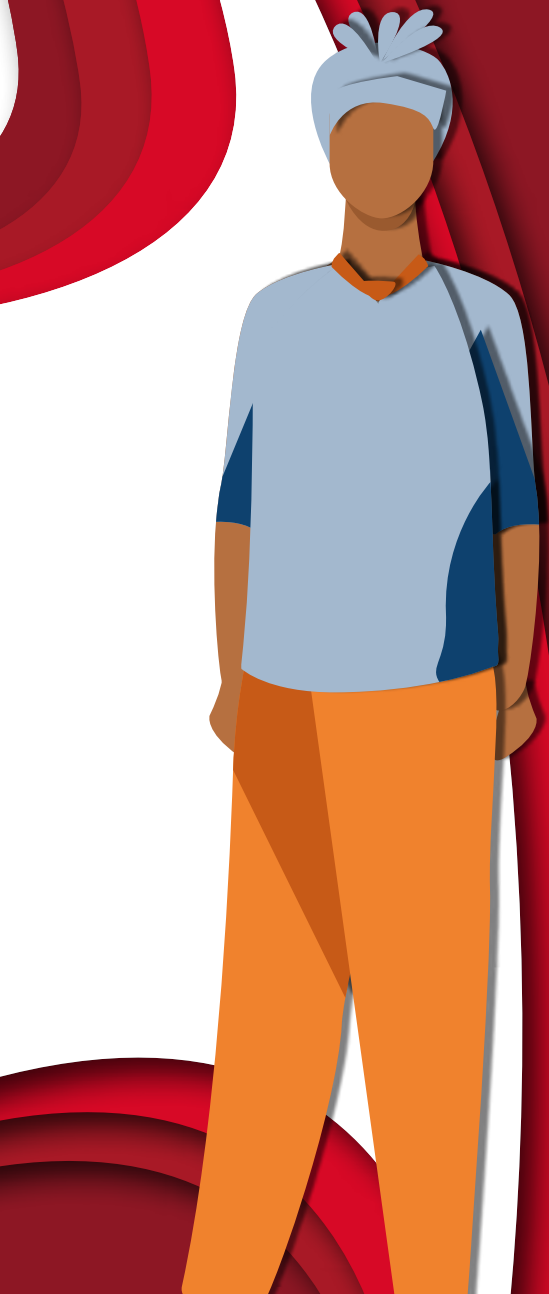
62%

of beneficiaries feel they deal with problems well, following our support.



Thank you to the MCF for the support my family was given, especially to the twins George and Henry. After four years studying mechanical engineering, they both graduated with first class masters degrees and secured jobs. I am very proud of how hard they worked and what they have achieved. Without the grants it would have been so much harder for me, as my husband Tim is no longer able to work following a brain tumour and strokes."

Nicola Woodward



A series of events including COVID-19 devastated our business in its infancy. Then I suffered a heart attack which reduced my ability to work within the company and led to a very negative effect on our finances and mental health. Reaching out to the MCF was literally a lifeline. The support both financially and compassionately has eased our burden. We can now focus on my health recovery and work to build things back up. A helping hand without judgement is a remarkable thing and embodies all that is good in our fraternity."

Adrian Bligh



A review of
our five-year strategy

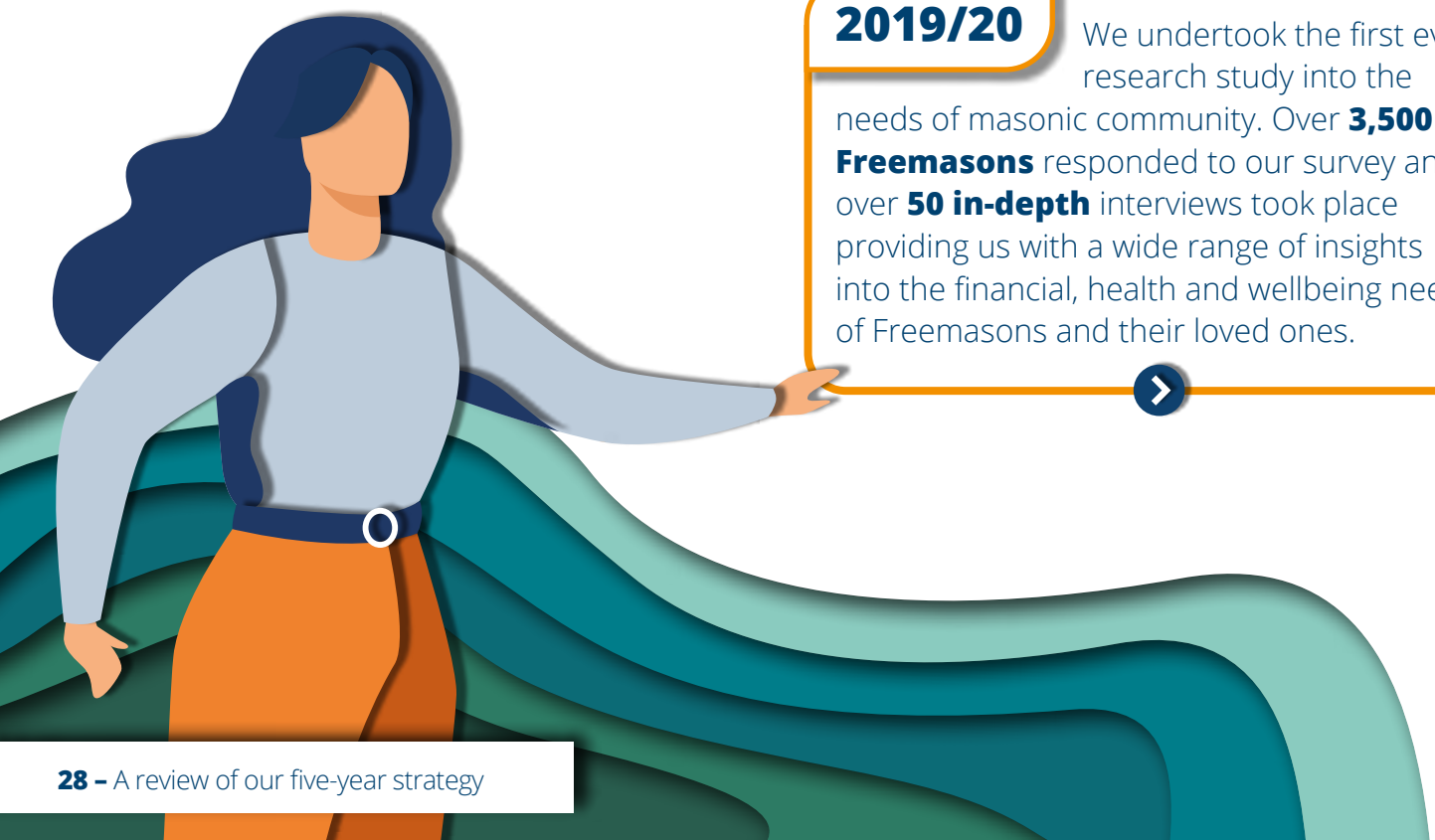
There is much to be proud of when looking back over the five years of our first strategy.

We have awarded **over £100M with more than 30,000 grants** in that time and have achieved almost all that we set out to do.

2017/18 We started with a bang when creating the MCF Community Awards where we awarded **£3M** to **300 charities** to mark the **300th anniversary** of the first Grand Lodge. The programme involved Freemasons across England and Wales choosing **300 local charities** to receive an award, with the wider public voting on the size of grants awarded to each charity, ranging from **£4,000 to £25,000.** We received almost **200,000 votes** from the public, helping to raise awareness of the MCF and the charitable principles of Freemasonry.

2018/19 We increased the number and value of multi-year core grant funding to small charities. We recognised that not all our grants should be project-focussed and that the essential daily costs of running a charity are vital too and charities often struggle to get funding for them. In this year we also began our **£1M three-year partnership with Age UK.** The 'Later Life Goals' project, supported older people who were experiencing a significant event in later life to feel less lonely and get the most out of life.

2019/20 We undertook the first ever research study into the needs of masonic community. Over **3,500 Freemasons** responded to our survey and over **50 in-depth** interviews took place providing us with a wide range of insights into the financial, health and wellbeing needs of Freemasons and their loved ones.

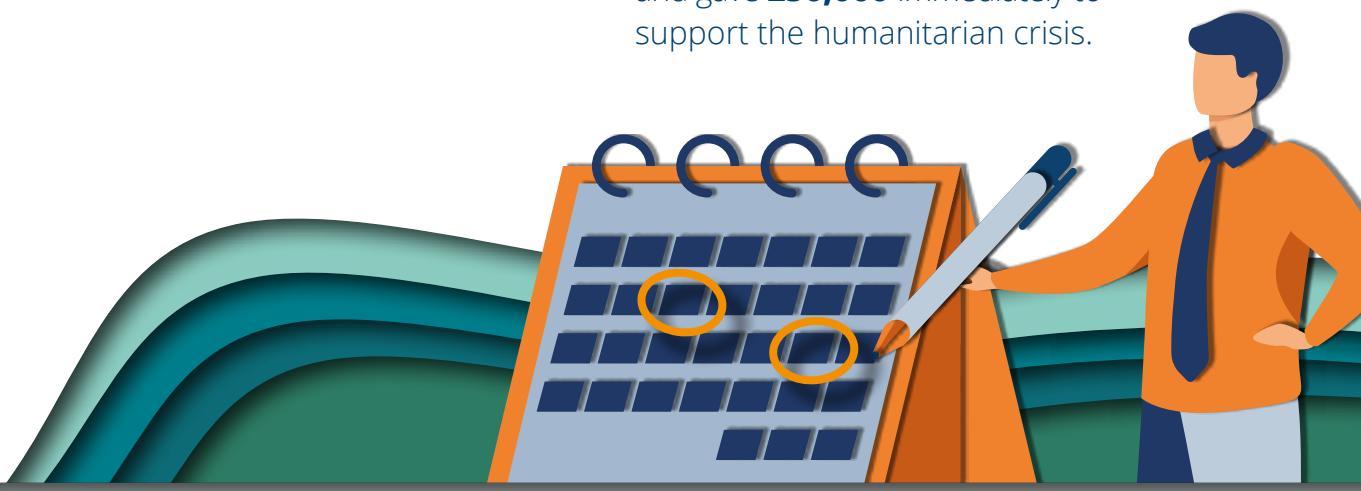


2020/21

This was a year like no other as we responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact that had on the communities we supported. The pandemic was a perfect storm which resulted in a significant reduction in the amount of donations we received as Freemasonry shut down along with the rest of the country, while at the same time demand for support from the individuals and charities rose dramatically. Working in partnership with the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) and Metropolitan and Provincial Grand Lodges across England, Wales, the Channel Islands and overseas Districts, we awarded **£4.7 million** in grants to **support local communities through COVID-19.** During this time the charity needed to be agile and flexible with almost all staff working remotely.

2021/22

This was the final year of our five-year strategy. As in the previous year, we wanted to respond to the impact that COVID-19 had on communities and charities supporting those affected. We are proud to have supported **3,281 families and individuals** and given **798 grants to charities** to fund projects that are tackling some of society's most challenging issues. We partnered with Age UK, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and Refuge and gave them grants totalling **£790k.** Freemasons across England and Wales also stepped up to support their local communities and together with MCF gave **392 matched-funded grants** to help local charities, totalling **£464,601.** We also launched a dedicated appeal in response to the war in Ukraine and gave **£50,000** immediately to support the humanitarian crisis.



Our work doesn't stop here, however, and we know that there is much more we can do on behalf of Freemasonry to help disadvantaged families and communities in the years ahead.

The MCF believes that being an impact-led grantmaker can help us to *build better lives* for those we help directly as well as those receiving help from the charities we have supported.

To do this effectively we need to understand who our beneficiaries are and how their circumstances compare to that of their peers. In 2022 we undertook an analysis of the past five years of support to families and individuals. On the following pages are some of the key findings.

Five years
of impact



The impact of our first five-year strategy
Supporting Freemasons and their families

Over
£66M
in grants awarded

Over
8,000
households supported

Over
1,200
children supported

Over
31,000
grants given

Over
10,000
people helped

Over
3,700
66+ years old beneficiaries supported

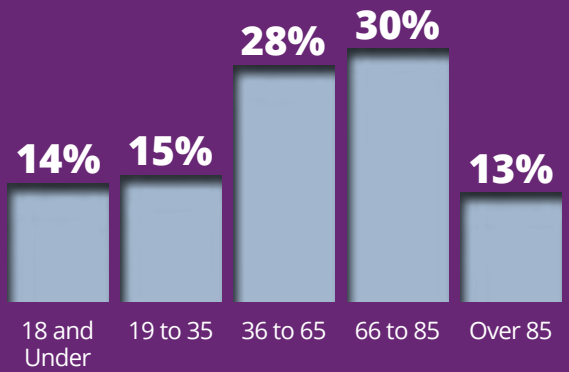
Beneficiaries' gender split



59% Male

41% Female

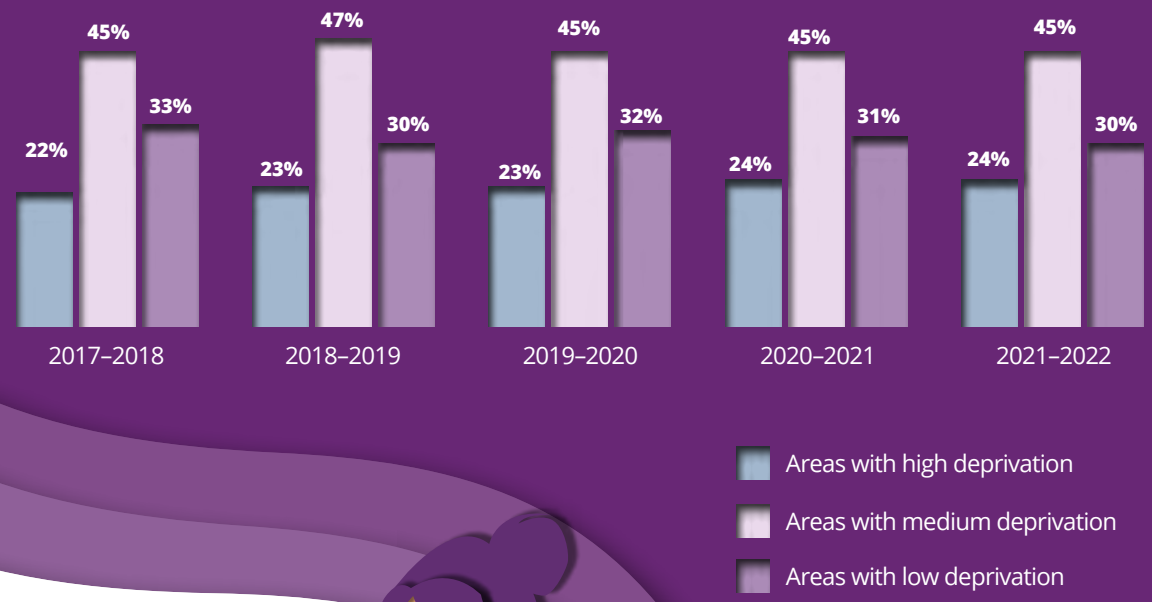
Beneficiaries' age analysis



The ***Index of Multiple Deprivation*** (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation in **32,844** small areas or neighbourhoods in England. We wanted to know how our beneficiaries in England were categorised in the index to understand whether we are directing our support to the most deprived, as might be assumed.

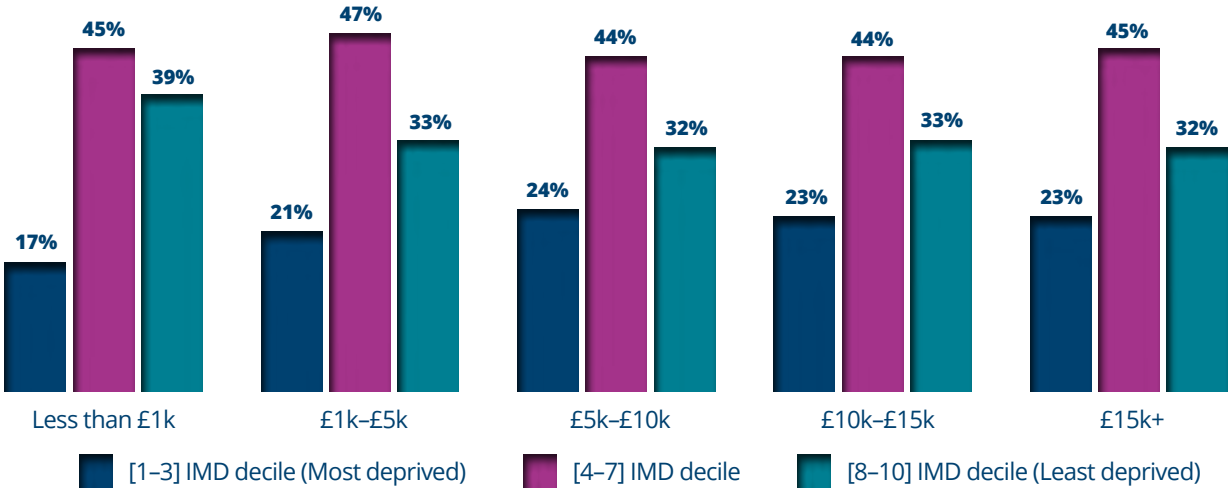
23 per cent of the total value of our grants over five years supported people living in the most deprived areas. Although it might appear that we are not directing enough of our support to those in the most deprived areas, this is a reflection that the levels of household income and savings we allow a beneficiary to hold is higher than most grantmaking charities and therefore our beneficiaries may live in more affluent areas. We also have a separate and more generous financial test for our health, care and wellbeing support which are included here.

Proportion of total grant value by financial year by deprivation indices





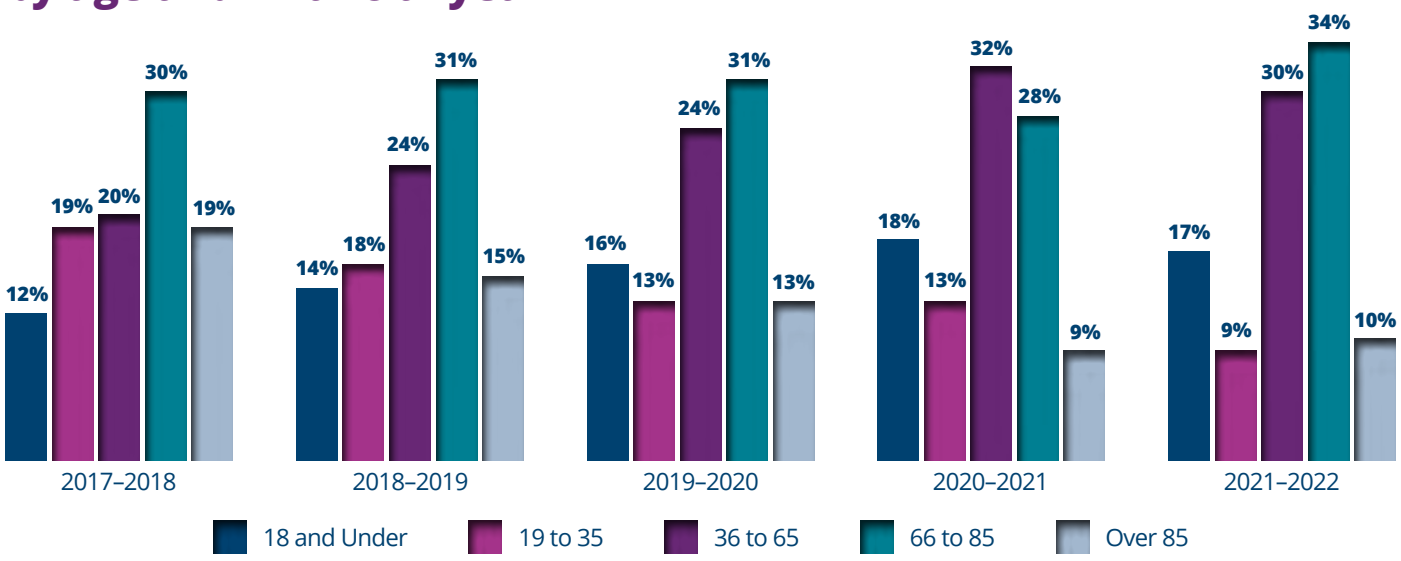
Proportion of total grant amount by grant size and deprivation indices





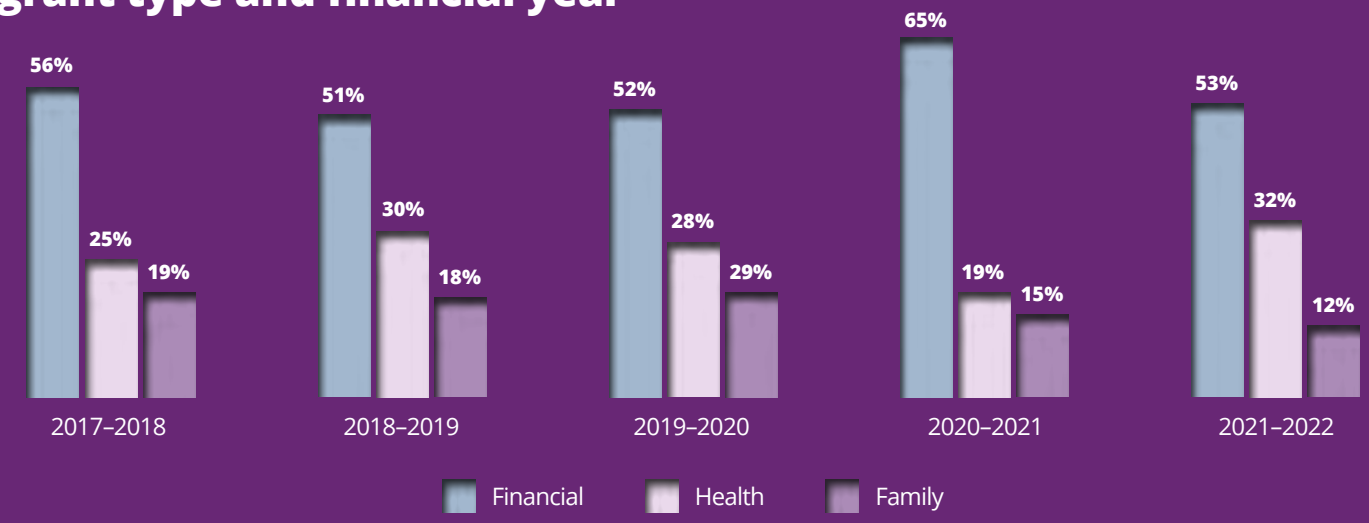
When analysing our support by age group we can see that we have been increasing our support to younger people aged 18 or under and our support to those aged over 85 has reduced.

Proportion of beneficiaries by age and financial year



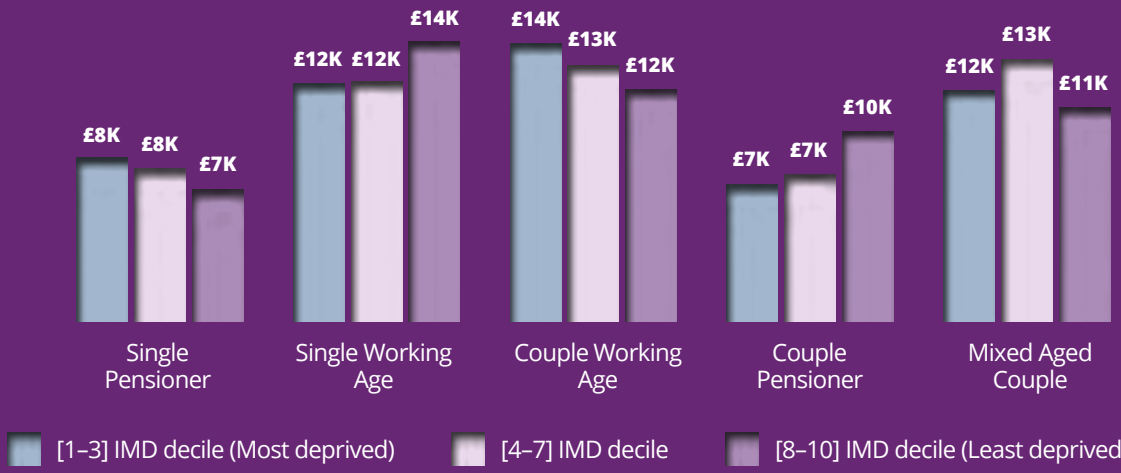
The majority of our grants each year are consistently directed to those in financial crisis. We saw a fall in support for health care needs during the pandemic which rebounded significantly in 2022.

Proportion of grants by per year grant type and financial year



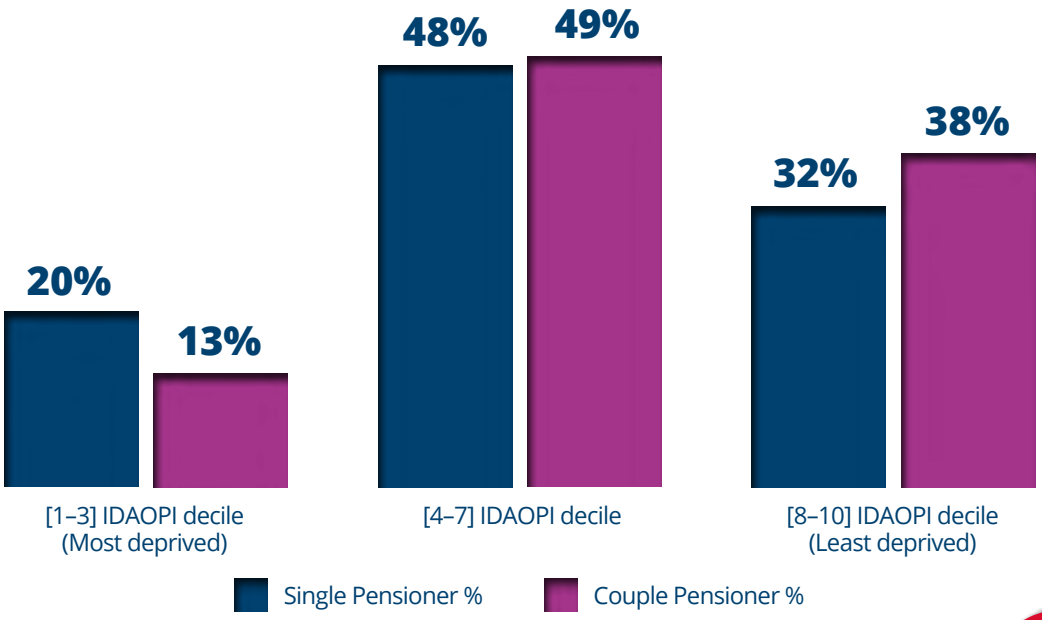
We learnt that we have awarded larger grants to working age households, many of which will have children and therefore higher living costs. We know that many of these households struggle to make ends meet.

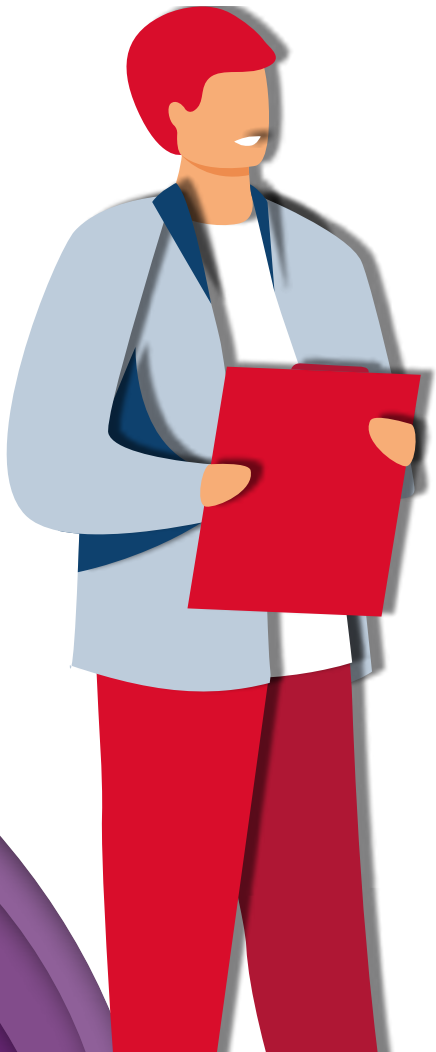
Proportion of grants by household type and deprivation indicies



We identified that only 33 per cent of pensioners we supported were in the lowest Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index (IDAOPI). We are using insights such as these to reflect on how we target our support in different ways to make sure we are reaching people most in need and making a positive difference.

Proportion of pensioners by family status and Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index





Our plans
for 2022/23



Supporting those in need

- We will work with our colleagues at the RMBI Care Co. to pilot new grants for residential care in the North West of England.
- We will work with our partners at Hospice UK to implement a bursary grant programme to hospice staff, providing funding towards the costs of accredited courses that improve patient outcomes.

Fundraising

- We will launch a new community fundraising platform that will enhance and improve the user experience and maximise income from online fundraising.
- We will establish new donor engagement initiatives that will enhance the donor experience, improve our engagement with donors and encourage ongoing donations.

People and volunteers

- We will deliver two induction days for new and recently appointed Provincial Grand Almoners and Grand Charity Steward in partnership with United Grant Lodge of England to help ensure these essential volunteer are equipped with the skills and support they need to carry out their respective pastoral and fundraising roles.
- We will deliver a programme of staff-focused wellbeing activities and support throughout the year, including the promotion of awareness days and highlighting the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion through themed events.

Reaching out

- We will undertake a stakeholder engagement exercise with our supporters and beneficiaries to learn how effective our current strategy has been and to review the key themes from our new strategy as it emerges.



Our profile

The MCF in the media

The MCF seeks to achieve media coverage for our grant-making by working in partnership with UGLE, Provincial Communication Officers and the charities' communications teams to identify and publicise positive news stories.

Through a proactive media relations strategy we aim to keep our donors and the wider public aware of the beneficial impact that our funding provides to charities as well as the people and communities they support. Coverage of the grants we award on behalf of Metropolitan Grand Lodge and Provinces is also helping to transform the public's understanding of Freemasonry as a force for good in society.

In addition, our growing media profile is helping other charities to find out about the MCF's grant-making programmes and apply for funding, thereby increasing our ability to reach and help more people.

This year the MCF was mentioned in **240 newspaper articles** including *The Times, Evening Standard* and *Mail Online*, **reaching an estimated five million people**.



Our finances

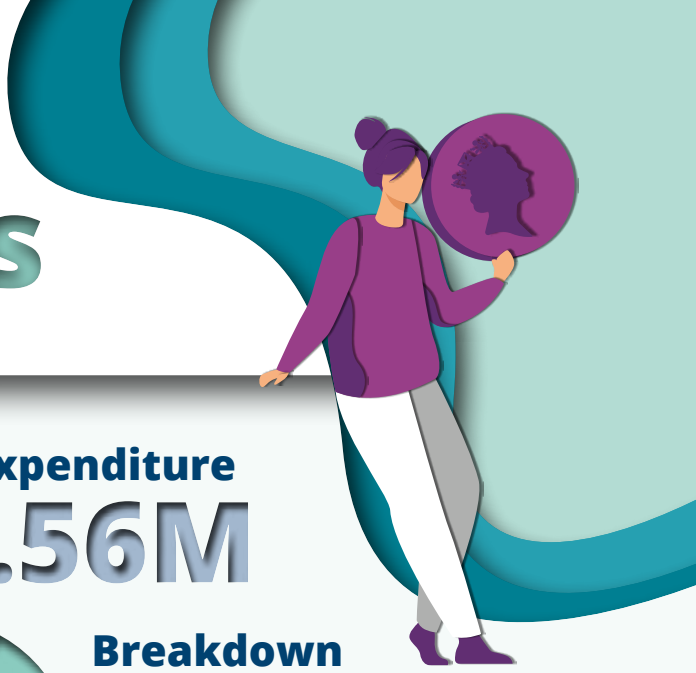
Money in, money out

Our income comes from the generosity and efforts of Freemasons, their families and friends, past and present, and we work hard to make sure that we spend these donations as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Around **54 per cent** of our income comes from the contributions of today's Freemasons, the majority of which is raised through festival appeals, a unique fundraising system where Freemasons in selected Provinces focus their collective efforts on raising funds for the MCF over a period of five or six years.

A further **18 per cent** comes from legacies and the remaining **28 per cent** comes as income from assets that have built up over a long period of time from the generosity of previous generations.

For every £1 spent, 87 pence was paid out in grants and support services for individuals and their families facing difficulty, and charities that work directly with vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society. Only seven pence of every pound represents the costs of generating funds, which includes investment management fees, property costs and fundraising. The remaining six pence is spent on the administration required to deliver our life-changing work.



2021/22 Expenditure

£38.56M



Breakdown

£2.43M Generating Funds

£6.47M Charitable Grants

£12.59M Masonic Grants

£2.70M Masonic Support

£11.81M Charitable Grants

£2.56M Charitable Overhead

2021/22 Income

£26.37M



Breakdown

£6.47M Donations – Festivals

£3.35M Annual Contributions

£4.47M Donations – Other

£2.87M Rental

£4.75M Legacies

£4.46M Investment



About Freemasonry

One of the oldest social and charitable organisations in the world, Freemasonry's roots lie in the traditions of the medieval stonemasons who built our cathedrals and castles.

It is here that a number of the famous elements of Freemasonry find their roots. In the medieval era, stonemasons often travelled around to find work in different locations. To demonstrate their level of qualification, they would use grips, words and signs in order to distinguish themselves from unqualified builders.

Freemasonry uses building analogies to teach members how to lead productive lives that benefit the communities that they live in. In the medieval era, stonemasons wore aprons and gloves to protect themselves while working on shaping rough pieces of stone, but in today's society Freemasons meet to build friendships and communities rather than cathedrals and castles.

Guiding principles of Freemasonry

For Freemasons, there are four important values that help define their path through life: Integrity, Friendship, Respect and Charity.



In today's world filled with uncertainty, these principles ring as true now as they have at any point in the organisation's history.

Integrity – Building good people

Freemasons are focused on building themselves as people of integrity, and membership provides the structure to help achieve that goal. Being a Freemason gives members a sense of purpose, supporting and guiding them on their journey through life. Collectively, members are bonded through an understanding of unity and equitability – principles fundamental to Freemasonry.

Friendship – Building together

Freemasonry provides the common foundation for friendships between members, many of which will last for life. Being a Freemason means something different to each person who joins, but whether looking to make acquaintances or develop their own potential, all members share a sense of togetherness that strengthens their ability to succeed and grow.



Respect – Building unity

Freemasonry brings people together irrespective of their race, religion, or other perceived differences that can divide us as a society. Members are expected to be of high moral standing and are encouraged to talk openly about what the organisation does and what it means to be part of it.

Charity – Building compassion

Kindness and charitable giving are deeply ingrained within the principles of Freemasonry and the organisation provides the structure for members to make positive contributions to their communities and various causes through fundraising events or volunteer work. Individuals can make an important contribution at local, national and global level by giving both their time and money.



For more information on Freemasonry and UGLE visit **ugle.org.uk**

Grand President
HRH The Duke of Kent KG,
Grand Master

President
James Long TD

Deputy President and Chairman
Sir Paul Williams OBE, KStJ, DL

Chief Executive
Les Hutchinson

Operations Director
John McCrohan

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Sinéad Brophy
Simon Duckworth OBE, DL
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Dr Simon Fellerman
Alan Graham MBE
Antony Harvey
Christopher Head
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Charity number 1164703.
Company number 09751836.





Discover how we helped your local community and spread the news!

Scan the QR code to find more information about the impact our work in your Province and download a poster. You can display these in lodges or in offices, share on social media or by email.