



**Masonic**  
Charitable Foundation

# Better Lives

Issue 3 | Autumn 2017

## **Education and opportunity**

Can we help your children  
and grandchildren  
reach their potential?

**Under the Microscope:**  
Prostate Cancer

**A Home from Home:**  
Inside an RMBI Care Home

For Freemasons, for families, for everyone

[www.mcf.org.uk](http://www.mcf.org.uk)



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### Editorial panel:

**Rachel Jones**,  
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**Ernie Greenhalgh**,  
Past-Provincial Grand Almoner  
**Freya Wallace**, Marketing Executive  
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Advice & Support Adviser  
**Suzanne Atkins**, Grants Officer  
**Victoria Lewis**, Beneficiary



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# > Welcome

... from Aimee

“It’s a pleasure to write a guest welcome for this issue of *Better Lives*. The Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) has supported me for six years – you can read my story on page 8.”



For the third year running, child poverty has risen in the UK. Four million children are growing up in families that simply can't afford to pay their bills. Families experience poverty for many reasons – it might be a rise in living costs, or a drop in earnings through job loss or poor health. Whatever the reason,

when a family struggles to make ends meet, children miss out. For some, growing up in poverty means being cold or going hungry, for others it means missing activities like sports lessons or school trips.

Studies show child poverty has long-lasting effects on both educational attainment (just 34% of pupils entitled to free school meals achieve five GCSEs at grade C or above) and on health and life expectancy well into adulthood. Over the next few pages, you can read about some of the ways the MCF encourages opportunity, promotes independence and improves wellbeing for disadvantaged families across England and Wales.

If you're finding it hard to make ends meet, please get in touch with the MCF. Without their help, I wouldn't have been able to pursue my dream career – turn to page 8 to find out what that is!

**Aimee**  
Supported by the MCF since 2011



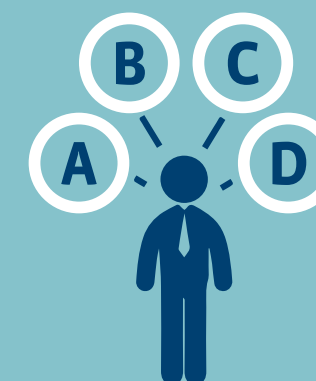
Hello! I'm the *Better Lives* Almoner. I'll pop up from time to time throughout this issue with useful information. If you don't know what an Almoner is, turn to page 14 where I answer your questions about the MCF in my very own column.

 **0800 035 60 90**  **help@mcf.org.uk**

# No need to choose

Many callers to our freephone enquiry line focus on the most urgent issue they are facing, such as a missed mortgage payment or a long wait for an operation. Often, they don't mention any additional problems they are experiencing as a result.

We know that problems don't arise one at a time, so you don't need to choose which of the problems you are facing is most important. We know that illness affects much more than your health while the effects of a reduced income reach further than your bank balance. We are here to help in any way we can.



When dealing with life's unexpected challenges, it can be difficult to know where to start. Whether you've been made redundant, lost your partner or received a medical diagnosis, the knock-on effects often reach all areas of family life. Sometimes, callers to our freephone enquiry line are unaware of the full range of support available, or they don't want to ask for too much at once. Our experienced staff are trained to listen and ask the right questions in order to identify all the ways that we can make your life a little easier.

Robert, a Freemason, first turned to us for financial help following a medical diagnosis.

“Immediately after I was diagnosed with terminal bowel cancer, I was admitted to hospital for treatment. We've always been a month-to-month family and, being self-employed, I was worried how we would pay that month's bills. My brother and Lodge Almoner got in touch with the MCF on my behalf. The charity provided an emergency payment before later assisting with a longer term grant. This instantly lifted a huge weight from my shoulders.”


It was only after Robert returned home that a representative of the MCF visited him and he realised additional support was available for his children.

“The MCF provides termly grants to support my two step-children who are studying for their GCSEs, and my daughter who is studying sociology at university. All three are doing well and it's reassuring to know that whatever happens to me, support for all three children will continue for as long as they are in education.”

Sadly, Robert passed away earlier this year but we will continue to support his family for as long as they need us.

If you are a Freemason or a close relative of a Freemason, and you are facing a challenging period of your life due to financial, health, family or care-related issues, call us today to find out if we can help.

 **0800 035 60 90**

 **help@mcf.org.uk**

On the back page of this magazine is a list of the support available from the MCF – if you need something on the list, or if what you need isn't listed, please call for free today on **0800 035 60 90**, or send an email to **help@mcf.org.uk**.



# New skills and fresh experiences

**Afterschool clubs and weekend classes are a great way to keep children busy and entertained, but did you know they are also a fun way to learn new skills and gain fresh experiences?**

A recent study of more than 6,400 children found that as well as achieving more at school, children who take part in extra-curricular activities develop a number of social, emotional and behavioural skills including:



Children learn how to juggle different tasks and commitments through afterschool clubs, weekend lessons and practising activities in their own time.



As children play or work together outside the classroom, they learn to support and share their own ideas to help and guide others.



Mixing with new or existing friends in a productive environment helps children to strengthen confidence and independence.



When a child joins a club, they sign up for that activity for a specific period of time – this teaches important lessons about committing to something for yourself and your team.



Through extra-curricular activities, children can immerse themselves in fun, hands-on activities that go beyond what they learn in the classroom.



Extra-curricular activities burn energy through physical activity and build healthy habits that can benefit children throughout their lives.

The study, carried out by the Institute of Education at University College London, showed that activities outside the formal school day could help close the attainment gap between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and those from wealthier families.

However, the study also found there were still inequalities as many low-income families struggle to afford the costs associated with sports clubs, private tuition or music lessons.

At the MCF, we promote independence and improve wellbeing for families through grants to cover daily living expenses. For the families we support who have children under the age of 25 and in full-time education, we also encourage opportunity by providing additional grants to cover the cost of extra-curricular activities.



## > The John Family

We have supported Chris, Marina and their children Tanya, Natasha and Rhys during a difficult few years following Chris' redundancy.


Chris: "When things started to get hard for us financially, my wife wanted to seek help, but I was stubborn. Then, things became even harder and that's when I picked up the phone."


"As well as helping us to pay our bills, the MCF covered the cost of gymnastics, dancing and swimming lessons for the children. All three are doing really well because of the classes – especially our son, Rhys. When he first joined gymnastics, the coach told us he had potential

but his fear and lack of confidence were holding him back."

"Now, aged 8, he helps other children in the preschool class and just won silver in his first competition."

Marina: "To any families out there, I would say, one minute you might have everything and then the next minute it could all change. If you are struggling, please pick up the phone."

 **0800 035 60 90**

 **help@mcf.org.uk**



(UCL study: [www.natcen.ac.uk/media/1135440/CLS-WP-2016-Out-of-school-activities-during-primary-school-and-KS2-attainment.pdf](http://www.natcen.ac.uk/media/1135440/CLS-WP-2016-Out-of-school-activities-during-primary-school-and-KS2-attainment.pdf))

# Have you heard about TalentAid?



**Many of the children supported through TalentAid have gone on to become professional musicians, Olympians and West End performers.**

Alongside our main grants, we can also support the children and grandchildren of Freemasons whose exceptional talents in music, sport or the performing arts have potential to develop into a career. We can consider TalentAid applications even if family circumstances means the child would not qualify for support under our core programme.

Through TalentAid, we can assist with ongoing costs such as advanced music or drama lessons or sports coaching. We can also help to purchase one-off items like musical instruments or, as was the case with Grace, Jakob and Finnlay, sports equipment:

They told us: "Funnily enough, we only got into archery after going with Dad to a beginners lesson. Dad is registered disabled and needed a hobby suited to his mobility."

"At first we went along to help him and keep him company but within six months we'd all entered local, national and British competitions and broken records every time! We did all of this with borrowed or second-hand equipment that got some funny looks from our competitors – until they saw us shoot! As time went on, we needed more resources and training to develop as archers but mum and dad just couldn't afford it."

Their dad, Stuart, said: "When I first heard about the MCF I didn't think they'd be able to help as I'm not a Freemason, but my father was a Mason which meant that my children – his grandchildren – were eligible to apply."

"Through TalentAid, the MCF has provided the equipment and coaching the children need to progress to the next level and all three have been scouted by Team GB! Aside from archery, all of them work really hard at school and are doing very well."

**"I truly believe archery has given my children skills to cope in school and life in general, including confidence, dedication and the ability to plan ahead – and they couldn't have done it without the MCF."**

**TalentAid applications for support for the 2018/19 academic year open in November!**

**To find out more about applying:**

 **[mcf.org.uk/talentaid](http://mcf.org.uk/talentaid)**

 **0800 035 60 90**

 **[talentaid@mcf.org.uk](mailto:talentaid@mcf.org.uk)**



# Q The BIG Questions

**Matthew, 25, is a Grants Officer at the Masonic Charitable Foundation. He lives in South London with his friends.**

## My alarm goes off...

...but I'm not very good at getting up in the mornings. I jump in the shower then grab something that I can eat on the train whilst listening to a podcast.

## I'm responsible for...

...medical grant applications. This means reviewing applications; liaising with hospitals; making sure we have all the supporting documents; and keeping applicants updated. Because the issues are medical, the priority is making sure people get help as quickly as possible.

## I got my job...

...by starting at the MCF as an admin temp! I then moved on to help the grants team, and was offered an interview for a permanent position.

**“I finish at 5pm, but if I get an emergency call from a hospital or someone applying for help, I'm always happy to stay late.”**

## My typical day...

...starts by answering emails, and flagging those that require advice from a Senior Grants Officer. Once that's done, I make my first coffee of the day – I drink way too much coffee! I'll then crack on with processing applications, and managing ongoing grants as our work doesn't stop with the award of the grant. I'll then have my second coffee before phoning hospitals to confirm costs, check waiting times and make sure everything is running smoothly. If I'm not too sure about a particular case, I'll sit down with my team and we'll work through it together. I finish at 5pm, but if I get an emergency call from a hospital or someone applying for help, I'm always happy to stay late.

## After work...

...I head home and cook a nice big dinner. I'm quite into cooking so that's my way of unwinding and I tend to get quite carried away with my recipes!

## My most memorable work moment...

...was receiving a thank you letter from the first case I saw from start to finish. The applicant faced a 12 month wait for a knee replacement and was trapped at home, but we managed to get him an operation within three months. There are a lot of memorable moments because I know I've moved someone's life on to a new phase and given them back the independence they'd been missing.

## The hardest part of my job...

...has to be telling someone they don't qualify for support. Sometimes it's because they've got an NHS date within the time frame, which is actually a good thing! We can't help everyone but luckily saying 'no' is very rare. If we do have to turn someone down, we will try to signpost them to other charities or government agencies that may be able to help.

## The best part of my job...

...is helping people – it's important to me that the work I put in will make a massive difference to someone's life. The working environment is also great. We're not just working for the sake of making money; we are all working to help as many people as possible.

## My Top 5

- 1 Theatre
- 2 The pub (can I say that in a work interview?)
- 3 Exploring London
- 4 Travelling
- 5 Philosophy



# MCF Alumni

This summer, thousands of young people graduated from universities across the country and are now embarking on their chosen careers, but with tuition fees at an all-time high, young people from low-income families are increasingly reluctant to apply for a place at university.

Since 1788, when we established a school for orphaned daughters of Freemasons, we have

helped tens of thousands of children and grandchildren of Freemasons reach their academic potential despite difficult circumstances at home.

Over the next two pages are just a few examples of the bright young people we have supported onto career paths in a variety of industries.

**We are incredibly proud of our ever-growing MCF Alumni and wish them all the best in the future.**





**The Engineer**  
Martin

After Martin's parents divorced, his Freemason father, Jim, worried how he would be able to support him financially over the years ahead.

“Thanks to the MCF, I was able to graduate with a first class honours degree in Civil Engineering. The support gave me stability to achieve my goals during a time of great change in our lives. I am now continuing my studies to specialise in structural engineering. In the future, I'd like to combine my knowledge of engineering with humanitarian aid so I can work to make the world a better place.”



**The Sports Performance Analyst**  
Chris

During the financial crisis, Chris' father was made redundant several times. Soon after, Chris started university where he studied Sports Science.

“I knew my dad wanted to support me while I was at uni, but he was struggling so much. The MCF supported me through my Bachelor's degree and my Masters. I now work full time as a Performance Analyst for the Cardiff Blues rugby team and I'm about to start a four year PhD which will run alongside my job - I'll be looking at coach and player feedback relationships.”

“I really am grateful to the MCF - I've had so much support all the way through, and I'm now in a position where I can support myself which I didn't think would be possible.”



**The Clinical Psychologist**  
Aimee

After Aimee's father died at the age of 45, her Freemason grandfather, Frederick, stepped in to support the family through the financial strain that followed. Eventually his savings started to run low and he turned to the MCF to help his granddaughter.

“The MCF made sure I had all the resources and equipment I needed to study. I graduated from Cardiff University with first class honours in Psychology and have since completed my PhD. I've also been accepted to go and study for a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology in October 2017, the goal I had in mind when I was first studying - I've finally got there after nine years!”

“I'm extremely grateful for all of the support from the MCF. They have been fantastic and have enabled me to pursue a career I really love.”



**The Filmmaker**  
Jake

After Jake's parents divorced, he lived with his mum, Joanna. Over the next few years she was diagnosed with breast cancer and was then made redundant. Joanna struggled to afford the basics and was unable to financially support Jake's dream to pursue an education and career in the performing arts.

“During my second year at college, my grandad, who was a Freemason, fell ill. During the last few months before he died, he told me about the help that may be available through the MCF. A week after grandad died, I was accepted as a beneficiary of the MCF and gained a place on my chosen course. It's comforting to me that grandad knew I would be taken care of after his passing.”

“One of the films I produced at university has won seven awards and has been shown at 24 film festivals in places like LA, Russia, France and Toronto. I'm currently working backstage at The Phoenix Theatre in London and also run my own film production company on the side.”

“Without the MCF I wouldn't have had a chance of attending Regent's University and

following my dream of becoming a filmmaker. I hope to become a Freemason one day and give back to the MCF.”



**The Arts Lecturer**  
James

Before he got in touch with us, James was working in McDonald's to fund his degree studies at the Royal College of Art in London. The cost of fees and central accommodation began to spiral and he was unsure how he would continue with his course.

“The support from the MCF allowed me to give up term time work at McDonald's and focus properly on my studies through my Masters and my PhD. The MCF has empowered me to pursue a career in art - something I was worried I wouldn't be able to do after the rise in fees seemed to price me out of education. At the end of my PhD studies I achieved a distinction, and I'm now Dr Green, Arts Lecturer at Cardiff Metropolitan University!”



We can also support young people undertaking apprenticeships as long as they work more than 30 hours a week at less than minimum wage.

If you are finding it difficult to financially support your child or grandchild's education, get in touch today.

 0800 035 60 90  [help@mcf.org.uk](mailto:help@mcf.org.uk)



**The Dentist**  
Jenna

Jenna completed her Biomedical Science degree and was offered a place to study dentistry - something she'd always aspired towards. However, shortly before starting the course, Jenna was told that student finance would not fund her studies and she would have to fund the whole course herself.

“Whilst studying an incredibly intense course, I also had to take on two jobs just to try and make ends meet. Eventually this took a toll on my physical and mental health, and I almost had to drop out of university. My grandfather was a Freemason and told me if I ever needed help, the Freemasons would be there for me - so I got in touch with the MCF and applied for support. The MCF paid for my tuition fees, and I've now graduated as a Dentist with a first class honours. Applying for support was the best decision I've ever made.”

**Did you know?**

We support young people in the wider community to achieve qualifications through our grants to charities that provide educational opportunities for disadvantaged young people. We recently awarded a grant of £170,000 to York Minster Cathedral to fund three stonemasonry apprenticeships.

“The apprenticeship offers me the opportunity to develop my skills while working alongside some of the country's most talented craftspeople.”

- Lewis, Apprentice funded by the MCF





# Under the Microscope: Prostate Cancer



**Professor Colin Cooper, Chair of Cancer Genetics at University of East Anglia, is leading revolutionary research into the diagnosis of prostate cancer. The research has been made possible by £1 million of funding from the Masonic Charitable Foundation.**

Professor Cooper and his team of researchers have successfully identified different forms of prostate cancer – classifications which did not previously exist – and can now begin to trial ground-breaking tests which will directly impact the lives of newly diagnosed men.

You will undoubtedly have heard of prostate cancer, but what exactly is it? What are the warning signs that you should look out for? We went back to basics with Professor Cooper to find out more.

## What is prostate cancer?

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK, with around 44,000 men diagnosed each year. The disease has some critical differences from other cancers – while over half of all men over the age of 60 will develop prostate cancer, only around 10% of these cancers will ever become life threatening. The vast majority of diagnosed prostate cancers are harmless and the £1 million investment from the MCF will help to develop a test to distinguish between these harmless (non-aggressive) and aggressive prostate cancers, meaning treatment can be targeted to the men who actually need it.

## What are the warning signs of prostate cancer?

The early symptoms of prostate cancer include:

- Problems passing urine (getting up many times in the night to go to the bathroom)
- Blood in the urine
- Lower abdominal pain

If you experience these symptoms, it's much more likely that you have something other than prostate cancer, but there is a small chance it could be prostate cancer.

Genetics are an important factor – prostate cancer often runs in families and we know that black men have an increased risk while Asian men have a lower risk, although we don't know why this is the case. Generally, we don't know what environmental or dietary factors cause prostate cancer.

## What are the risks of late diagnosis?

As with any cancer, the earlier you're treated the better. Left undiagnosed and untreated, prostate cancer can spread and become more difficult to treat – you really need to catch it while it is still in the prostate.

## How can men get tested?

If you have symptoms of prostate cancer, getting tested is simple. First, arrange an appointment with your GP, who will do something called a PSA blood test which tests for prostate protein in your blood. If you have an abnormally high level of PSA then you will go for further scans and biopsies to determine if you have prostate cancer.

It's helpful to know that if you are over the age of 50 and see your GP for something completely different that requires a blood test, you have the right for your blood to be PSA screened as well, regardless of whether you are showing any symptoms.

Remember: testing for prostate cancer using PSA screening can detect harmless cancers as well as aggressive cancers – and that's where our research can make a difference.

## Did you know?

Over the last 18 months, we've given £250,000 to cancer charities, supporting their life-saving work.

## Are there any preventative steps that people can take to reduce their risk?

This is a good question and more research is required to answer it. What we do know is that avoiding dairy protein such as milk and consuming more processed tomatoes is good for your prostate. It's also beneficial to eat a special type of broccoli called 'beneforte broccoli' as it has high levels of a chemical called sulforaphane which is believed to protect against prostate cancer. For those already diagnosed, exercise is also good for slowing progression of prostate cancer.

## What treatments are available for men diagnosed with prostate cancer?

There have been many advances in treatment over the last decade such as hormone withdrawal therapy, surgery and radiotherapy. Importantly, once our research into aggressive and non-aggressive forms of prostate cancer has concluded and we have a secondary test for newly diagnosed men, doctors will be able to make a much better informed decision as to what treatment the patient needs. Fingers crossed this will be soon!

## Les' story

As well as tackling prostate cancer on a national scale through our medical research grants, we can also support individuals within the Masonic community who are affected by the condition.

Les, a Freemason for 16 years, was completely unaware he was living with this life-threatening disease. It was only during a routine doctor's appointment that he was offered a PSA blood test.

"The blood test came back showing that my PSA levels were too high. My doctor told me that I should have a scan to investigate further but that it would take a couple of weeks to get an appointment on the NHS. I didn't want to wait, so I decided to pay for an MRI scan and a biopsy privately. This was when my cancer was fully diagnosed –

but I was told I would face a year and a half wait for an operation."

After confiding in his Lodge Almoner about his diagnosis, the long NHS wait and the unaffordable cost of private care, Les found out about the MCF and successfully applied for funding to have his treatment privately. Just three months later he had the surgery he needed.

**"As soon as the word cancer is mentioned, your whole world turns upside down, so who knows what would have happened if I had been forced to wait. I'm just so lucky I caught it early!"**

If you are experiencing symptoms of prostate cancer, please make an appointment with your GP today and enquire about the cancer pathway.

If you are facing a long wait for treatment for prostate cancer and can't easily afford private treatment, please get in touch with us as soon as possible – we may be able to help:

0800 035 60 90 @ help@mcf.org.uk





# >A home from home

Through RMBI Care Co, we care for older Freemasons, their families and many people from the wider community in 17 care Homes across England and Wales. We offer residential care, nursing care and dementia support. We can also provide sheltered accommodation for people who prefer to live independently as well as short respite breaks and day care services.



Our Marketing Executive, **Freya**, went along to Prince Michael of Kent Court in Hertfordshire to meet one of the residents and learn about the care provided for older people living with dementia.



"Mary, shall we pretend to cross the road?"  
"Okay," Mary laughs. "Beep! Beep!"

My visit to Prince Michael of Kent Court in Hertfordshire is full of fantastically funny moments like these. Mary, a resident at the Home, is a quick, warm and intriguing character. She also has dementia.

"I've found that a lot of people with dementia think that they need to go shopping," Hollie tells me as we stand outside the convenience store. "They say 'I need to go and get the kid's clothes' or 'I need to go to the bakers'. The idea behind these shop fronts, and the Dementia Support House as a whole, is to recreate normal, everyday moments."

"I think it's lovely," Mary says when I ask her how she feels about the new changes. "I feel at home which is important, and I've got to know the staff who are all nice."

She flashes a mischievous grin in Hollie's direction then adds: "And she didn't tell me to say that!"

"My relatives all work in care," Hollie tells me. "So, when I was 18 it was the first job I got, and I fell in love with it. Mary, you've been here for two years, haven't you?"

"Yes!" Mary replies. "It's a nice place to live – you get looked after, you get your meals cooked – your hands get nice and soft because you get help with your chores! I have five children, so I did

residents and a florist teaches flower arranging. We even have opera singers – the residents sit in the lounge with a cup of tea and sing along. It really is amazing to see and such a lovely atmosphere, especially when some of them get up to dance."

If you're thinking of an RMBI Home for yourself or a relative, the staff work hard to ensure the process is as seamless and comfortable as possible. First, you can come in and talk to the Home Manager, then have a look around and meet staff and other residents. You can visit as many times as you need before making your decision.



**“Every time my family visit they always say how lucky I am to be here and how jealous they are of it!”**

I have to admit, as a relatively new member of the MCF team, I'm not sure what to expect. At the start of the day, Hollie, a full-time carer at the Home, takes me on a tour of the newly renovated Dementia Support House which has been designed to recreate positive memories for residents and give them a sense of normality. The attention to detail is astounding.

"All of the residents' doors are actual front doors with house numbers on them," Hollie explains. "They're all different colours and styles to make residents feel like they are returning to their own home."

The corridor is decorated with brick-pattern wall paper that's rough to the touch, creating a sense of being outside, walking down a real street.

The garden also recreates a street; there's a zebra crossing with flashing traffic lights and a bus shelter. At the back of the garden is a row of shop fronts.

miss them when I first moved here, but they come and visit me often and take me out."

I ask Mary what she likes to do for enjoyment in the Home and she holds up her hands.

"I like to get my nails done," she says with a smile.

"We have 'Nails and Natter' on Monday afternoons," Hollie explains. "The activity girls are amazing and arrange something for every day. A lady comes in to do exercises with the

"Every time my family visit they always say how lucky I am to be here and how jealous they are of it!" Mary says.

Looking around the beautifully tended garden, with the scent of lunch floating on the air from the dining room, I see what they mean.

"I'm quite jealous of it too, Mary," I laugh. "Maybe I can move in and be your neighbour?"

"Hmm..." Mary chuckles. "I think you're a bit young!"

To find out more about any of the RMBI Homes, including locations, eligibility criteria, advice and information about paying for care, please get in touch:

020 7596 2400 @ enquiries@rmbi.org.uk  
rmbi.org.uk





In this regular column, our resident Almoner answers your questions about the support we provide. Elsewhere in the magazine, you might see him pop up from time to time with useful information!

### But first and foremost, what is an Almoner?

An Almoner is an officer within a Masonic Lodge responsible for the wellbeing of Lodge members and their families. He remains in contact with members who need support and keeps in touch with the widowed partners of former members so that the Lodge, Province or the MCF can provide help if they need it.

**If you are going through a difficult time, you can contact your local Almoner for guidance.**

**“I am about to be evicted. Can the MCF help with the cost of setting up a new home?”**

**Yes**

We can potentially assist with one month's rent in advance and a security deposit for a new rental property. The cost will be assessed against local market averages and the property should be affordable in the longer term for you.

**“If I need legal advice, can the MCF provide any advice or funding?”**

**No**

But we will signpost you to your nearest statutory or voluntary organisation that may be able to offer a free legal consultation.

**“I suffer with arthritis and am unable to climb my stairs. Can you help with funding for a stairlift?”**

**Yes**

We can consider funding for a stairlift; however, you should first approach your local authority for an Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment. The OT's report will form part of your application to the MCF.

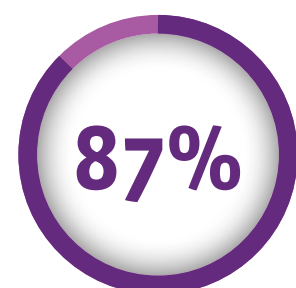
Send your questions for the MCF Almoner to [help@mcf.org.uk](mailto:help@mcf.org.uk).

## MCF Community Awards Results



Over the summer, almost 178,000 people voted in the MCF Community Awards – Tercentenary Fund, through which we awarded grants totalling £3 million to 300 charities. We supported charities in every Masonic Province, and the charities with the highest number of votes received the largest grant amount of £25,000.

Thank you to our readers who voted!



of voters were members of the public.



said the Awards had improved their opinion of Freemasonry.

### Reader feedback of the month

**“Better Lives is an informative and worthwhile communication – it's good to know support is available if and when required!” Trevor, via email**

We love hearing your feedback so we can make *Better Lives* as helpful and relevant as possible. If you have any comments, feedback or suggestions, please email: [communications@mcf.org.uk](mailto:communications@mcf.org.uk) or tweet: [@masonic\\_charity](https://twitter.com/masonic_charity)

## Puzzles for prizes

### Complete the crossword to win a £50 John Lewis voucher!

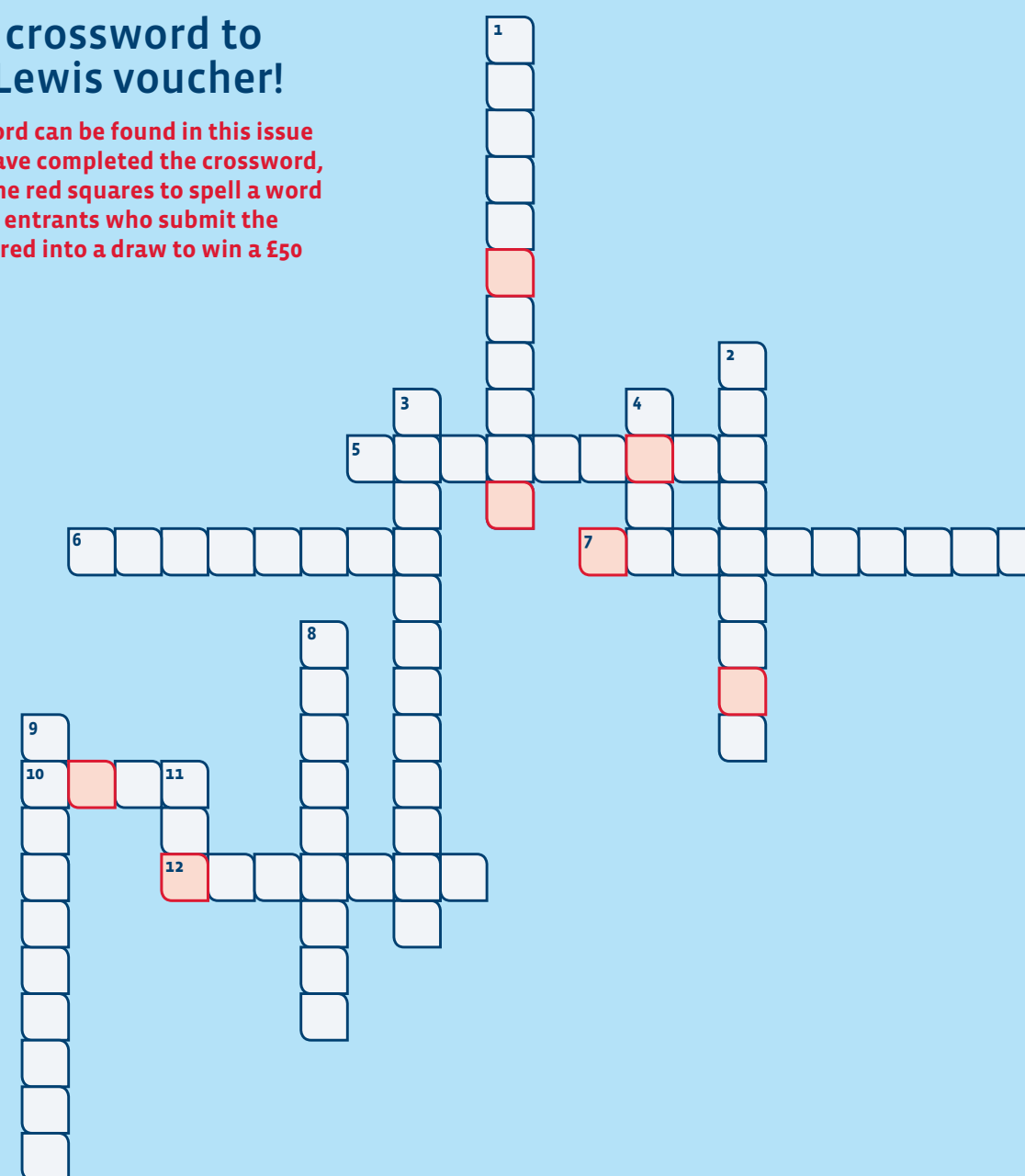
The answers to the crossword can be found in this issue of *Better Lives*. Once you have completed the crossword, unscramble the letters in the red squares to spell a word related to Freemasonry. All entrants who submit the correct answer will be entered into a draw to win a £50 John Lewis voucher.

#### Across

- 5 Through this scheme, we support young people with exceptional talents (9)
- 6 58% of voters in the MCF Community Awards said their opinion of Freemasonry had \_\_\_\_\_ as a result of the awards (8)
- 7 Chris' three children take part in this extra-curricular activity (10)
- 10 If you need support, you can email \_\_\_\_\_@mcf.org.uk (4)
- 12 In a Masonic Lodge, this officer is responsible for the wellbeing of members and their families (7)

#### Down

- 1 We awarded a grant of £17,000 to this cathedral to fund apprenticeships (4,7)
- 2 James worked at this restaurant to fund his studies before the MCF stepped in (9)
- 3 Chris is a Sports Performance Analyst for this sports team (7,5)
- 4 The name of the RMBI resident our Marketing Executive, Freya, met recently (4)
- 8 Eating this type of broccoli can help protect against prostate cancer (9)
- 9 Our Grants Officer, Matthew, studied this subject at university (10)
- 11 Your GP can screen for this protein in your blood to test for prostate cancer (1,1,1)



### How to enter

Write your crossword answer and/or circle the differences you spot in the photos clearly on the tear-off flap. Fill in your details on the reverse of the flap and send it to:

**Masonic Charitable Foundation, 60 Great Queen Street, London, WC2B 5AZ**

The winner will be notified before the next issue of *Better Lives* is printed.

### Write your crossword answer here:

### Spot the difference and win a giant Eddie the Teddy!

Pictured below are Jake and Seren who visited our stall at a tercentenary celebration event this summer!

To be in with a chance of winning your own giant Eddie the Teddy, simply spot the six differences between the two photos!



We love this photo of issue 2's spot the difference winner, Finley, with his mum, Jessica!





### Cut out and keep

Even if you don't need us at the moment, tear off this page and keep it in a safe place in case your situation changes.

# How can we help?

Are you a Freemason, or a close family member of a Freemason? Do you have a financial, health, family or care related need?

We can help with:



## Financial

- **Essential daily living costs** to help make ends meet
- **Help through a personal crisis** such as redundancy, bereavement, family breakdown or a medical diagnosis
- **Funeral bills**
- **Emergency home repairs**



## Health

- **Medical treatment** if you are facing a long NHS wait
- **Mobility aids** such as mobility scooters, wheelchairs and stairlifts
- **Home adaptations** including wet rooms
- **Counselling** either over the phone or face-to-face through our Careline



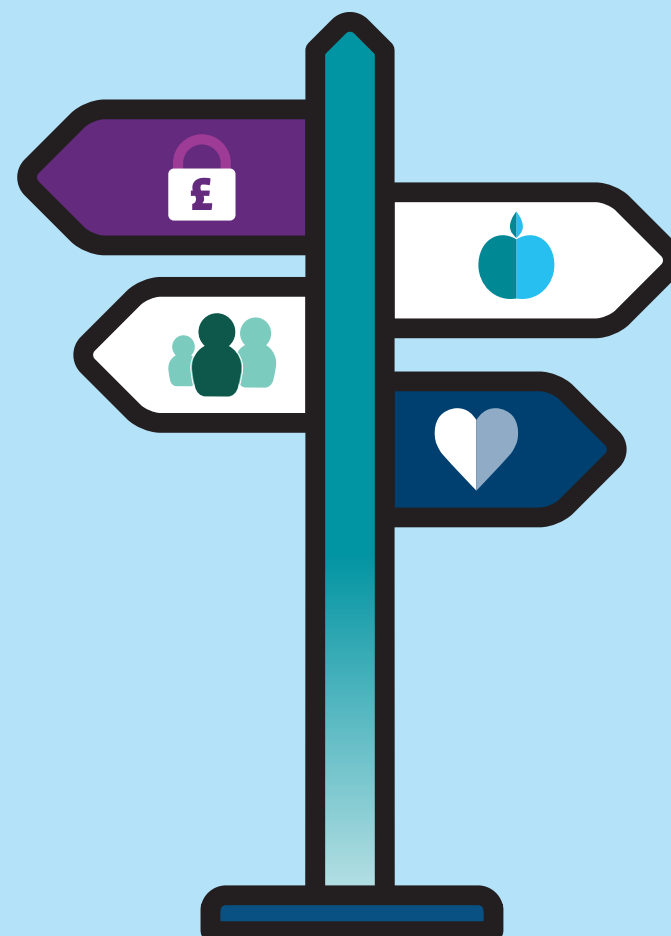
## Family

- **Educational expenses** for children including school trips, extracurricular activities, school uniforms and laptops
- **University costs** such as accommodation and books
- **Support for exceptional talent** in music, sport or the performing arts



## Care

- **Masonic care homes** at 17 locations across England and Wales
- **Respite care** including domiciliary, day centre and residential
- **Guidance and support** from professional advisors



If you need help with any of the things on this list, or if what you need isn't listed, please call our confidential freephone enquiry line today to find out if we can help:

 **0800 035 60 90** @ [help@mcf.org.uk](mailto:help@mcf.org.uk)

Speak to your Lodge Almoner about applying for a grant or contact us directly to start your application. Our enquiries team can offer confidential guidance on the help available and advise you about the process and criteria for making an application, which includes a financial test.

## > Follow our work and receive our exclusive lapel pin

Register for email and postal updates about the work of the MCF.

Name

Email

Full Address

Postcode

I am a

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Freemason</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Interested person</b>      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Family member</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Charity representative</b> |

If you are a Freemason, please tell us the name of your Province and indicate whether you are one of the following:

Province

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Worshipful Master</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Secretary</b>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Almoner</b>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Charity Steward</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>None of the above</b> |   |

Please return this form to:

Masonic Charitable Foundation  
60 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5AZ

