

Better Lives



A day in the life of Getting out and about!

page 3

Inside an almoner's bag

page 4

In the spotlight Loneliness in later life

page 6

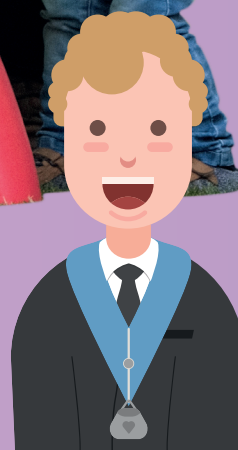
Insider story Go behind the scenes on our most recent film shoot!

page 8 – 9

Ask the almoner

page 14

For freemasons, for families, for everyone
www.mcf.org.uk



Contents

- 3 | **A day in the life of...**
Getting out and about
- 4 | **Revealed:**
Inside an almoner's bag
- 6 | **In the spotlight**
Loneliness in later life
- 8 | **Insider story**
Daventry Area
CommunityTransport
- 10 | **Seasons of fun**
Supporting families from struggling
with low-incomes
- 12 | **Four ways you can play your part...**
Helping reduce loneliness
- 13 | **Painting the town red**
with RMBI Care Co.
- 14 | **Ask the almoner**
Your questions, answered
- 15 | **Puzzles**
Your chance to win prizes!



Guest welcome

“ It is a common misconception that only older people are at risk of loneliness; in fact, loneliness and social exclusion can affect people of all ages and from all walks of life.

As a member of the MCF's Advice & Support Team, I come into contact with lots of different people who have become isolated as a result of health problems, family responsibilities or financial difficulties, as well as age. Some are single parents or full-time carers, others have been made redundant or may be struggling with limited mobility. By making sure the people we assist have access to the right support, we can give them greater freedom and the opportunity to participate more actively in society.

Throughout this issue of *Better Lives*, we'll be exploring the topic of social inclusion and how the MCF is helping people of all ages to overcome their isolation and get out and about. Read on to find out how our seasonal grants have helped low-income families to enjoy days out together and how we are working in partnership with 13 Age UK branches across the country to help combat loneliness in later life.

When people approach us for support it is not always obvious that they are feeling lonely or isolated. By sitting down and having a chat about what's going on in someone's life, we can often gain a better understanding of what their true needs are and signpost them to other specialist organisations.

If you are struggling financially, physically or emotionally, don't hesitate to get in touch – you never know where the conversation could lead!

Maggie Holloway
Advice and Support Manager



A day in the life of...



Getting out and about!

Sally is a full-time mum who lives in Wiltshire with her two-year-old twins, Ted and Alex, and her partner, Neil.

After a premature birth, Ted developed cerebral palsy which means that he can't walk or stand unaided. Sally's father is a freemason and got in touch with us to see if we could support the family in any way. Ted now has an 'Upsee mobility harness' that we part funded and allows him to walk with the help of his mum, meaning he can put his wellies on and enjoy the great outdoors with his brother!

Ted and Alex wake up at...

...7am. Ted is usually the first to get up – he's keen to get downstairs! I carry Ted while Alex wanders down behind us. Ted likes to have Weetabix with banana for breakfast; he has a special chair so he can sit up and eat at the table with his brother.

I get the boys dressed...

...and put Ted into the Upsee. We spend the morning walking around the garden, which he loves – we have chickens so we take up a bucket of food and collect any eggs that have been laid overnight. I used to have to push Ted in a pushchair up the garden whilst Alex ran ahead, so it's lovely to see him running up to the chicken coop with his brother.

We spend a lot of time...

...outdoors! We have sheep opposite our drive so every morning we go to say hello. Ted loves stamping on the stones of our gravel drive and picking the dandelions, things that he used to watch Alex do and was desperate to join in. Being in the Upsee has really given him a sense of independence, which is so important for a growing child. We then have lunch, which is usually toast, crisps and fruit.

Do you or a loved one need mobility support? We may be able to help! Get in touch:

After lunch...

...we take a quick trip to the park and Ted enjoys telling me where to walk; he points to the roundabout or swings and says 'way!' which is my cue to take him to the next part of the playground.

Now Ted can stand...

...he loves to open gates and cupboards – it's such a common thing for a two year old to do but a real novelty for him! It's brilliant because when we get home from the park, I can get on with the washing up and he can entertain himself with the cupboard in front of him. Alex will come up and hold his hand and cuddle him – they love being at eye level with each other and it's these moments that make having twins really special.

For dinner...

As a treat, I give the boys fish pie – Ted loves a good pie! He then spends some time with Daddy once he's back from work, and tells him what he's been up to that day. No matter what we've done, Ted usually says that he visited some goats... I don't know where that comes from!

Bedtime...

...is usually around 7pm. We help Ted climb the stairs then both boys have a bedtime drink. You can hear them chat away and talk about their day, but soon enough they're off to sleep.

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

Revealed: Inside an almoner's bag



Whether it's a briefcase or a rucksack, a tote bag or a zip folder, an almoner is never without his bag when he's out and about visiting members of his lodge. Peek inside and the contents will give you a glimpse of what it really means to be an almoner.

Ray, 55, lives in Essex and has been an almoner for two lodges for the last eight years. We spoke to Ray to find out how he defines his almoner role, what support he can provide to the masonic community, and most importantly, what's inside his bag...

So Ray, what does the role of an almoner mean to you?

"I absolutely love being an almoner! When I'm chatting to people outside of freemasonry, I describe the role as a welfare officer."

What support can you provide for the masonic community?

"Essentially, we are the first point of contact for lodge members and their families for any type of assistance. You've got to be someone that people know they can turn to if they need support. We try and give people the encouragement, confidence and care they need to work through whatever situation they're in, and I also make sure I keep in touch with the partners of brethren directly, so they know they can call me at any time."

Are you an almoner?

Visit our *dedicated almoner resources page* where you can find plenty of tools such as videos, handbooks and factsheets to help you in your role! Visit:

 www.mcf.org.uk/almoner



So Ray... what's in your almoner bag?



MCF factsheets: Topics range from loneliness, to bereavement, addiction to debt; they explain quite complex matters in a simple way so it's good to be able to refer to them if needed.

Biscuits: Who doesn't like a biscuit! It's a nice icebreaker – when I visit someone, we have biscuits and a cup of tea and it sets a relaxed, informal tone, and helps to put them at ease.

Notepad: I always take notes at visits so I can keep track of what's been said and what's going on, and have something to refer to in the future.

Telephone: Sometimes I need to make an enquiry during the visit, so carrying my phone means I can contact the MCF or any other support services straight away.

Cards with my contact details on: Before I leave, I give them my contact details so they know that they can call me at any time.

Provincial Grand Almoner's contact details: On occasions, people may prefer to contact someone else, especially if I know them personally and they feel uneasy revealing their situation to a friend. So giving the Provincial Grand Almoner's contact details gives them an option to speak to a different person.

Pen: For obvious reasons!

Flowers: I always take flowers if someone's recently bereaved, and sometimes for others too. It's a kind gesture.

MCF leaflets: I always give people leaflets and use them to talk through the different areas of MCF support. They all include the MCF contact details should they want to get in touch.

Tissues: If someone gets upset it's good to be able to offer them a tissue, as a way of saying "it's okay."



In the spotlight: Loneliness in later life



Loneliness in later life is on the rise, with millions of older people reporting that they feel ignored or invisible. In fact, there are over 200,000 older people in the UK who haven't spoken to anybody in the past month.

As the UK's leading charity supporting the wellbeing of older people, Age UK has the expertise required to tackle this important issue. With this in mind, we recently launched a partnership with 13 local Age UK branches across England and Wales to deliver individually tailored support to older people going through

major life transitions. The programme will improve wellbeing, increase independence, and reduce loneliness.

We spoke to Pam Creaven, Services Director at Age UK, to find out more about loneliness in later life and what we can do to combat it.

How widespread is loneliness amongst older people in the UK?

Figures suggest there are currently 3.6 million older people living alone in the UK, with 1.4 million of them feeling ignored by others and cut off from society.

It is predicted that by 2066 there will be more than 20 million people over 65; with an aging population and an underfunded social care system that will struggle to cope, the number of lonely people and the complexity of their needs is likely to increase.

Why is loneliness such a problem amongst older people?

Studies have identified a number of factors associated with being lonely in older age, including a lack of social networks and health problems.

Many older people live alone, possibly because they're widowed or live far away from

their families. Others simply have limited opportunities to socialise. As people get older, their health tends to decline, which can reduce their ability to leave the house and maintain relationships.

What effect can loneliness have on a person's health?

Chronic loneliness is associated with a number of health conditions including depression, psychological stress, and an increased risk of developing dementia.

Our research has also shown that social isolation is a stress that suppresses the immune cells involved in killing viruses and bacteria.

What can we do as individuals to help ease the issue of loneliness?

Age UK believes that 'no one should have no one to turn to', so first and foremost it's important that people are made to feel that they are not alone.

“If you have an older friend or relative, keep in contact with them, particularly if they live further away. You can also look out for older neighbours by popping in for a cup of tea, or giving them a hand with their shopping.”

Alternatively, you could volunteer to work at your local Age UK, where coffee mornings and other events provide important opportunities for socialising and activities.

Watch our new video which features Bill, an 88-year-old freemason and veteran, who shares his experiences of loneliness since his wife, Nancy, passed away.

www.mcf.org.uk/impact-later-life



Freemason, Bill, 88, has been supported by the MCF and Age UK »

What is Age UK doing to tackle loneliness and isolation amongst older people?

We offer a wide range of support which helps older people to make new friends or keep in touch with old ones.

Our telephone and face-to-face befriending services allow us to match older people with volunteers who share similar interests for a regular chat. Our network of local Age UK charities also run transport services, lunch clubs, day centres, exercise classes and other social events which give people the chance to get out of the house and meet new people.

The Age UK website (www.ageuk.org.uk) provides comprehensive information and advice, whether it's on the steps a person can take to make new connections, or how to spot the signs of loneliness and offer help.

“Through our partnership with the MCF, we are able to launch our 'Later Life Goals programme' in 13 areas across England and Wales, which will support around 10,000 lonely older people.”

The programme supports people to set life goals for their finances, health or social life, with the core aim of using these goals to combat loneliness or social isolation.

How does our society need to change in order to prevent the issue from growing?

Age UK is proud to be a member of the Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness, which was started by the late MP, whose desire in her own words was to 'turbo charge the public's awareness of loneliness'. The Commission is an independent, cross-party body that serves to highlight that society can, and should, be doing more to help lonely people in our community.

Where can people turn if they are feeling lonely?

Loneliness is incredibly personal and can manifest itself in a number of different ways, so there's no one cause or solution. But if a person is feeling lonely, it's vitally important they remind themselves that they're not alone, because there are lots of people who can talk to them and offer some assistance.

Any older person who feels isolated should contact their local Age UK branch, which can provide them with straightforward advice, companionship, and a wide range of other practical services.



If you feel lonely or know of someone who may be socially isolated, get in touch with Age UK:

www.ageuk.org.uk

0800 055 6122

Lines are open 8am-7pm, 365 days a year.

Did you know?

The MCF also has links to social groups for older people. Get in touch to find out more:

0800 035 60 90

help@mcf.org.uk

We also have a comprehensive factsheet and video about supporting others who are lonely, which can be used by anyone:

www.mcf.org.uk/almoner

Daventry Area Community Transport

*Inspired by the many stories of freemasons volunteering their time with local charities, we've created a brand new video series called **Helping Hands!** Each episode follows a freemason as they spend a day volunteering with a charity that has benefitted from an MCF grant, to find out more about their important work and highlight the impact of masonic funding on the wider community.*

Our most recent episode sees Northamptonshire & Huntingdonshire freemason, Bob, visit Daventry Area Community Transport (DACT). Bob volunteered for 15 years at DACT, and returned for the day on their dial-a-ride service, which aims to tackle loneliness and social isolation in the elderly community.

Our Marketing Executive, Freya, went along for the ride too and shares their experience...

5:00am

My alarm goes off and I'm careful not to hit the snooze button; it's a long way from Kent to Northamptonshire! I grab a cup of tea from a café then catch a train to London.

7:00am

I arrive at London Euston and have about half an hour until my train to Daventry. It's going to be a long day so I treat myself to some eggs on toast, board the next train and fall back asleep for the journey.

8:30am

Our videographer, Gary, is there to meet me when I arrive;

"Why do you book shoots so early!" he says with a laugh.

We hop in his van and make the short drive to DACT's head office. DACT were awarded £15,000 by Northamptonshire & Huntingdonshire freemasons in last year's MCF Community Awards and the money went towards a new bus for their dial-a-ride service – it's exciting to see the new bus sat in the car park, ready for a day of volunteering!

We're a little early so we grab another cup of tea and run through the video brief to make sure we're fully prepared.

9:00am

We head back to DACT where we find Bob, our volunteer for the day, and introduce ourselves. Bob's been a freemason for 16 years and used to be a volunteer driver for DACT before he retired. He's got his old uniform on and is sat having a cup of tea and a chat with Ron, the bus driver; it's like he's never left.

9:30am

Off we go! First stop of the day is 90-year-old Jean, who has used the dial-a-ride-service for the last five years. Immediately, she recognizes Bob and quips; "What are you doing here?!" Bob gives her a friendly laugh and a hug, scoops up her shopper trolley and secures it in the back of the bus, then holds her hand whilst she navigates the steps. Jean sees me sat near the back of the bus and flashes me a big smile;

"Oh, hello... You're a little young for this aren't you?" I start to realise that Jean is the joker of the bus, and will later have many of the passengers in fits of laughter, including myself.

I sit next to Jean and explain that we are spending a day filming on the bus to highlight the great work that DACT does.

"It's absolutely fantastic", says Jean without hesitation.

"I've been using it since my husband died and I don't know what I would do without it. They wait for you, pick you up, take you into town and drop you home again. It sounds so simple but I'm getting on a bit, so I would be stuck at home by myself if the bus didn't run. You can get terribly lonely when you're older, so having people to chat to on the way into town means so much more than you could imagine."

I think Jean has hit the nail on the head. It's such a simple service on paper, picking people up and taking them home again. Ron says that some people ask why they don't just get a taxi – but the dial-a-ride service provides so much more than transport. It provides opportunities for people to socialise, feel included in their community,

leave the four walls of their home, and maintain some independence at a time in their lives when it can start to disappear; a sentiment that is echoed by all the passengers throughout the day.

"Next stop!" calls Ron, and we are off again.

10:00am

We've finished the first of three drop offs and are on our way back to begin the next passenger pick up. Ron lets slip that after 11 years of volunteering, today is his last shift at DACT. "I think I've only told one passenger as I don't want people to make a fuss," he says. Famous last words!

10:20am

Ruby is the last passenger to be collected before the bus makes its way into town. Just as Ron is about to set off, Ruby stands up and makes an announcement; "Ron, a little birdie told me it's your last day on the bus!" Ron starts to smile. "To say thank you, we've done a little collection for you and Eileen's baked a lemon drizzle cake."

Ron simply replies,

"I did say I didn't want a fuss but who can say no to cake!"

I'm even more pleased when I see a slice heading in my direction.



11:30am

After a short break, we are back on the bus ready to pick the passengers up from their shopping trip and take them home again. In the distance, we see a long queue of ladies waiting patiently with their shopping bags, flowers, groceries and walkers, chatting away and

putting the world to rights. Bob comments that he remembers how fit he used to feel, having to quickly jump on and off the bus and lift everyone's bags into the back – "I reckon I could still do this," he says and I ask if he would ever return. "If I could I would in a heartbeat, but my wife is ill so I'm her full-time carer." I'm so pleased that we could give him one day back at DACT for old times' sake.

1:00pm

The final passenger has waived goodbye and we're back in the offices. "That was brilliant," beams Bob. We manage to have a sit down with Rob, DACT's Chief Executive, who talks us through the impact of the Masonic Charitable Foundation's funding on the charity.

"The Community Awards was a brilliant initiative which we were so pleased to have been a part of. The £15,000 secured the future of the dial-a-ride service, and we are reminded weekly about how much it's needed by the number of people that book on the service. We're just so grateful."

1:30pm

We say our goodbyes to Ron and the rest of the DACT team, then head off to catch the train back to London. Before we leave, Bob reflects on his day as a volunteer;

"After all these years, it's so good to see that DACT is still doing it's bit to support the community. As a freemason, I'm so proud that we've been able to play a part in tackling loneliness and social isolation. It really is a fantastic thing to be a part of."

Watch Bob's day out with DACT in our latest episode of **Helping Hands** now!

www.mcf.org.uk/DACT

Subscribe to our YouTube channel and follow us on social media to keep up-to-date with the latest MCF videos and news

[@Masonic_Charity](#)

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Enjoying the school holidays and time as a family should not be limited by financial circumstances; whether it's the summer holidays or festive break, time out of education allows families to create memories that will last a lifetime.

Unfortunately for some families from low-income backgrounds, spending money on activities and trips just isn't an option. To help ease the pressure, we provide a small grant for the children we support with daily living expense grants who are considered to have a greater financial need than most.

Seasonal grants can be used for anything! Days out, Christmas presents, fun activities – it's completely up to the family how they would like to use the money. Here are just a few of the day trips and adventures that families have enjoyed this summer, thanks to our support:



"I would like to thank the MCF for providing us with a summer holiday grant for Megan and Amy.

We were able to visit Portmerion Village and King Arthur's Labyrinth – they both had a great time and without the assistance of the grant, it wouldn't have been possible!"

Andrew, father to Megan, 18, and Amy, 11

"Theo and Matilda have had a great summer. We could visit theme parks and adventure activities with the generous help of their summer grant."

Jan, mother to Theo, 12, and Matilda, 9



To find out more about our daily living expenses grants, get in touch:

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



mcf.org.uk

"The MCF donation has allowed us to give each of our children an experience of their choice. Bronwyn had a trip to Serbia with the Girl Guides booked, so she used the grant for spending money which meant she could experience the country she was in, like the cafés, the museums, and forts. What she learnt during those ten days will be of use, but more importantly, the memories that she has and the friends that she made will be with her forever.

Emerys and Carys enjoyed trips to the cinema, went on Pokémon hunts and visited board game cafés – they were all things that we could now say yes to without worrying about whether we could afford it."

Adam, father to Bronwyn, 15, Emerys, 12, and Carys, 8

"I visited the Welsh National Museum of History at St Fagan's with my mum, and had the chance to explore many original historic buildings from all over Wales. I really felt I could imagine how people lived, worked and spent their leisure time in the past. I really liked the old fashioned sweet shop and mum liked the Barra Brith cake with butter!"

Benjamin, aged 13



"My daughter, Ellie, 21, son, Max, 16, and I all had a fantastic day out in Stratford-upon-Avon with the help of our summer grant. Thank you!"

Helen, mother to Ellie and Max



"The summer holidays were coming up and I was a little worried about filling the six weeks up with fun activities for them.

I was overjoyed when we received the special summer grant and I was able to surprise my daughter and son with a trip to Alton Towers. We've also spent days at the beach and a visit to Haven for the weekend."

Angela, mother to Tiger, 14, and Jemima, 9

Four ways you can play your part...

No one should feel lonely but unfortunately, loneliness and social isolation affects over 1.4 million people every day.

There are many organisations across England and Wales that can support those who are feeling lonely or socially isolated, however, sometimes the most simple and effective way of getting back into the community is through the support of family and friends. Here are four top tips on how you can tackle social isolation, and help others get back out and about...



Invite someone for tea

It sounds so simple, but many people can go for days, if not weeks, without having a conversation with another person. Inviting someone for tea or coffee is small gesture that can make a big difference to a person's wellbeing.



Give someone a call

Do you have an hour each week? Give someone who you think may be feeling lonely a call. Whether you just catch up about your day or ask them how they're feeling, making an effort to get in touch can help people feel less alone.



Ask someone how they're feeling

If we know someone is feeling low or depressed, sometimes we avoid asking them how they are for fear of upsetting them. Don't be afraid! By asking someone how they feel, you're providing them with an opportunity to open up. This may help them to understand why they feel lonely, and work out some next steps to combat their isolation.



Put them in touch with the MCF

We offer a variety of support to people who are feeling lonely or socially isolated. Our counselling careline is a free and confidential service that can support members of the masonic community through a difficult time. Alternatively, our enquiries team can signpost people to the best local and national services that aim to help people who may be feeling lonely.

The masonic community is already helping people to get out and about!

A spot of lunch

Vic, 78, is a Visiting Volunteer from East Kent, who has run regular fine dining lunches for widows and socially isolated freemasons for the last four years.

"I realised that there wasn't much intermingling with ladies from different lodges, so I wanted to bring them together. When their husbands or partners were alive, they would attend events together, but once they were widowed, all of that stopped. The lunches have been very successful and we usually get around 40 to 50 people attending. It means people can socialise and it makes a big difference to them!"



Get in touch with the MCF and our counselling careline service today:

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



Painting the town red with RMBC Care Co.

Through RMBC Care Co. we care for older freemasons, their families and many people from the wider community in 18 care homes across England and Wales.

When we think about loneliness and isolation, we often think of older people living alone. But it is very common for care home residents to feel isolated and cut off from the rest of society, especially for those without friends or family members to visit. That's why all RMBI residents are given the chance to take trips outside the home to get out and about, and enjoy new and familiar activities. A change of scenery, fresh air and the excitement of an outing can have great health benefits – stimulating conversation, bringing back fond memories and giving people a sense of freedom.

Royston Smith lives at Shannon Court in Surrey, and regularly attends RMBI trips.

"The trips we go on help keep us in touch with the outside world and it's a chance for us to meet new people in the community. Going shopping or to the pub are things I've done all my life and I like having the freedom to keep them up."

Jackie Tumber, Activities Coordinator at Shannon Court explains,

"Outings are vital to our residents as they have such a positive impact on their health and wellbeing. They create a sense of purpose, make them feel part of the local community and promote independence. Our trips involve a lot of laughter, which we think is important for everybody!"

This year, residents at Shannon Court have enjoyed trips to Birdworld, a Jane Austen festival, Longleat Zoo, Christchurch Quay in Dorset and a cruise along the Thames in a Victorian paddle steamer.



"Outings like these really bring the residents together, giving them the opportunity to socialise and make new friends. The trip to Dorset brought back many happy memories of childhood days

out, sparking lots of lively conversation and laughter. They can't wait to go back next year!"



Jackie and the team at Shannon Court recently received recognition at the Surrey Care Awards for leading their activity programme.

"It was very exciting to be recognised for our activities at Shannon Court. We work really hard to make life fun for our residents and to ensure that every day is different."

RMBI Care Co. offer residential care, nursing care and dementia support. It also provides sheltered accommodation for people who prefer to live independently as well as short respite breaks.

To find out more about any of the RMBI homes, eligibility criteria, advice and information about paying for care, contact them!

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



Ask the almoner

Our resident almoner answers your questions about the support we provide.

My partner has moved into a residential care home and I'm struggling to afford the costs of visiting them. Can the MCF help fund my travel expenses?

Yes – it is possible that the MCF can consider a grant towards travel costs to and from a care home or hospital. Call our enquiries line on 0800 035 60 90.

I am feeling lonely. Does the MCF run any befriending services?

Not directly – but the MCF can liaise with the local masonic community to help you meet new people. In addition, our Advice & Support Team have a wealth of knowledge about organisations in your local area that can support people in similar situations, and would be happy to discuss these with you.

I have mobility issues which make it difficult to leave the house. Can the MCF help?

Yes – the MCF can consider grants for ramps, rails or stairlifts to make it easier to move around your home as well as grants for powered wheelchairs or mobility scooters to help you get about outside.

Send your questions for the Better Lives almoner to @ help@mcf.org.uk



You've spoken!

This summer, we conducted a survey of people who have been supported by the MCF for the first time. We asked for feedback on their experience, the support they received and the impact that our grants have had.

We are thrilled to report that the majority of people we have supported were happy with the service they received:

93% felt the process of applying for support was a positive experience.

97% felt that the MCF staff's knowledge and professionalism either met or exceeded their expectations.

93% felt that the response time to their enquiry met or exceeded their expectations.

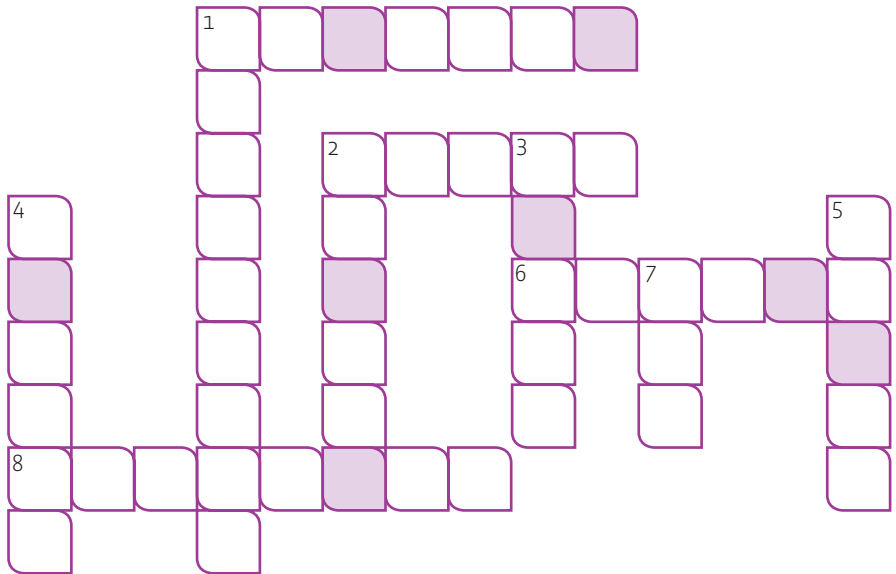
96% were satisfied with the size of their grant.

We love hearing your feedback so we can make *Better Lives* as helpful and interesting as possible. If you have any comments, feedback or suggestions, please email: 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 all be found in this issue of *Better Lives*. Once you have completed the crossword, unscramble the letters in the purple 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

- _____ loneliness is associated with a number of health conditions (7)
- We have launched a partnership with this charity, to help reduce loneliness (3, 2)
- A seasonal grant helped Bronwyn take a trip to _____ with the Girl Guides (6)
- 78-year-old Vic is a Visiting Volunteer from this province (4, 4)

Down

- Bob spent the day volunteering at Daventry Area _____ Transport (9)
- Maggie Holloway is the manager of our _____ and Support Team (6)
- The piece of mobility equipment that we provided for two-year-old Ted (5)
- Residents at Shannon Court went on a day trip to Christchurch Quay in _____ (6)
- Our new video series is called Helping _____ (5)
- The name of the almoner whose bag we looked inside (3)



How to enter:

Write your crossword answer and/or circle the five 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 Ted and Sally who are featured in 'The big questions'.

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



Congratulations to Neil Hunton

who correctly identified the word 'compass' in our last issue of *Better Lives* – a £50 John Lewis voucher is in the post!

Well done to Brian Wood

who spotted all five differences in last issue's Spot the Difference – you've won our giant Eddie the Teddy!

Reader feedback

In the last issue of *Better Lives* we shared an article about Ronnie, and his battle with addiction and homelessness. Many people connected with his story and we were touched by some of the responses we received.

Steve*, via email

"I have just read Ronnie's story in the last issue of *Better Lives*. I am a freemason and I was also homeless while I was in the chair. I thought I was the only one. I've assisted Shelter a lot in the last six months. Please pass my best to Ronnie, it does get better!"

Joe, via Facebook

"Alcoholism is one of the top killers in our country. I have been secretary of our local AA for many years and have seen many people die from booze. The upside is I see many people making a new life for themselves. Well done MCF for publishing this post on a subject that is still regarded as taboo".

*Name changed to protect identity.



> Follow our work and receive our exclusive lapel pin

Register for email updates about the work of the MCF and receive future issues of *Better Lives* through the post!

Name

Email

Full Address

Postcode

I am a

☐ Freemason ☐ Interested person

☐ Family member ☐ Charity representative

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

Province

☐ Worshipful Master ☐ Secretary

☐ Almoner ☐ Charity steward

☐ None of the above

Please return this form to:

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

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It's easy to take the small things in life for granted such as visiting a loved one or sitting comfortably whilst watching the TV. For some people, these everyday things are a luxury. The MCF exists to help people who were previously missing out on simple pleasures due to poor health or financial worries.

Now I can...



Visit my husband in hospital

Since January, we've helped **25** people to visit their loved ones in hospital or care homes with grants to cover their travel expenses



Have a cup of tea with my neighbour

We've also helped **27** people to adapt their homes with rails and ramps, making it easier to get in and out of the house



Pop out to the shops whenever I like

We've given **45** people more freedom by funding the costs of a mobility scooter or wheelchair



Spend time with my family in the evenings

We've helped **21** people to relax more comfortably and safely in their homes by funding the cost of a rise and recline chair



Sleep in my own bed again

We have made it easier for **32** people to get around their homes by funding the costs of a stair lift

“My wife used her scooter for the first time on Saturday and she was elated! We spent the afternoon in town, something she hasn't been able to do for months.”

“After losing the lower half of my leg, I found myself restricted to the ground floor of my house. Thanks to the help of the MCF, I'm able to move around my home more freely and I can access the upper floors again.”



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For freemasons, for families, for everyone

60 Great Queen Street | London | WC2B 5AZ

Tel: 020 3146 3333 | info@mcf.org.uk

www.mcf.org.uk

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Can we help you?

For advice about the support we offer and how to apply, contact us today:

0800 035 60 90

help@mcf.org.uk

