



**Masonic**  
Charitable Foundation

## **Information for Freemasons and their families**



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# Introduction

This booklet provides a brief summary of the work of the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF), the central charity for Craft Freemasonry.

The MCF builds better lives by encouraging opportunity, promoting independence and improving wellbeing for Freemasons, their families and the wider community.

The MCF offers vital assistance to Freemasons, their married, life, widowed, divorced and separated partners; as well as their children, stepchildren and grandchildren who are under 25 and in full-time education. Other relations may also qualify for support if they can demonstrate that a Freemason has provided them with significant financial or physical support.

Every Freemason, regardless of rank or office, is encouraged to read this booklet so that he is aware of the support that is available from the MCF.

The original version of this booklet was produced following the Board of General Purposes' report, adopted by Grand Lodge on 14 December 1983, which stated:

*"The Board feels that every member of the Craft should possess a copy of this booklet. It recommends that each newly made mason, and every brother who joins from another Constitution, should be given a copy of the booklet with the Book of Constitutions, and that a copy should be presented to each newly installed Master."*

This version replaces the 2018 edition ('Information for Freemasons and their families'). A copy is issued with each Book of Constitutions supplied by the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE). Further copies can be obtained from:

**Letchworth's Shop**

Freemasons' Hall  
60 Great Queen Street  
London WC2B 5AZ

 **020 7395 9329**

Comments on the booklet and suggestions on how it could be improved are welcome. Please send them to:

**Masonic Charitable Foundation**

60 Great Queen Street  
London WC2B 5AZ

 **020 3146 3333**

 **communications@mcf.org.uk**

The MCF relies upon the continuing support of Freemasons to identify those in need and to provide the generous donations that fund its work. All Freemasons under the United Grand Lodge of England support the work of the MCF through their lodges. Other funding is raised through festivals held by Provinces each year and other gifts, donations and legacies.

The booklet does not aim to provide all the answers on what the MCF does – it simply seeks to give information about the wide variety of support that may be available and offer advice on making an application.

Further details about making an application to the MCF are available from your lodge Almoner or your Metropolitan or Provincial Grand Almoner.

This booklet also includes information about the Mark Benevolent Fund and other masonic charities that may be able to assist you.

# Masonic Charitable Foundation

## **Building better lives**

The MCF aims to be a force for good by providing support, care and services to Freemasons and their families in need, and supporting other charities to help the most disadvantaged people in society.

## **Governance**

The MCF is managed by a board of trustees in accordance with the Articles of Association. The board is led by a chairman who is appointed annually. There are also two members appointed by each Province. The charity is administered by a chief executive, chief operating officer and staff team.

## **Support and services**

Most of the support provided by the MCF takes the form of financial grants to assist with daily living costs but grants can also be provided for specific items or services. Help is available for Freemasons, their married, life, widowed, divorced or separated partners; and their children, stepchildren and grandchildren under the age of 25 and in full-time education.

A range of health and care needs, including medical treatments, counselling and mobility aids or home adaptations is supported. Residential, nursing and dementia care is also provided by RMBI Care Co.

Grants can be provided to support the education of children and young people, including support whilst at university, extra-curricular activities and computer equipment. The MCF can also support exceptional talent in sport, music or the performing arts.

The Advice & Support Team offers confidential and practical guidance about the support available from the MCF and many other organisations. The team works with Freemasons and their families in the local community through home visits and telephone advice. They are able to help on a wide range of issues using their specialist knowledge in benefits, local authority obligations and the care sector.

In addition to the support provided to Freemasons and their families, the MCF tackles some of the most significant challenges facing society, in particular, reducing isolation in later life and ensuring a positive future for young people. The MCF works in partnership with some of the country's biggest charities to deliver support.

The MCF also helps to fund the vital work of hospices and regularly contributes to appeals for disaster relief worldwide.

Funded entirely through the generosity of Freemasons and their families, the MCF helps to improve the lives of thousands of people every year in England, Wales and overseas.

## Origins

Masonic charity has existed since the eighteenth century, providing support to Freemasons and their families. The MCF brings together the work of The Freemasons' Grand Charity, the Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys, the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution and the Masonic Samaritan Fund.

The separate charities continue to exist as funds within the MCF, but their work has now been consolidated under the MCF. The RMBI Care Co. also continues to provide high-quality care services for older people.

Every year,  
the MCF helps over

**3,000**  
**PEOPLE**  
at a cost of



**£12M** and gives

**£5.5M** to local and  
national charities

# Support for Freemasons and their families

## What support is available?

A wide range of help and support is available for financial, health, family and care-related needs, including:



### Financial

- Essential daily living costs
- Help through a personal crisis
- Funeral bills
- Emergency home repairs



### Health

- Medical treatment
- Mobility aids
- Home adaptations
- Counselling for adults and children



### Care

- Masonic care homes through the RMBI Care Co. – including residential and dementia care (for more information see page 20)
- Respite care
- Guidance and support from professional advisers



### Family

- Educational expenses for children
- Support while at university
- Support for exceptional talent in music, sport or the performing arts

## **Who is eligible?**

Those seeking support must demonstrate the following:

### **A masonic connection**

In order to be eligible for support, the applicant must be a Freemason or have a strong family connection to a Freemason under the United Grand Lodge of England. The Freemason does not necessarily need to be currently subscribing, but he must have been a member before the need arose.

### **A financial, health, family or care-related need**

Many needs follow a life-changing event such as a medical diagnosis, loss of employment, family breakdown or the death of a family member.

## How to apply for support

The MCF treats all enquiries and applications sympathetically and in the strictest confidence.

Speak to your lodge Almoner about applying for a grant or contact the MCF directly to begin your application.

 **0800 035 60 90**

 **help@mcf.org.uk**

 **Masonic Charitable Foundation**

60 Great Queen Street, London, WC2B 5AZ

If the MCF can help and you would like to apply, a representative of the charity will visit you. They will help you to complete the application form which will help the grants department understand your circumstances in more detail.

A member of the MCF Grants team will let you know when your application has been received and keep you updated on its progress.

If approved, a payment will be made directly to you or to a supplier if your need is for equipment or a service.

If the MCF is unable to assist, staff will try to direct you to other organisations that may be able to help.

# Advice, counselling and other support

Alongside the MCF's financial grants, a wide range of practical support is available for you and your family from the Advice & Support Team and the counselling service.

## Advice & Support Team

The Advice & Support Team (AST) provides a free, independent and confidential service on behalf of the MCF.

The AST offers advice, guidance and support on a range of issues that can affect the masonic community. They can help you through difficult times by listening to you, understanding your needs, discussing potential solutions and directing you to organisations and services that can help.

Examples of the advice and support available from the Team include:

- **Talking** about financial difficulties
- **Assisting** with applications for charitable support
- **Discussing** the best approach to meet your care needs
- **Exploring** how home adaptations and mobility aids can help you maintain independence
- **Supporting** your children with practical advice on education and wellbeing
- **Signposting** you to state and local authority benefits and services available from other charitable organisations

## Counselling service

The MCF offers a counselling service. The service is a confidential, free helpline for Freemasons and their eligible family members.

The counselling service can offer support for:

- Anxiety, depression or stress
- Feelings of uncertainty, growing worry or panic
- Adjusting to retirement or workplace pressures
- Financial worries or debt
- Bereavement, divorce and loneliness
- Illness, addiction or family ill-health

The service is operated by trained counsellors who will listen and offer professional guidance. Up to six telephone sessions with a trained counsellor can be arranged. Alternatively, face-to-face sessions can be provided within 15 miles of a person's home or work.

Freemasons, their married, life, widowed, divorced or separated partners, as well as their children who are between the ages of 17-25 and in full-time education can access the counselling service.

Other relations may also qualify for support if they can demonstrate that a Freemason has provided them with significant financial or physical support.

Where the service identifies that a higher level of support is needed, it may be possible to provide enhanced mental health support. This is subject to a financial assessment and usually requires a visit from a member of our Advice & Support Team.

If your need cannot be supported through the MCF, you will be signposted to other organisations that may be able to help.

Further information is available at:

 **[mcf.org.uk/counselling](https://mcf.org.uk/counselling)**

To access the counselling service, call the freephone enquiry line or contact us via email:

 **0800 035 60 90**

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

# Grants to charities

The MCF tackles some of society's most important issues through grants to local and national charities and partnerships with leading organisations in the sector. With grants totalling around £5.5 million each year, the MCF helps thousands of disadvantaged and vulnerable people to live happy, fulfilling lives and participate actively in society.

The MCF's grant-making programmes for charities target funding where it is most needed, within the areas about which Freemasons care most passionately. The target areas are currently: reducing isolation in later life, creating the best start in life for disadvantaged children and young people, medical research into degenerative disease and funding care services in the hospice sector. The target areas are reviewed each year to ensure grants are making the greatest possible impact.

Over the last forty years, the MCF has provided over £130 million to local and national charities. The MCF's work is funded solely through the generous donations of Freemasons, their families and friends.

 [mcf.org.uk/community](https://mcf.org.uk/community)



The MCF provides support for Lifelites, a charity that provides and maintains specialist technology packages for the 10,000 terminally-ill and disabled children using every children's hospice service across the British Isles.

These packages help children who are often restricted by their conditions to play, be creative, communicate and control something for themselves, for as long as it is possible.

Originally founded as a masonic charitable project, Lifelites is now a well-established charity in its own right raising all its own funds. The MCF helps Lifelites by donating office premises and administrative services, meaning Lifelites can use the funds it raises on delivering life-enhancing technology.

For more information about the work of Lifelites, visit:

 **[lifelites.org](https://www.lifelites.org)**

Lifelites registered charity in England and Wales No. 1115655

# Supporting the MCF

The MCF relies upon the generous donations of Freemasons, their families and friends to provide its wide range of charitable support. The MCF does not fundraise from members of the public or use street collections. There are many ways to raise money including sponsored challenges and social events, but signing up to regular giving with Gift Aid is one of the easiest.

## **Festival appeals**

Each year, four masonic Provinces hold a festival event to celebrate the end of a fundraising appeal, during which a range of activities take place that make a significant contribution to the MCF's income.

## **Fundraising support**

The MCF can provide sponsorship forms and other materials for fundraisers such as promotional items and printed materials.

For more information, please email:

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

## **Legacies**

Leaving a legacy in your will can make an important contribution to the funding of the MCF. Every gift, large or small, can help to make a difference to those assisted through the charity's support and services.

For more information on legacy giving or to order a free guide to making a will, please visit:

 [mcf.org.uk/legacy](https://mcf.org.uk/legacy)

### **The Relief Chest Scheme**

The Relief Chest Scheme is a free service to help lodges, chapters, Provinces and other recognised masonic organisations manage their charitable giving efficiently.

Funds placed in Relief Chests are held securely by the MCF until they are given to a charity by the donors.

The Relief Chest Scheme helps donors to save time, take control and give more.

For further information, or to open a Relief Chest for your lodge, chapter or appeal, please visit:

 [mcf.org.uk/reliefchest](https://mcf.org.uk/reliefchest)

### **Promoting the MCF's work**

A range of leaflets, promotional materials, resources and general publications are available for distribution at masonic centres or events. These materials cover topics such as the support available to masonic families and the impact of the MCF's charity grants. Banner stands and other promotional items are also available on request.

To request copies of leaflets, please visit:

 [mcf.org.uk/leaflets](https://mcf.org.uk/leaflets)

If you would like to request a speaker to deliver a talk or presentation about the MCF at a lodge meeting or event, please email:

 [communications@mcf.org.uk](mailto:communications@mcf.org.uk)

Alternatively, a copy of a standard script and PowerPoint presentation can be downloaded from the MCF's website:

 [mcf.org.uk/resources](https://mcf.org.uk/resources)

### Register for updates

Please visit [mcf.org.uk/sign-up](https://mcf.org.uk/sign-up) to register for updates and receive an exclusive lapel pin.

 [@masonic\\_charity](https://twitter.com/masonic_charity)

 [/theMCF](https://www.facebook.com/theMCF)

 [@masonic\\_charity](https://www.instagram.com/masonic_charity)

 [/MasonicCharitableFoundation](https://www.youtube.com/MasonicCharitableFoundation)

# RMBI Care Co.

Company no. 1293566. Charity no. 1163245.

A subsidiary of the MCF, RMBI Care Co. cares for older Freemasons, their families and people in the wider community. Caring has been its way of life since 1842 and today, the charity provides a home for over 1,000 people across England and Wales – while supporting many more.

RMBI Care Co. offers residential care, nursing care, dementia support, limited sheltered accommodation for people who prefer to live independently, short-stay breaks so families can have a rest from taking care of a loved one, and day services. Whatever services people need, RMBI Care Co. cares for them professionally and kindly.

Those members of the masonic community who choose an RMBI home have the security of knowing that they have a home for life, even if their financial circumstances change – as long as RMBI Care Co. can still meet their needs.

## RMBI homes

### **Albert Edward Prince Of Wales Court\***

Mid Glamorgan

 **01656 785311**

### **Barford Court\***

Hove

 **01273 777736**

### **Cadogan Court\***

Exeter

 **01392 251436**

### **Connaught Court\***

York

 **01904 626238**

### **Cornwallis Court\***

Suffolk

 **01284 768028**

### **Devonshire Court\***

Also provides sheltered accommodation.

Leicester

 **0116 271 4171**

### **Ecclesholme**

Manchester

 **0161 788 9517**

### **James Terry Court\***

Croydon

 **020 8688 1745**

### **Lord Harris Court**

Berkshire

 **0118 978 7496**

### **Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court\***

Essex

 **01376 345534**

## **Prince George Duke of Kent Court**

Kent

 **020 8467 0081**

## **Prince Michael Of Kent Court\***

Watford

 **01923 234780**

## **Queen Elizabeth Court\***

Llandudno

 **01492 877276**

## **Scarborough Court**

Northumberland

 **01670 712215**

## **Shannon Court\***

Surrey

 **01428 604833**

## **The Tithebarn\***

Liverpool

 **0151 924 3683**

## **Zetland Court\***

Bournemouth

 **01202 769169**

*\* Includes a Dementia Support House*

### **Farnfield Court**

Self-contained flats with their own kitchen, bathroom and 24-hour emergency assistance.

Croydon

 **020 8688 4153**

### **Harry Priestley House**

Accommodation and residential care for up to 12 people with learning disabilities.

Doncaster

 **01405 814777**

### **How to apply for a place at an RMBI Care Co. home**

If you would like to find out more information about an RMBI home including how to apply, please email **[enquiries@rmbi.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@rmbi.org.uk)** or call **020 7596 2400**. You can also contact your preferred home directly and speak to the Home Manager.

RMBI Care Co.'s services are available to people with either private or public funding. Each applicant is assessed on an individual basis to understand their needs and how the home can support them. The weekly fee covers accommodation, meal and care and this may change if a person's care needs change.

# Mark Benevolent Fund

Registered Charity No 207610

## Assisting Mark Master Masons in distress

The Mark Benevolent Fund (MBF) came into existence in 1868 on the suggestion of the Grand Master, the Reverend Canon George Raymond Portal, whose views on charity were far more progressive and radical than the general thinking of the times.

Today, the MBF provides grants to eligible Mark Master Masons and their dependants in need, and to other worthy causes throughout England and Wales.

## How to apply

Petitions for relief are received from lodge Almoners and visiting brethren via their Provincial Grand Almoners or secretaries. The MBF Petitions Committee sits on a regular monthly basis to consider cases and relief is almost immediate upon approval.

### **Mark Masons' Hall**

86 St James's Street  
London, SW1A 1PL

 **020 7839 5274**

 **glmmm.com**

 **d.coleman@mmh.org.uk**

## Other masonic charities

In addition to support available through the MCF, many Provinces have their own charities or benevolent funds that may be able to assist you.

Please speak to your lodge Almoner or Provincial Grand Almoner to find out if any help is available from your Province.

For a list of Provinces and current details, please visit:

 [mcf.org.uk/about/provinces](http://mcf.org.uk/about/provinces)

## Contact information

### Useful telephone numbers

Masonic Charitable Foundation	<b>020 3146 3333</b>
United Grand Lodge of England	<b>020 7831 9811</b>
RMBI Care Co.	<b>020 7596 2400</b>
Lifelites	<b>020 7440 4200</b>
Mark Benevolent Fund	<b>020 7839 5274</b>

### Useful websites

Masonic Charitable Foundation	<b>mcf.org.uk</b>
United Grand Lodge of England	<b>ugle.org.uk</b>
RMBI Care Co.	<b>rmbi.org.uk</b>
Lifelites	<b>lifelites.org</b>
Mark Benevolent Fund	<b>markbenevolence.org.uk</b>





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

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