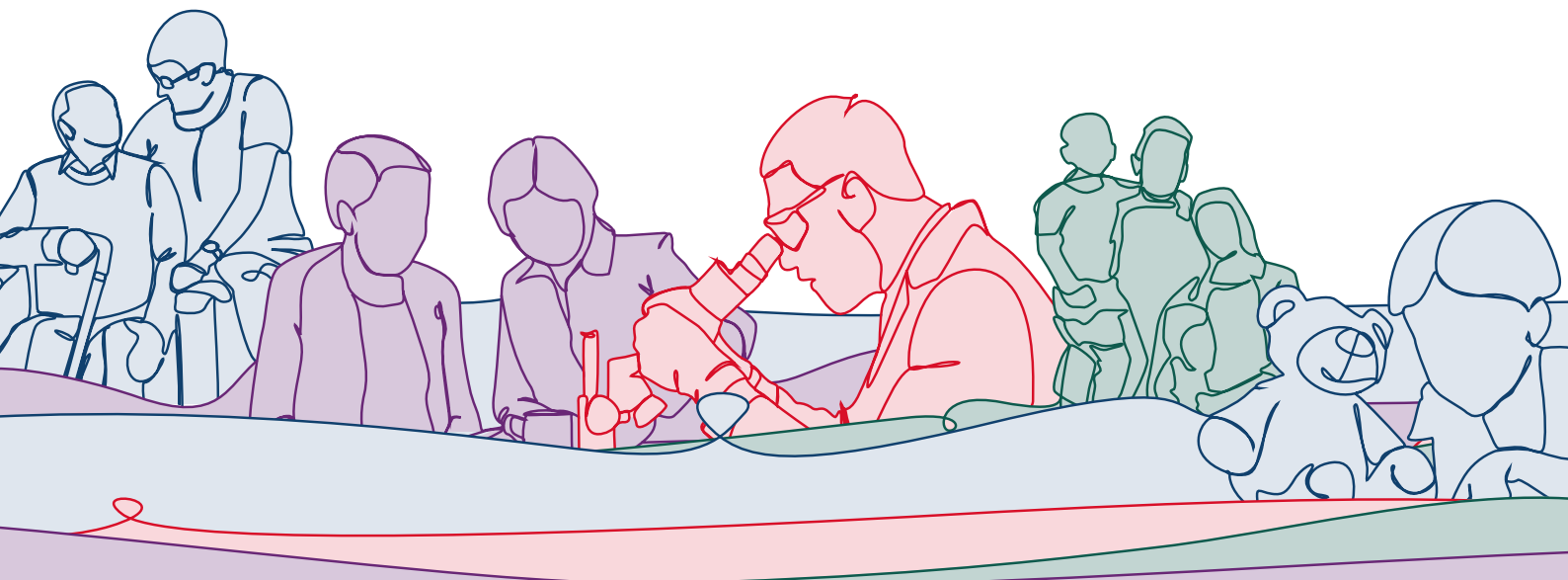


OUR IMPACT 2019/20

THE FREEMASONS' CHARITY

On behalf of Freemasonry, we have continued to build better lives in communities across England and Wales.



Message from the Chairman and Chief Executive

Over the last twelve months, we have supported hundreds of local and national charities to ensure the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in society get the support they need. We have also provided essential support and services to thousands of Freemasons and members of their families with financial, health, family or care needs.

For charities, we provided funding for core costs or projects that tackled some of society's most prominent issues, such as loneliness and social isolation in later life, and barriers facing disadvantaged children and young people. For Freemasons and their families, we provided grants and support services for those struggling with the cost of everyday living; their health, care and wellbeing; or accessing opportunities for children, young people and their education.

As a charity funded entirely through the generosity of Freemasons and their families, we would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our work. Whether through fundraising, volunteering, making a donation

or signposting people to our support, every single action means we can continue to encourage opportunity, promote independence and improve wellbeing for thousands of people.

In this report, we highlight the areas in which we have made the most impact and set out our goals for the year ahead – all on behalf of Freemasonry.

If you would like to learn more of our work, visit our website: **mcf.org.uk**



James Newman OBE,
Deputy President and
Chairman



Les Hutchinson,
Chief Executive



Our year in brief 2019/20

We continued to support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our communities.

£19M

of charitable support, funded entirely by the donations of Freemasons, their families and friends, was awarded by the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) through

6,882 grants

Including our work, Freemasonry contributed a total of

£42M

to charitable causes during this year.

Our year in numbers

GRANTS FOR CHARITIES

415

local and national charities funded

FREEMASONS OR THEIR FAMILIES

4,036

Freemasons or their families supported

ENQUIRIES

15,416

enquiries received from people asking for help

RMBI CARE CO.

1,073

residents were provided quality care in our RMBI Care Co. homes

RESEARCH

8

additional medical research PhD studentships were established



DISASTER RELIEF

20



disaster relief efforts in the UK and around the world were supported totalling £312,401

What we said we would do in 2019/2020


Values

Our goal	Ensure all areas of our work were guided by our three core values being responsive to need, making a difference and striving for excellence.
Why? 	These values have been developed to empower our staff and volunteers to make decisions and deliver a service to a standard that our donors, beneficiaries and the wider charity sector expect. Freemasons are at the heart of the MCF and we hoped that our new core values will be evident to everyone with whom we work.
Status 	Achieved In response to our annual beneficiary survey, 83 per cent of respondents felt the MCF was actively demonstrating all its values. In response to our staff survey, 81 per cent felt positively that “the MCF has strong values, which are put into practice”. This is 9 per cent higher than the sector benchmark.



Beneficiary experience

Our goal	Within our grant-making programmes, we wanted to continue to improve the experience and response times of those coming to us for help.
Why? 	We wanted to ensure all our applicants had a positive experience with the MCF, whatever the outcome of their enquiry or application.
Status 	Achieved Within our Masonic Support programmes, 96 per cent of new beneficiaries and 93 per cent of existing beneficiaries surveyed felt that the Enquiry Officers’ knowledge and professionalism when responding to their enquiry either met or exceeded their expectations. 97 per cent of over 15,000 enquiries received via calls and emails were responded to within one working day. Within our Charity Grants programmes, 246 charities responded to a survey about their experiences of applying to us for a grant. 89 per cent felt that our two-stage application process was “helpful”. 88 per cent consider the support they received through the process to be “helpful”. 44 per cent felt that their experiences of applying to MCF was “better” or “much better” compared to that of applying to our peers in the sector.



Knowledge

Our goal	Our Charity Stewards' Focus Group would put our fundraising volunteers at the centre of our planning and ways of working, helping to ensure we were compliant and innovative.
Why? 	To ensure best practice and innovation were central to our fundraising activities.
Status 	Achieved The Charity Stewards' Focus Group has succeeded in creating new and innovative ways of delivering training and support to our key stakeholders, ensuring that we promote best practices and are compliant with the Fundraising Regulator's 'Code of Practice'.



Needs

Our goal	Use commissioned studies and surveys to better understand the changing needs of the Freemasons and their families we support.
Why? 	For the first time, the MCF wanted to hear directly from Freemasons about their needs and the needs of their families, so that we could ensure our support packages were fit for purpose, both then and in the future.
Status 	Achieved Over 3,500 Freemasons responded to our survey and over 50 in-depth interviews took place to provide a wide range of insights into the needs of the masonic community.



Needs

Our goal	Create a working group, which considered new options to support people living with mental health conditions.
Why? 	We knew that mental health issues are a growing area of concern for the masonic community. Although we provided counselling support to many people, we believed there was more that we could do.
Status 	Achieved We established an expert panel to guide our thinking and service development. The mental health working group has met and provided guidance on how to extend our counselling support to children and young people which we plan to have in place in 2021.

Technology



Our goal	Embrace smarter technology to make the most efficient use of staff and volunteer time and resources, including testing video conferencing to reduce travel and expense for staff and volunteers, and rolling out Tablet PCs to our Trustees for board and committee meetings.
Why? 	This would help reduce staff and volunteer time, make more efficient use of our donors' money and lessen our impact on the environment when producing and distributing meeting papers and travelling around England and Wales.
Status 	Achieved We installed video conferencing facilities at our offices allowing Trustees and others to attend meetings virtually. Tablet PCs were issued to all Trustees and printed board papers are no longer produced.

Outcomes

Our goal	Develop two Theory of Change and outcome frameworks to help us monitor the effectiveness of our funding for local and national charities and the people they support, as well as the support we provide to Freemasons and their families.
Why? 	We needed to be confident the support we offer was having a positive impact on the lives of the people and charities we support, so that we could reassure the masonic community that their donations are making a positive difference.
Status 	Partially achieved We developed a Theory of Change that outlined our logic and goals for our grants to charities. This Theory of Change is published on our website. We have begun to capture feedback from the charities we support so that we can improve our application process. This data will be analysed in 2020/21. The measurement frameworks for our Masonic Support programme will be developed in 2020/21.





Profile

Our goal	Continue working to raise our profile within the charity sector and in the wider community, supporting the United Grand Lodge of England's communications objective of raising the profile and changing the public perception of Freemasonry.
Why? 	To build on our responsibility to present the positive, charitable and caring face of Freemasonry and help to dispel outdated myths.
Status 	Partially achieved We were proud to sponsor the Family Award in the 2019 Centre for Social Justice Awards. We are also active members of a number of sector bodies including the Association of Charitable Foundations, London Funders and Association of Charitable Organisations. We achieved coverage about our activities in a number of charity sector publications.

Profile

Our goal	We wanted to become a more effective and professional fundraising charity.
Why? 	We are serious about positive fundraising and wanted to ensure we adhered to best practice.
Status 	Achieved We have continued our membership with the Fundraising Regulator and are supporting our staff to achieve qualifications from the Chartered Institute of Fundraising. Through closer working with our donors we increased per capita giving in our fundraising appeals from £731 to £756.

Governance

Our goal	Continue to recruit trustees and committee members with the specialist skills to strengthen our governance and help provide scrutiny, challenge and support to our charitable activities.
Why? 	Our board and committee membership would evolve as three-year terms came to an end.
Status 	Achieved We have recruited and inducted a significant number of new trustees and committee members, all of whom bring with them the skills and experiences that our trustee skills matrix had identified as areas needing improvement.

Supporting Freemasons or their families



Last year we received 15,416 calls and emails from Freemasons or their families seeking support – more than we have ever received before.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we have never had to turn down an application due to a lack of funds. Thankfully, we responded

to the rise in enquiries by awarding more grants to more people in need. The average value of these grants also increased.

As households continued to struggle with the rising costs of everyday life, the majority of these grants helped people to cover the cost of living. Half of the total value of support we provided to Freemasons or their families was for daily living expenses.

Daily Living Costs

Our grants for Daily Living Costs helped people to cover the everyday costs of running a home or respond to an emergency.

2,153

Freemasons or their family members received

2,776

grants totalling

£7.4M

Children, young people and education

These grants helped children and young people to access the educational opportunities they needed to reach their potential.

689

children and young people from

478

families received

1,239

grants totalling

£2M

Health, care and wellbeing

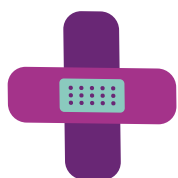
These grants helped people to live healthier and more independent lives.

1,674

Freemasons or their family members received grants totalling

£3.9M

This included the following:



575
people

who were facing a long NHS wait received life-saving or life-changing medical treatment.



486
people

from 439 families accessed our counselling service to help improve their mental health and wellbeing.



565
people

received mobility equipment to help them live more safely and independently.



38
carers

were able to take short breaks from their caring responsibilities.



843
home visits

were carried out by our Advice & Support Team to provide expert guidance and practical assistance.



2,160
visits

commissioned to Visiting Volunteers, most of them Freemasons, to guide people seeking support to complete their grant application.

Supporting local and national charities

Tackling loneliness and creating a positive start in life

Every year, we work hard to help tackle some of society's most important issues. To support Freemasonry in making an even greater impact, we focussed our support through **two programmes** that are responding to areas that are underfunded or overlooked: **tackling loneliness and social isolation in later life** and **creating the best start in life for disadvantaged children and young people**.

Through these two programmes we are supporting projects, such as elderly befriending and youth mental health services, as well as funding core running costs for smaller charities to ensure their services can continue – all of which made a real difference to thousands of lives across England and Wales.



34 grants were awarded to charities tackling **social isolation and loneliness in later life**, at a total cost of **£1,303,985**



65 grants were awarded to charities supporting **disadvantaged children and young people** at a total cost of **£2,135,224**

“

We are very grateful to the Freemasons for their generous grant. Our vital service reduces unnecessary 'bed blocking' in hospitals, removing stress to the person and eases direct pressure on the NHS. Thanks to Freemasonry, we will be able to help more military veterans and the over-65s facing social isolation issues, to live independently in their own homes.”

Chief Executive,
Defence Medical
Welfare Service



Medical research

Over the year, the MCF has continued Freemasonry's support for pioneering medical research into degenerative diseases through eight new medical research PhD studentships, bring the total number of PhDs studentships awarded to 18.

From psychiatry in old age to breast cancer to hearing loss, our medical research funding is not only providing opportunities for the scientists of tomorrow, but playing a pivotal role in ground-breaking discoveries into some of society's most prevalent degenerative diseases.



8 research grants were awarded to **fund PhD studentships**, at a total cost **£1,124,045**



I am enormously grateful to the Masonic Charitable Foundation for their support. Understanding how and why memory consolidation changes in Alzheimer's disease could open the door for future research into targeted treatment of memory-related symptoms."

Sarah,
University of Cambridge
PhD student

Hospice grants

Our partnership with Hospice UK, established in 2018, built upon its funding for bereavement projects and began a new phase of funding hospice services and projects supporting the homeless and vulnerably-housed community – such as much-needed palliative and end-of-life care.

Our hospice grant programme also continued to support core costs in local hospices, strengthening Freemasonry's impact on the hospice sector across England and Wales. some of society's most prevalent degenerative diseases.



19 Hospice UK grants were awarded to fund bereavement projects and services for the homeless, at a total cost of **£448,021**

218 grants were given to **local hospices** for core costs, for a total of **£300,000**



We are very grateful to the Freemasons for their generous grant, which will help us work collaboratively with Harbour Housing and St Austell Healthcare to give disadvantaged and vulnerable people, and those with complex needs, access to the same choices for their end of life care as everyone else."

Dr Carolyn Campbell,
Cornwall Hospice Care



How we helped your local area



Freemasonry in England and Wales is divided into 48 areas, consisting of 47 Provinces and London. We are proud to support Freemasons, their families, and local and national charities in every single one of these communities.

As well as funding our charitable activities, Freemasons play an active role in delivering our services at a local level – from volunteering to help families complete their application forms, to assisting us in identifying local charities which they are passionate about, and working with our strategic partners – such as Age UK – on the delivery of their services.

Number of Freemasons or their families members helped with grants	Amount in grants given to Freemasons or their families	Amount to help cover daily living costs	Amount to support health, care and wellbeing	Amount to support the education of children and young people	Number of people that accessed our counselling service	Amount in grants given to charities	Number of grants awarded to charities
Totals							
3,986	£13,160,657	£7,343,054	£3,800,869	£2,016,734	483	£4,507,176	399
Bedfordshire							
40	£195,738	£83,331	£68,437	£43,971	7	£22,700	6
Berkshire							
34	£72,912	£60,118	£5,356	£7,439	4	£109,378	8
Bristol							
26	£90,690	£48,215	£20,775	£21,700	8	£35,920	4
Buckinghamshire							
46	£147,425	£96,372	£31,578	£19,474	7	£95,888	7
Cambridgeshire							
16	£59,454	£23,269	£4,011	£32,175	2	£78,355	4
Cheshire							
113	£477,239	£209,980	£167,843	£99,416	12	£48,643	10
Cornwall							
78	£365,899	£207,204	£43,365	£115,330	3	£171,861	12
Cumberland and Westmorland							
49	£141,160	£93,937	£29,883	£17,340	4	£29,717	7
Derbyshire							
59	£199,350	£69,223	£100,792	£29,336	6	£52,025	5
Devonshire							
120	£382,092	£209,359	£103,450	£69,283	7	£72,740	11
Dorset							
49	£149,405	£76,288	£65,515	£7,603	7	£3,470	3

Number of Freemasons or their families helped with grants	Amount in grants given to Freemasons or their families	Amount to help cover daily living costs	Amount to support health, care and wellbeing	Amount to support the education of children and young people	Number of people that accessed our counselling service	Amount in grants given to charities	Number of grants awarded to charities
Durham							
133	£391,196	£294,236	£80,345	£16,615	15	£128,236	9
East Kent							
138	£456,395	£247,081	£121,967	£87,346	13	£255,557	10
East Lancashire							
132	£384,582	£241,063	£60,535	£82,984	6	£46,578	13
Essex							
174	£556,793	£344,987	£178,743	£33,063	28	£127,080	12
Gloucestershire							
66	£215,285	£119,868	£57,534	£37,883	8	£43,875	5
Guernsey and Alderney							
4	£27,506	£9,506	£656	£17,343	1	£885	1
Hampshire and Isle of Wight							
162	£489,695	£342,441	£115,562	£31,691	25	£30,380	10
Herefordshire							
25	£67,885	£29,593	£30,698	£7,595	8	£89,295	3
Hertfordshire							
66	£245,717	£130,244	£41,198	£74,275	12	£70,907	22
Isle of Man							
2	£5,498	£3,594	-	£1,904	-	£1,875	1
Jersey							
-	-	-	-	-	-	£1,655	1
Leicestershire and Rutland							
47	£115,541	£68,447	£38,188	£8,906	6	£72,246	5
Lincolnshire							
65	£205,667	£126,966	£43,931	£34,770	6	£31,485	6
London							
388	£1,382,933	£761,522	£344,348	£277,064	47	£364,506	16
Middlesex							
66	£202,422	£101,138	£52,848	£48,436	8	£18,405	5
Monmouthshire							
30	£80,514	£31,750	£27,055	£21,709	3	£97,418	3
Norfolk							
72	£267,959	£140,990	£100,431	£26,538	16	£87,129	4
North Wales							
61	£182,729	£101,428	£69,141	£12,161	9	£154,588	6
Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire							
73	£179,615	£133,986	£26,105	£19,524	13	£127,050	6
Northumberland							
94	£311,191	£207,260	£55,125	£48,807	8	£157,701	8
Nottinghamshire							
50	£198,341	£84,905	£65,735	£47,701	13	£83,161	7

Number of Freemasons or their families helped with grants	Amount in grants given to Freemasons or their families	Amount to help cover daily living costs	Amount to support health, care and wellbeing	Amount to support the education of children and young people	Number of people that accessed our counselling service	Amount in grants given to charities	Number of grants awarded to charities
Oxfordshire							
18	£47,748	£37,084	£8,088	£2,576	2	£194,501	5
Shropshire							
23	£58,057	£33,488	£20,493	£4,076	3	£135,010	6
Somerset							
85	£284,709	£137,341	£135,050	£12,319	10	£65,410	5
South Wales							
185	£743,569	£233,720	£426,244	£83,605	15	£56,080	9
Staffordshire							
67	£229,504	£130,579	£75,855	£23,070	9	£69,920	10
Suffolk							
47	£239,810	£110,403	£38,916	£90,490	5	£24,845	7
Surrey							
102	£323,696	£193,702	£89,938	£40,056	14	£84,655	7
Sussex							
165	£594,209	£295,354	£207,460	£91,394	15	£167,729	17
Warwickshire							
72	£273,465	£165,329	£92,126	£16,010	11	£193,027	13
West Kent							
70	£209,067	£108,636	£81,089	£19,342	10	£57,706	7
West Lancashire							
313	£797,329	£499,663	£194,442	£103,224	30	£208,443	17
West Wales							
33	£66,519	£41,501	£23,114	£1,904	3	£11,830	4
Wiltshire							
47	£182,913	£122,978	£40,263	£19,673	5	£129,975	16
Worcestershire							
60	£166,770	£113,934	£33,834	£19,002	13	£53,580	11
Yorkshire, North and East Ridings							
89	£253,113	£168,879	£49,744	£34,490	7	£73,569	9
Yorkshire, West Riding							
132	£441,351	£252,163	£133,067	£56,120	19	£270,187	26

This date in this table covers the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020.

In addition, we have supported 50 Freemasons and their families living in overseas Districts under the jurisdiction of the United Grand Lodge of England. The value of these grants amounts to £217,076.

Download an infographic for your area at mcf.org.uk/impact

What our beneficiaries said

Our third annual beneficiary survey

Our annual surveys are extremely important, as they allow us to benchmark our work against the results of the previous year and help us improve over the year ahead. To understand our true impact, 802 people supported by the MCF shared their thoughts and perceptions of our services in our most recent survey – from first application through to grants awarded.

We were incredibly pleased to see that, for the third year running, the overwhelming majority

of Freemasons or their families said our help positively impacted their lives and they had a good experience accessing our support.

Behind every positive response is a member of staff or volunteer that played a part in that person's story. Whether receiving their initial enquiry, taking them through their application, awarding their grant or providing follow-up services, such feedback is only possible thanks to the professionalism and dedication of our staff and volunteers.

Staff

95% of beneficiaries felt the Enquiry Officers' knowledge and professionalism when responding to their enquiry, met or exceeded their expectations.

83% of beneficiaries felt the MCF was currently demonstrating all its organisational values of striving for excellence, being responsive to need and making a difference.

Grant size

90% of beneficiaries receiving support for daily living costs or care said the MCF's support allowed them to meet their care needs or an acceptable standard of living.

Wellbeing

Before approaching the MCF for support, the biggest issues among those surveyed were that they **rarely or ever felt relaxed** and that they had **low levels of optimism about the future**. Encouragingly, following our support, positive outcomes have been identified in all wellbeing markers and there has been a consistent increase in our beneficiaries **feeling more optimistic, useful and relaxed**.

Application experience

94% of new beneficiaries said that having a Visiting Volunteer come to their home to help complete an application was a positive experience.

86% of beneficiaries felt the process of applying for support, whether as a new applicant or existing beneficiary, was and always has been a positive experience.

Response times

86% of new beneficiaries were happy with the length of time it took to process their application.

“

Without the support of the MCF, I wouldn't be able to look after my daughter and follow a career I love – they really have changed my life.”

Imogen



“

Without the support from the MCF, I genuinely don't think I'd be here anymore. I still have dark days and losing my parents feels like yesterday, but I'm managing and so grateful for all the MCF has done for me.”

Adrian

“

The MCF offered to cover the costs of my husband's funeral, which was a huge weight off my mind and they continue to offer funding to help me with my day-to-day living expenses. It's still tough, but thanks to the MCF, I'm managing.”

Doreen



“

The MCF pays for carers to come in to our home so that I can take a break. It's brilliant in that it gives me a rest so that I can stay strong.”

Avril



Our plans for 2020/21



Supporting those in need

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, we will adapt our support for families, individuals and charities to ensure those most in need throughout the crisis get appropriate support in the most effective way possible. We will explore ways to extend our mental health support to children aged under the age of 17.



People and volunteers

We want to train and support our staff and volunteers to use video conferencing, increase effectiveness and closer working across our activities and expand the use of secure electronic communications with Trustees and committee members. All necessary MCF staff, Visiting Volunteers and Trustees will have undertaken appropriate DBS checks and undergone training in equality and diversity.

We will develop a wellbeing strategy to help staff recognise the importance of self-care and help reduce stress in the workplace.



Supporting charities in partnership with Provinces

We will enhance our Charity Grants programme with a new matched-funding scheme whereby we work with Provinces to co-fund local projects, helping locally-raised charitable funds go even further. We will also provide additional grant funding to Provinces that are actively fundraising for the MCF through a festival appeal. This funding will be used to support local charities, allowing Provinces to demonstrate how some of the money raised for the MCF returns to their areas and supports local communities in need.



Reaching out

We will launch our new website providing relevant and up-to-date information about accessing the support we offer, as well as tools to support potential applicants, beneficiaries, volunteers and fundraisers. We will also acknowledge and commemorate those who have left us a legacy in their will.



Fundraising

We will develop new ways to donate online, for use in lodge meetings and community fundraising events. We will update our support tools and guidance for fundraisers, and deliver a Festival Forum event for all Provinces actively fundraising for the MCF. We will roll out a free will-writing service, availability to the masonic and non-masonic community.

Our income and expenditure

Our income comes from the generosity and efforts of Freemasons, their families and friends, past and present.

Around 60 per cent of our income comes from the contributions of today's Freemasons, the majority of which is raised through festival appeals, a unique fundraising system where Freemasons in selected Provinces focus their collective efforts on raising funds for the MCF over a period of five or six years.

Gifts in wills also contributed a significant amount to our income, increasing by £1.2 million compared to the previous year. We are incredibly grateful to those who wish to

continue making a difference to our life-changing work by leaving a legacy donation.

As always, we worked hard to ensure that we spent these donations as efficiently and effectively as possible.

For every pound donated, 85 pence was paid out in grants and support services for Freemasons or their families facing difficulty and charities that work directly with vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society. As last year, just seven pence of every pound was spent on the administration, a low amount compared to the sector.

2019/20 income

£28.5M

Breakdown

£10.42M

Donations – festival fundraising appeals (37%)

£3.55M

Annual contributions (12%)

£3.51M

Donations – other (12%)

£4.98M

Investment income (17%)

£3.57M

Legacies (13%)

£2.46M

Rental income (9%)

2019/20 expenditure

£36.21M

Breakdown

£28.1M

Grants (78%)*

£2.7M

Support services (7%)

£2.81M

Generating funds (8%)

£2.6M

Charitable overheads (7%)

* includes £5.1M support grant to RMBI Care Co. and grants to charities made through the Relief Chest Scheme.

Save time, take control and give more with the Relief Chest Scheme

A great deal of fundraising is carried out using our Relief Chest Scheme, a free service that helps Freemasons raise and disburse money for their chosen charitable causes, through pioneering technology and donor-advised funds. The Relief Chest Scheme also makes it simple to reclaim Gift Aid tax relief on eligible donations.

The Relief Chest Scheme offers a range of useful tools such as statements, reports and an online fundraising platform to keep track of donations and ensures that charitable giving adheres to all legal and HMRC regulations.

£11.8M

was donated by
Freemasons into
Relief Chests.

As of March 2020,
there were over

5,000

Relief Chests.

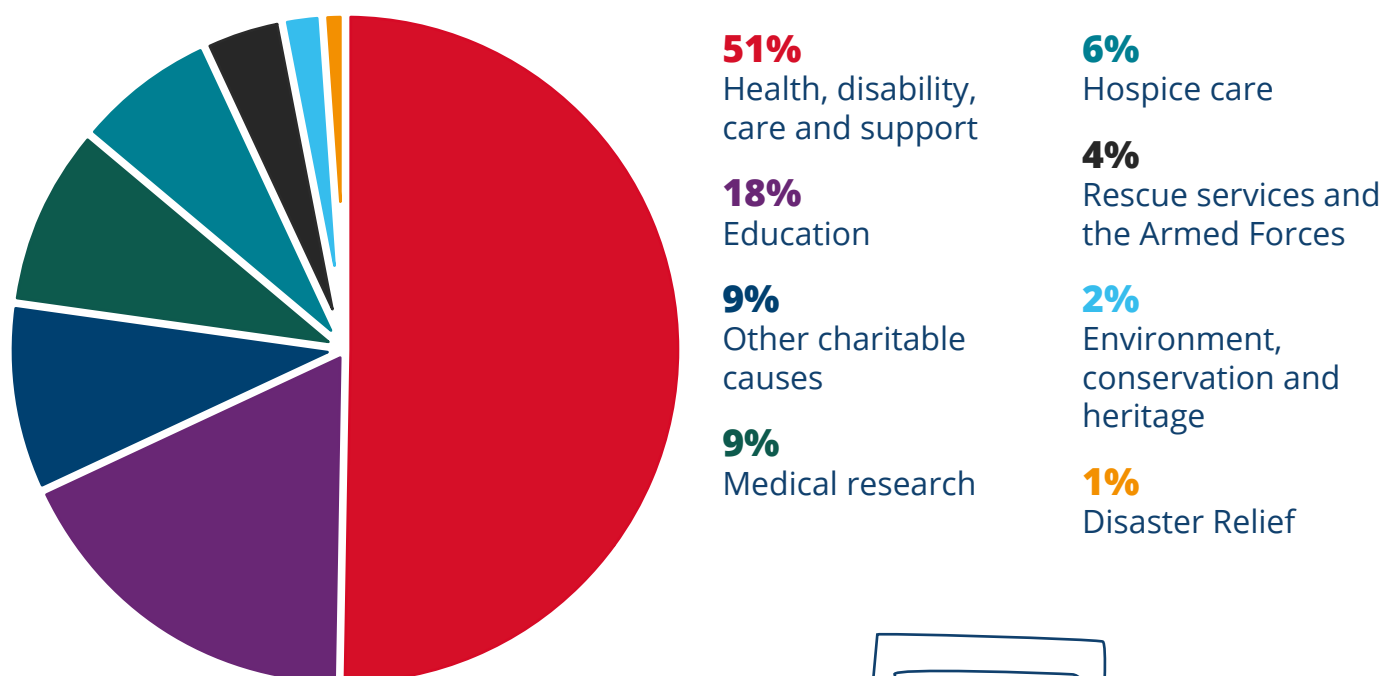
£1.53M

reclaimed by
the Relief Chest
Scheme in Gift
Aid from HMRC.

£13.23M

was paid from the
Scheme to charitable
causes including our
own activities.

The distribution of that which went to other charities is shown below.





To view the full 2019/20 Impact Report, please visit mcf.org.uk/impact

This Impact Report covers the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020. Our recent response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including financial information and statistics, has not been included in this report and will instead be a focus of our 2020/21 Impact Report.

Follow us on:



mcf.org.uk

The Masonic Charitable Foundation is the national charity of Freemasonry under the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE). UGLE is the governing body of Freemasonry in England, Wales, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and some Districts overseas.

To find out more about Freemasonry, visit ugle.org.uk

Charity number 1164703. Company number 09751836.

