

Provincial Grand Lodge of East Lancashire - Festival 2026 for the Masonic Charitable Foundation



NEWSLETTER

February 2023

Festival News



It has almost been 12 months since the Festival Launch Banquet in 2022, where we were privileged to have the support and attendance of Sir Paul Williams, *OBE*, (Deputy President of the MCF) and Howard Wilson, Head of Fundraising for the Charity. Our Festival Appeal aims to raise £2.4M by 2026 and, as of 31st January 2023, our projected total is:

£ 978,256

By far the most important thing to say is **“Thank you”**. Thank you to the many individuals (brethren and family members) who have signed up to monthly regular payments or have made single larger donations to the Festival, to the Lodges and Districts who have given or held events in support of the Festival, and to the Royal Arch and other Orders, Masonic Halls, Luncheon Clubs or other bodies who have also contributed.

This projection is calculated from monies already donated, plus the total amount we will have accumulated if all paying by regular payments keep them up until after the end of the appeal period.

The truth is that the best and only way we will achieve our target is if more members make a personal commitment. **To date only 18.3 % (less than 1 in 5) have signed up to a regular payment and we would really like more to consider this.** At his Installation the Provincial Grand Master, RWBro Robert Frankl, said:



“In the years running up to the Festival, we can look forward to many more happy social and fundraising events, not losing sight of the fact that the bedrock of a Festival total to be proud of, will be the personal financial commitment each of us individually makes.”

This is so true, so if you aren't already, please consider setting up an affordable regular

payment by [CLICKING ON THIS LINK](#).

A printable version of the form, if you prefer, is [HERE](#). Remember, if you can afford £5, £10 or £20 per month matters not, and the charity can claim 25% Gift Aid back on all donations made in this manner if you are a UK Tax Payer.

In their financial year, 2021/22, the MCF awarded £19.6M to support the work of 726 Charities and help 3281 Individuals and Families.

The Masonic Charitable Foundation is funded entirely through the donations of Freemasons, their families and friends. The core work of the Charity is responding to the needs of disadvantaged people and communities across England, Wales, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and internationally.



Other ways to support the Appeal

Donate: Beyond personal regular or single payments many Lodges and Chapters give collectively at their Installation or other meetings. We welcome all such donations but also please consider using **GIFT AID ENVELOPES**, either for the Lodge collection, at the social board or at events. All District Charity Stewards have stocks of these, and provided that all participants are aware that the donations are for the MCF the process is simple: Collect the envelopes, complete a verification form and send all to the MCF with a cheque. This way the Lodges total donation is recognised and magnified by the 25 % Gift Aid element, and the Individuals envelope donation is added to their personal donation total too. [CLICK HERE FOR GIVING RESOURCES](#).

Fundraise: Social or sponsored events help raise vital funds for the Festival Appeal and individuals or Lodges can give careful consideration to planning or holding one or more events each year. Most importantly we should be **putting 'fun' into 'fundraising'**. [CLICK HERE](#) to see how easy it is to set up an online fundraising page for your event or activity. You can then share your page through social media or email.

Spread the Word: The 2026 Festival Appeal is not just about raising vital funds; it is also an opportunity to educate every member in East Lancashire about the support available and the work carried out in our Province and wider afield. Remember—anyone finding themselves in need must know that they can approach the MCF. To find out more about the **MCF's impact** [CLICK HERE](#).

Online Shop

The Province's online shop fully supports the Festival and is where you can purchase Festival ties, gloves and all kinds of Festival related '**sustainable**' goods and other items.



With our partner, 'Zero-negativity' we have tried to ensure all goods are eco-friendly (including the packaging and tags used) and all products are of really good quality and value.

There is a **custom** section where you can order merchandise featuring your own Lodge, Chapter or club crest. Halls can even order workwear for staff and there are a range of gifts available for Installations or anniversary meetings.

Website: [East Lancashire Freemasons Shop](#) (Also on Facebook)

Since the formation of the MCF in 2016, in this Province alone, it has awarded well over 1000 grants to Freemasons and their families amounting to almost £2.5M. Most were supported with daily living costs and others were helped with health, care and support for children and young people to give them the best start in life.

During the same period above, almost 100 Charities within the Province received grants amounting to almost £1M. A wide range of charities have been supported in all of our Districts. In addition £130K was given to help our response to COVID providing PPE, meals for the vulnerable and many other projects. So in total MCF support has been almost £3M.

Provincial Events

ZIPWIRE CHALLENGE

14th May 2022

This is the next Provincial Event and we can tell you that the Provincial Grand Master himself is taking part. In fact a number of well known names are, so **get behind them and offer your support.**



If you want to have an exhilarating and fun day out then sign up and join us at Zipworld in North Wales. Entrants will travel over 1.5km, reaching speeds of up to 100 mph. Open to Masons and non-Masons.

We expect participants to raise a minimum of £100 for the Festival through sponsorship and the cost of entry is £90 per person.

Once enrolled you will be given your own personal MCF Fundraising page to share with your potential supporters and access to paper sponsorship forms if you need those. We have partnered with MCF and opened a Relief Chest just for the Zipwire Challenge.

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP](#)

The system works similarly to Just Giving but 100% of the donations will be for the Festival and it also allows for Gift Aid Tax Reclaim.

The proceeds from all participants will be collected together into Relief Chest Number E0026a.

You can see a list of participants [HERE](#) and find their fundraising page therein.

And if you just want to support the event generally, you can donate directly into the Relief Chest—see QR Code to the right. Point your phone camera at it and wait for it to be detected.

Participants must be < 130KG, over 1.2m high and under 18s must be accompanied/supervised by adults.



In order to carry out its valuable work on our behalf, the MCF relies on income from general donors, investment income and legacies. But circa 40% of it's income comes from Provinces in Festival. Without that income the MCF would be restricted in the work that it could do. Since the formation of the MCF East Lancashire consistently receives more than it gives. We have EL 2026 to really try to give something back.

Since 2016, nationally, the MCF has given well in excess of £100M. This equates to about £52K per day. In 2020 it is estimated that masonic charity (from all sources) was £51.1M, with over 18.5M hours of volunteer work in their communities.

Events Continued....

From Quiz Nights to Race Nights, and from Murder Mystery Evenings to Sponsored walks, fun and fundraising are taking place across the Province.

Please help us to support your event.

We will publicise it as

best as we can through the Charity Stewards and Communications Officers network, on Provincial Social media channels and on the Provincial website [HERE](#). You can email us at el2026@eastlancsfreemasons.org.uk

We also want to see News from your event so we can publicise your success across the Province and encourage others to follow your lead.

Most Festival events are about raising funds whilst having a great time, and most functions are family and friends inclusive. They offer a great opportunity to showcase Freemasonry—a force for good in an uncertain world. Please support events in your area to the best of your ability, and who knows, your next Initiate, may just have had his interest piqued at a function you took him too.



In 1725 the Premier Grand Lodge established a Committee of Charity to deliberate on petitions and Grant Assistance. Today circa 70% of the money given by the Masonic Charitable Foundation is to Freemasons and their dependents who have a financial, health related, education or care need.

In 1850 Robert Crucefix established the RMBI—'an asylum for worthy, aged and decayed Freemasons'. Today the charity (under the MCF) runs 18 homes providing residential, nursing and dementia care as well as funding towards care within the system in other homes.

The MCF—a short history



Freemasonry is one of the oldest social and charitable organisations. In times before a welfare state (in fact as far back as the early 18th century), it created charities to look after the wellbeing of members and their families, but over time it has evolved into a major supporter of charities and causes beyond Freemasonry, throughout local communities across the country. The Masonic Charitable Foundation was formed in 2016 bringing together the work of four separate charities: The Freemasons' Grand Charity, The Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys, the Masonic Samaritan Fund and the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution.

Today, strategically, the MCF is very well aligned with UGLE, and the two separate organisations are mutually supportive in many ways. Their principal raisons d'être are to support us, and help us build and maintain our prime values—Integrity, Friendship, Respect and Charity. Charity is often our biggest 'hook' to connect with society at large and, when we do, there is often a recruitment opportunity and/or a chance to offer a new and different, positive perspective on Freemasonry.



DONATE NOW

Festival Appeal Committee

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Email:
el2026@eastlancsmasons.org.uk

[Website](#)



The members of the Appeal Committee have specific roles but work collectively to facilitate and manage the implementation of agreed Festival strategy. The APGMs lead the Festival Appeal in their areas, which is managed locally by the District Festival Manager (District Charity Steward) with support from his District Chairman and the rest of the Team.

You may well find your Chairman, his Deputy and the District Charity Steward asking to speak at the Social Board on Festival matters and Grand Officers / Installation Representatives will also be well versed on Festival themes. This all sounds excellent but the reality is that it is your Lodge Festival Representative (often the Charity Steward) who is best placed to speak with you on Festival matters and news from the MCF. Please therefore support him when it comes to Fund Raising within the Lodge, and save him from contacting you (when it comes to personal giving) by approaching him.

Each of us has the capacity to make this appeal a success, by way of our contributions, by arranging fundraising, or by spreading the word and the important messages to others. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Did you know?

Charity and Freemasons

Charity is in a Freemason's DNA. It is the focus of our First Degree ceremony and its importance and virtues are the first lesson a newly made Freemason learns.

In our Province the East Lancashire Masonic Charity (ELMC) is currently looking after some 665 Beneficiaries. Many of these are Widows of closed Lodges but a large subset are Brethren, Widows, Spinsters, Young People, Married Couples, Bachelors and Hewlett Court Residents. The ELMC works closely with the MCF to provide for all those in need. Every year about 80% of the financial support the beneficiaries need comes from the MCF; our local charity, the ELMC, provides the rest. Without the MCF our work would be impossible. In 2021/22 the MCF gave £440,259 in masonic grants in East Lancashire, supporting 116 disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals, and gave £193,737 to a total of 22 charities within the confines of the Province.

President	Provincial Grand Master
Deputy President	DepPGM
Chairman	Chad Northcott, PAPGM
Festival APGM	John Griffin, APGM
Deputy Chairman	Terry Kakoullis, Past District Chairman
Provincial Festival Steward	Robert Findlay, Provincial Charity Steward
ELMC Liaison	Julie Ward ELMC Operations
Treasurer	David Cowen, ELMC Treasurer
Fundraising Manager	Steve Thomson, ELMC FR Committee
Communications Managers	Rachel Cookson and Gerry Russell (ELMC Comms)
Events Planning & Coordination	Susan O'Neill, Secretariat
Merchandising & Admin Manager	Karen Hall ELMC Administration
Advisory Officer	Derek Calrow OBE
MCF Liaison	David Hudson, Provincial Almoner

Provincial Festival Dates for your Diary

Festival Quiz Grand Final, Ashday Lea, Rawtenstall -Wednesday 19th April 2023

Zip Wire Event—Sunday 14th May 2023

Sponsored Walk and Fun Day at Hewlett Court— TBC—June or July

Variety Show, Empire Theatre, Blackburn - Friday 27th October 2023

Christmas Festival 'Event' - Saturday 18th November 2023—more details to follow.

It's a Knock Out—Hewlett Court—2024—Date and details TBC

Soap Box Derby, Hoghton Towers—25th May 2025—Further information in due course