

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



## NEWSLETTER

May 2023



## Flying for the Festival

Sunday 14th May 2023 and inspired by their desire to make a difference, the above crew attended a thrilling charity zipline event to raise funds for the Festival. Little did they know that their endeavours would test their courage, create fantastic memories and help to raise some £25,000 for Charity. The event took place in Wales at ZipWorld, where the world's fastest Zipline, "Velocity2" resides. Once details of the zipline were published, word quickly spread throughout East Lancashire, and people from all walks of life eagerly signed up to participate. It was only a short time later that a group of forty-eight remarkable individuals assembled.

Among the participants was the Provincial Grand Master of East Lancashire, Robert Frankl, who managed to swap his usual PGM's Apron for a less fancy Zipline apron; accompanying him were two Assistant Provincial Grand Masters, Mark Davis & David McGurty. Some less-abled members also participated in the event, and they jumped right in without hesitation; taking the plunge with everyone else.

The zipline, stretched dauntingly across the old quarry. In groups of four the participants set off, soaring through the air with exhilaration; their screams of joy and muffled curse words echoed across the quarry as they hit over 100mph. Participants each enjoyed their moment of triumph as the onlookers, friends, and family cheered from below. As the last person touched down on the other side of the valley, the participants couldn't help but feel a sense of accomplishment. They had experienced an adrenaline-fueled adventure and raised incredible money for

charity. Afterwards, the participants all congregated at Bangor Masonic Hall where the Provincial Grand Master expressed his sincere thanks to all who organised, took part in the event or came to support.



Did you know that the  
Masonic Charitable  
Foundation is one of the  
largest Grant Giving  
Foundations in the country

The MCF is unique in that it  
does not raise money from  
the public. Its work is entirely  
funded through the generous  
donations of Freemasons,  
their families and friends.  
Approximately 40% of this  
funding is from the Festival  
system. There are currently  
25 Provinces in Festival mode

## Happy 7th Birthday to the MCF



This year the MCF celebrates 7 years since its formation in 2016, from an amalgamation of the previous Four masonic charities—the Grand Charity, the Masonic Samaritan Fund, the Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys and the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution. This Amalgamation has been successful with there now being one combined masonic support department. Most of the masonic work within the Province is administered by the East Lancashire Masonic Charity (ELMC) working in conjunction with the Provincial Grand Almoner and his team of Provincial Welfare Officers. The ELMC has its own Benevolence Committee which alongside the MCF further gives support to our Beneficiaries. Indeed the core functions of both the MCF and the ELMC are focused on the welfare of Freemasons and their Families.

In addition the MCF gives Grants to other Charities that operate within the core aims of the Charity. Such support includes grants aimed at reducing loneliness and isolation in later life and supporting the needs of disadvantaged and young people to help offer them the best start in life. There are 7 Charity Grant programmes as detailed below.

Approximately 75% of total charitable expenditure goes to Freemasons and their families when in need, and the remainder to non-masonic charities - on application and after rigorous due diligence and exploration.

 <p><b>Large Grants</b> For charities whose annual income is between £500,000 and £5m</p>	 <p><b>Small Grants</b> For charities whose annual income is between £25,000 and £500,000</p>	 <p><b>Hospice Grants</b> MCF Bursary scheme and themed project grants</p>	 <p><b>Strategic Partnerships</b> Large scale national partnerships</p>	 <p><b>Matched Funding</b> For charities awarded grants by Provinces in the local community</p>	 <p><b>Festival Grants</b> For charities nominated by Provinces in Festival</p>	 <p><b>Medical Research</b> PHD Studentships</p>
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## What is a QR Code

Try pointing your photo app on your mobile phone at this one and then click on the link to find out where it takes you. When you are collecting donations for the Festival in Lodge, Chapter or at the Social Board, this is an easy way to collect donations which also attract GIFT AID. And all donations collected this way are attributed to both the Lodge and the Individual. This is similar to using Gift Aid envelopes but cuts out the laborious part of that process.



**In East Lancashire alone, since its formation 7 years ago, the MCF has awarded 1200 Grants, totalling £2.5M supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged freemasons and their families: 200 Grants to support children and young people, 700 grants to relieve financial hardship and over 250 Grants to fund health and medical treatments.**

**In its first 7 years the MCF has awarded 114 Grants to local charities within East Lancashire totalling almost £1M. In addition to this, charities within the Province have benefitted from the National Strategic Partnerships the MCF has with Age UK, Hospice UK, Home Start UK and the Cranfield Trust. Overall our Province consistently receives back more than it gives to the MCF!**

## Festival Progress

The Pledged Festival total as of 30th April 2023 stands at **£1,126,072**.

**A very big thank you** to the hundreds of people signed up for regular payment promises (RPPs) and to all those brethren, wives, Lodges, Chapters and other masonic bodies who have donated so freely to the Festival. **Thank you also to all those who are wearing their Festival Jewels with pride.**

The truth is though that this figure is the total amount we will raise assuming that all those signed up for monthly payments by direct debit maintain their payments for the full term of their plan. Currently only 1 in 5 brethren have taken this important step, and we will only be in with a chance of achieving our target (£2.4M) if many more become involved.

We will celebrate our collective achievement at the culmination of the Appeal, the Festival, in late 2026. Our counting end date is December 2027 and so we are now urging brethren and companions to take out new RPPs over 4 years instead of 5, maybe for a slightly higher amount. Whether you can afford £2, £5, £10 or £20 per month matters not; it is the collective regular donations with added Gift Aid that makes a difference.



Since its formation in 2016 the MCF has awarded over 38,000 Grants to support vulnerable or disadvantaged Freemasons or their families. It has also given over 4300 Grants to fund the work of local and national charities that are supporting communities across England and Wales. In total the MCF has given over **£120M**. This equates to **about £50,000 every day**

MAKE A REGULAR DONATION TO A

## PROVINCIAL FESTIVAL

East Lancashire 2026 Festival

[CLICK ON THIS IMAGE](#)

to set up a regular payment to the 2026 Festival. Payments which will total £240 or more immediately qualifies you for a Stewards Jewel. And

the Honoric for Vice Patron starts at £480, Patron £720 and Grand Patron £1200.

If you prefer a paper RPP form they can be downloaded from the [MCF website](#). And if you prefer to arrange by telephone then Bidget at the MCF is sitting at her desk waiting to talk with you.

### Donate over the phone

To set up a regular donation:

020 3146 3345

To make a single donation by debit or credit card:

020 3146 3346



### UKRAINE CRISIS APPEAL

Together with UGLE, the MCF set up the appeal and within a few weeks Freemasons had raised over **£1.1M** to support those displaced by the invasion. This money has been dispersed with half going to aid agencies working in Ukraine and Eastern Europe, and half going to UK Charities supporting those who have relocated here seeking safety —often with young children.



## The Provincial Quiz

On 19th April the Grand Final of the Provincial Quiz took place at Rawtenstall Masonic Hall. There was an excellent atmosphere during the evening with all attending clearly having a good time. A worthy finale of all the successful heats that took place across the Province which is testament to the hard work by all involved.

A big thank you to all those involved in organising this wonderful event. A special thanks to the RW Provincial Grand Master Robert Frankl and his Wife Fiona for attending, along with the Deputy PGM VWBro John Farrington with Christine and APGM WBro John Griffin with Sue.

A special thank you goes to Chris Henthorn for hosting the final as well as being involved in the majority of the District Quiz Events. The various District quizzes leading up to this event were great nights—with so many brethren and their families demonstrating the ‘fun’ to be had in fundraising. The



Provincial Charity Shield was awarded to Zion Menorah Lodge, No. 1798 by the PGM / Festival President. We are hoping this will become an Annual Event within the Province and look forward to next year.

Did you know that the MCF funds Medical Research. There are circa 25-30 active projects—PhD studentships - with a current theme of childhood diseases. Follow the LINK to find out how one such grant has funded vital research in Motor Neurone Disease and how the recipient delves deep into neuroscience.



**FREEMASONRY GIVES**  
Becoming a Fund Raiser for the MCF is easy. Anyone can use the platform for their own or their Lodge or Chapter's events or escapades. Click on the image to begin:

[Become a fundraiser >](#)

This is the obvious choice for sponsored events, and also attracts Gift Aid on donations.



## Online Shop

The Province's online 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), excellent quality and good 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)



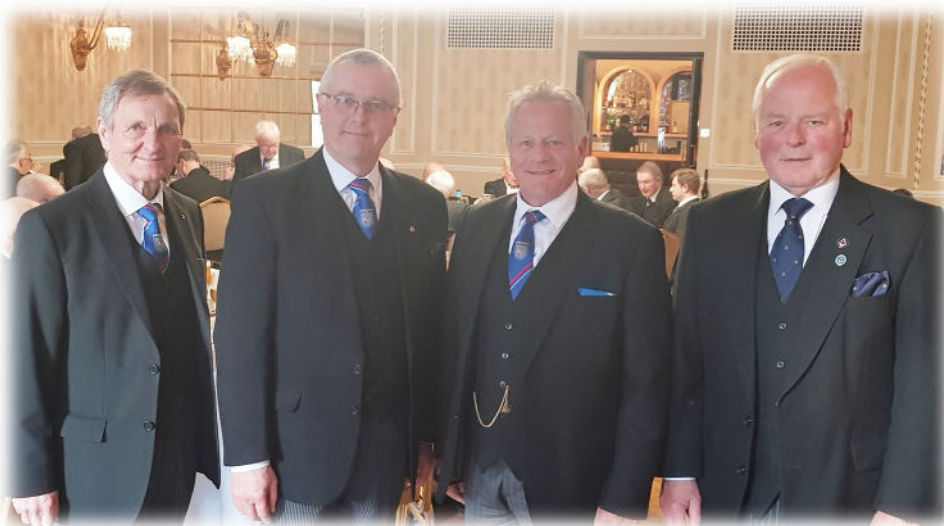
MCF IMPACT REPORT

## Provincial Grand Officers Chapter No. 3747

The Royal Arch is fast becoming an excellent supporter of the EL 2026 Festival and is working as one with the Craft Province in encouraging support for the Festival. So much so that on 11th May the premier Chapter in the Province treated the Companions to an informative and enjoyable night in the company of EComp Howard Wilson, one of 16 Trustees of the MCF and the Chair of the MCF's Fundraising Committee. Howard is no stranger to Festivals having served as the Chair for Worcester's 2011 Appeal in support of the RMTGB and also their Provincial Grand Charity Steward.

Howard captivated the Companions with a short history of the formation of the MCF and about his role in overseeing the work of our National Charity. He spoke eloquently about the support the MCF gives to Freemasons—financially, with health care, education (ensuring that children, **grandchildren** and young people have the same educational and other opportunities as their friends) and care options for older, disabled and seriously ill members of the masonic community.

Some of the fascinating facts in this Newsletter were provided by Howard as he talked about the sheer scale of support the MCF has to offer when the need arises.



Howard Wilson (right) accompanied by the Deputy Grand Superintendent, EComp Harvey Basger, the DepPGM, John Farrington (left) and 1st P — Andrew Holland (2nd)

### Festival Appeal Committee

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Did you know that the MCF offers free mental health support. If you are feeling down, have symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress or other mental health concerns then you may be able to access this service ran by an independent team of professional counsellors and therapists. This service is also available to children and grandchildren aged between 5 and 16 years and covers anxiety, PTSD, exam stress or just to talk about feelings, friendship issues and bullying etc.

**Get Support**

## Provincial Festival Dates for your Diary

Sponsored Walk and Fun Day at Hewlett Court— 22nd July 2023

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

Festival 2026 Tinsel and Tie Dinner Dance—18th November 2023

Grand Raffle 2024—TBA

Walk the Province—2024—TBC

Young People's Committee It's a Knock Out—Hewlett Court—2024—Date and details TBA

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