

Provincial Grand Almoner

Report for Provincial Grand Lodge – November 2024

The office of Almoner is an integral part of our Craft Lodges and Royal Arch Chapters. It is there to support our members and their families who are of paramount importance to us all, ensuring that no cry for help goes unheeded.

Firstly, I would like to thank David Hudson for the extraordinary handover he afforded me in his last few months in post. He did warn me that the Role of Provincial Grand Almoner is extremely busy and, of course, he was not wrong.

Throughout the year I have found myself humbled by the many cases of our Brethren and their loved ones who have found themselves in distress but heartened by the support that has been afforded by the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF) and our own East Lancashire Masonic Charity (ELMC).

I would also like to thank the Area Almoners for their tireless work supporting our Lodge Almoners and for the work they do on behalf of the MCF as Visiting Volunteers, meeting applicants and beneficiaries. Finally, a thank you to Julie Ward and the Team at Hewlett Court for all they do in supporting us all.

My first year in office has been extremely busy. The number of applications has increased as the year has progressed. It is also noticeable that the applicants' needs are often more complex and, therefore, applications and cases have become more complicated.

In November 2023, the Care, Advice and Support for Older People Programme was launched in our Province. The service has already proven its worth for many of our members and their families. Advice on care, and how best to find support for our families, can be a nightmare. This service can be used to seek assistance for our members, their children, parents and even grandparents.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to myself, or one of the Area Almoners, should you need any assistance – 'it is our duty to attend the comfort of the aged and unfortunate among our Brethren and dependants'.

Tony Stephenson PProvDepGDC

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