

Provincial Grand Almoner

Report for Provincial Grand Lodge – November 2025

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.

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

The MCF is the Freemasons charity and is there to support our members and their families when life takes an unexpected turn. It provides grants and support services for financial, health, family and care related needs. Of course, in East Lancashire we are so fortunate to have our own charity, the ELMC, that can provide additional care and support.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of a couple of initiatives.

Firstly, the Care, Advice and Support for Older People. 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. In some instances, small grants are available to assist with individual top ups.

Secondly, we continue to see a rise in the number of members and their families who are feeling down or have symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress or other mental concern. The MCF can help with mental health support. It operates a service run by an independent team of professional counsellors that can provide both telephone and face to face sessions. When counselling sessions are not appropriate, they can offer other forms of therapy.

I would 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. I would also like to thank Julie Ward and the Team at Hewlett Court for all they do on behalf of the ELMC and in supporting us all.

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’.

Finally, I wish you and your families the very best of health for the coming year.

Tony Stephenson PProvGSwdB
Provincial Grand Almoner