

United Masonic Charity Committee

Trustees' Annual Report for the period 1st January 2022 – 31st December 2022

Reference & Administration Details

Charity name: United Masonic Charity Committee

Registered charity number: NIC 101757

Principle address: 40 Orangefield Gardens
Belfast
BT5 6DP

Names of the trustees who manage the charity:

Chairman	Tony Blair
Vice Chairman	John Nixon
Treasurer	Russell Parkes
Secretary	Desmond Boyd
Asst Treasurer	David Cairns
Gift Aid Organisers	Trevor McCaughey Graham Walker
Trustee	David Mercer

Structure, Governance & Management

The United Masonic Charity Committee is an unincorporated association and is governed by a constitution adopted on 27th February 2012 and last amended on 7th July 2015.

The Charity Committee is managed and administered by a Management Committee comprising the officers and other members elected in accordance with the constitution to act as trustees.

The Charity Committee does not pay or remunerate any trustee or member of the Committee.

Objectives & Activities

The principal function of the United Masonic Charity Committee is to raise funds through the various Masonic Lodges situated within its District. It does so by promoting the benefits of fundraising to the members of the Lodges, assisting them with collecting information about potential beneficiaries and identifying other sources of income for those beneficiaries, such as rate rebates or other forms of income support. It does this with the assistance of dedicated individuals within each lodge.

Potential beneficiaries are identified by the respective lodges and application forms completed and forwarded to the Committee. These are reviewed, collated and forwarded to the most suitable Masonic Fund.

The Committee receives all funds raised by the Lodges, collates, claims tax relief and distributes to the respective Masonic Funds for distribution to beneficiaries.

The Committee can, additionally, assist in other charitable purposes as set out in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 throughout Northern Ireland.

The trustees of the United Masonic Charity Committee confirm that they have complied with their duty under Section 3 Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) to have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and that the public benefit requirement has informed the activities of the Committee in the year to 31st December 2022.

Achievements & Performance

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic there was only one full meeting of the Committee in 2020 and none in 2021. Communication during this period was maintained by the management committee via electronic means. With the relaxation of restrictions physical meetings thankfully recommenced in 2022.

Autism NI, based in Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Belfast, is Northern Ireland's longest serving autism charity and training provider. They campaign to inspire and educate local people, communities, businesses and government to ensure everyone can understand autism, and how to support autistic people. Representatives from this charity attended the April committee meeting and following an interesting and informative presentation were presented with a cheque for £500.00.

The Committee, through its respective Lodges, raised funds and passed on £31k to various Masonic Funds; the principle fund being the Victoria Jubilee Masonic Benevolent Fund who continue to support some 50 widows residing within the District.

Our outreach to the local community was continued in December when we were at last able to recommence our annual Christmas Carol Service in St Patrick's Parish Church. This was attended by the families of Masonic brethren and local residents alike. This support allowed for donations to both Church and Masonic Funds. Christmas gifts were also delivered by Santa to a large number of children in attendance.

Financial Review

An opening balance of £23k in January 2022 was a result of no meetings having taken place in 2021 thereby preventing the dispersal of funds in the normal manner. This amount was added to by a further £3k of gift aided contributions, £8k of non gift aided contributions and £5k relating to an HMRC gift aid reclaim for 2021.

No portion of any subscription, donation, devise or bequest or of any money obtained by way of reclaim of income tax shall be utilised for administration expense or for any purpose whatsoever, other than that of assisting any duly constituted Masonic Charity or other charitable purposes as set out in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

The trustees hold in reserve an amount appropriate to provide emergency assistance in suitable cases as approved by a majority of the Committee.

The Committee is not intending to levy any costs on Lodges for administration as ongoing voluntary donations from Lodges to offset expenses allows for sufficient funds within its Committee Account to meet those costs for the foreseeable future.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Committee's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the assets and liabilities of the Charity. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the 'Trustees' Annual Report' above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees.

Signature(s) *Tony Blair*

Trevor McCaughey

Full name(s) Tony Blair

Trevor McCaughey

Position Chairman

Past Chairman

Date 7th March 2023

7th March 2023