

United Masonic Charity Committee

Trustees' Annual Report for the period 1st January 2023 – 31st December 2023

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 2023.

Achievements & Performance

The Committee, through its respective Lodges, raised funds and passed on £22k to various Masonic Benevolent Institutions. The principle fund being the Freemasons of Ireland Victoria Jubilee Benevolent & Welfare Fund who continue to support some 50 widows residing within the District.

The Marie Curie Hospice, Belfast is a charity dedicated to providing a range of care and support for people with life-limiting conditions, ensuring that they get the care they need, when they need it, within their local committee. Mr Aiden Campbell, local author and long-term volunteer and fundraiser with Marie Curie attended the April committee meeting and following an interesting and informative presentation was presented with a cheque for £500.00.

In addition, individual Lodges through their own independent fund raising, forwarded over £10.5k to local charities and good causes in their respective areas.

Financial Review

The Committee received c£12k in Gift Aided Contributions and c£10k in non-Gift Aided Contributions.

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 4th March 2024

4th March 2024