

LISBURN AND DISTRICT MASONIC CHARITY FUND

TRUSTEES REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

CCNI 24 Apl 24

INFORMATION ON THE FUND

The Lisburn & District Masonic Charity Fund is subject to the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2022.

It is registered with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland,

Charity No 106216

The operation of The Charity Fund is governed by its Constitution and Rules, originally dated 13 February 1995 with subsequent amendments dated 14 September 2015, 14 November 2016, 10 September 2018, 12 November 2018 and 11 March 2019.

Its members are masonic units that have their meeting place in a masonic hall situated within the Lisburn District as defined by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim.

Craft Lodges elect three representatives, and Royal Arch Chapters, Councils of Knight Masons, Preceptory, and Prince Masons each elect two representatives to The Charity Fund Committee where they are entitled to vote at General, Special General, and Annual General Meetings. The masonic units are usually represented by their Almoner and Stewart of Charities, and in the case of Craft Lodges an additional representative is nominated.

The Charity Fund Committee elects The Charity Fund Board of Trustees at its Annual General Meeting, including the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and Gift Aid Secretary.

The Charity Fund Board of Trustees is responsible for the governance, strategy, management, and administration of The Charity Fund. The objectives of The Charity Fund are:-

- (A) To relieve the poverty of widows of freemasons, relatives of freemasons, and freemasons who are experiencing financial hardship, and
- (B) To assist any duly constituted masonic charity, any other charitable masonic undertaking, or any non-masonic charity approved by the members of The Charity Fund Committee, and
- (C) At its discretion, to provide financial assistance for other charitable purposes as defined in The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008

The Charity Fund Committee meets monthly, apart from the summer months and December. The Charity Fund Board of Trustees meets as and when required.

The Charity Fund receives donations that have been collected by its member masonic units, and from various fund-raising events organised by The Charity Fund Committee, Tax on Gift Aid donations is reclaimed, and all of the collected monies are donated to registered masonic and non-masonic charities.

The administrative costs of operating The Charity Fund are paid for by working expense donations from the member masonic units, and by members' ballots conducted at the monthly meetings of the Committee. The Trustees act in a voluntary capacity and receive no

remuneration other than any payments for expenses incurred in the operation of The Charity Fund.

The bankers to The Charity Fund are Danske Bank, PO Box 183, Donegall Square West, Belfast BT1 6JS. The Charity Fund operates two bank accounts, one the Charity Account for receiving charity donations and making charitable payments; and one the Working Expenses Account for the administrative costs of operating The Charity Fund.

The Charity Fund has Trustee, Public Liability, and Employers' Liability insurance to provide cover for those involved in the various activities and functions of The Charity Fund.

The annual accounts of The Charity Fund are prepared on a receipts and payments basis, based on the transactions recorded in the Fund's bank accounts where all monies received are lodged. The accounts of The Charity Fund are scrutinised by an Independent Examiner.

The address of the Fund is Lisburn Masonic Hall, 11 Belsize Road, Lisburn, Co Antrim BT27 4LA

TRUSTEES

Mel Bacon

Chairman

Mark Henderson

Secretary

Harold White

Treasurer

Brian Hampton

Gift Aid Secretary

Eddie Carson

Samuel Jamison

Girvin Mairs

Arthur Morgan

Geoffrey Rea

TRUSTEES REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

It is very pleasing to report a further good recovery in donation levels in 2023 from the Covid-hit years of 2021 and 2022. The total raised last year amounted to £19,392 and donations made totalled £20,375 that compared with the figures of £11,466 and £4,745 respectively in 2022.

The Trustees are extremely grateful for the generous support of the brethren of the Lisburn District, and their friends who supported our events.

Donations from our masonic units almost doubled from £7,925 in 2022 to £14,170 with the biggest increase coming from craft lodges where donations received increased from £2,463 to £9,635. Of our fundraising activities the Night of the Races raised £1,953, the AGM Ballot £485, and by 31 December the Fireside Quiz had raised £307.

A tax refund of £1,776 was received on Gift Aid donations.

Donations for Working Expenses from our member units totalled £389, and the members' monthly ballot totalled £304, providing in total of £693 to cover the operating expenses of the Charity Fund that amounted to £632 in 2023.

Of the total donations of £20375 made by the Fund, Restricted (or designated) Donations amounted to £5,397 and Unrestricted Donations amounted to £14,978. From this latter account, donations made by the Fund included £1,000 to Age NI, £300 to St Mark's Church Ballymacash, £6,839 to the newly constituted Freemasons Ireland Victoria Jubilee & Welfare Fund, and £6,839 to the Belfast Masonic Charity Fund. Including the Restricted Donations designated for the latter two charities, the total amounts donated to the Freemasons Fund was £9,682. And to the Belfast Fund was £8,104. A Restricted Donation of £1,200 was made to the Fleming Fulton School at the request of a member lodge.

In November, we were very pleased to welcome Andrea McAfee from Age NI to a meeting of our members where she gave a very interesting talk on their services. It was well received by our members.

With donations made during the year exceeding donations received the accounts show a deficit of £1,672 but with the cash brought forward from 2022 of £6,178, it leaves a cash balance of £4,903 at the year-end for distribution in the coming year.

With the return to a more normal level of activity it is the hope of the Trustees that the current level of donations can be maintained or improved upon in 2024.

The Charity Fund Board of Trustees has given careful consideration to The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the past year have helped to achieve The Charity Fund's objectives, and that they provide a public benefit.

Approved and adopted at a meeting of The Charity Fund Board of Trustees on 4 March 2024, and signed on their behalf by

Mel Bacon

Chairman, The Lisburn and District Masonic Charity Committee

