

2024 MCF Festival FAQs



What is the 2024 MCF Festival?

Periodically, each Province under the jurisdiction of the United Grand Lodge of England is invited to raise funds for the Masonic Charitable Foundation in a Festival appeal. This Province's 2024 MCF Festival will run for six years from March 2018, culminating in 2024. The Province's target is £2.024m. Each Lodge has a target as a contribution towards the Provincial target.

Is the Masonic Charitable Foundation the same as the Provincial Grand Charity?

No, they two are completely separate. They have similar roles, the PGC in the geographical area of the Province and the MCF (one of the largest Charities in the UK) at national level (England and Wales). The role of each is to support Freemasons and their families first and foremost and, secondly, the wider community. The Province benefits from a committed group of Almoners who maintain regular contact with Masonic families to identify support needs and a smaller group of trained Local Support Officers who's role is to ease access to MCF funding and support.

Why should I support the 2024 MCF Festival?

Because its YOUR national Masonic charity. You contribute to it. You can benefit from it in time off need. It is an opportunity for us to demonstrate the fraternal nature of our Order and its charitable heritage.

What does the MCF do?

It is there to support you and your family in time of need. This support includes financial help for those in distressed circumstances, help with urgently needed medical treatment, bursaries for gifted children of Masonic families, care home facilities, counselling, will writing service and respite help for carers. The MCF spends two thirds of its grants (£34m last year) on Masons and their families. It uses the remaining third to improve the lives of thousands not connected to Freemasonry in this country and overseas.

How is the MCF financed?

It is funded entirely through the generosity of Freemasons and their families. Every Freemason contributes £17 annually to the MCF through his Lodge subscription. At any one time there are about 30 Provinces (out of 47) that are in Festival, actively raising funds for the MCF through Festivals. These last on average for about six years. The MCF also derives income from investments, from HMRC through claiming back gift aid and through legacies.

How will our Festival funds be raised?

It is expected that by far the highest contributions will be from Lodge Relief Chests. That is why it is so important that every member of the Province should, wherever possible, have a Regular Payment Promise in favour of his Lodge's Relief Chest. There will also be major Provincial wide fund raising events and local raffles, gift aided collections, individual donations and other fund raising events.

I contribute to my Lodge alms collection and buy raffle tickets, why do I need to take out a Regular Payment Promise?

Alms collections and raffle proceeds do not normally contribute towards the Festival. The best way in which your Lodge can accumulate charitable funds for this purpose is through its Relief Chest. Donations can be gift aided, adding 25p in the pound for the basic rate tax payer and a rate of interest that is the best available. The Lodge can then be in a good position to reach its target. It can also support any registered charity with donations from its Relief Chest.

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But why do we need to support the MCF if we have our own Lodge charity account and also the Provincial Grand Charity?

There may come a time when a member of your Lodge finds himself in distressed circumstances and neither the Lodge charity account nor the Provincial Grand Charity has enough resources to help him. In this case the MCF is there to provide what is needed. By contributing to this MCF Festival your Lodge is also putting into practice two of the three pillars of Freemasonry, brotherly love and relief. It is acting fraternally in helping fellow brethren and providing charity.

What does the MCF do for this Province?

By its very nature, much of the work of the MCF is confidential. In most cases, detailed case histories cannot be given. We can tell you that every day, across the Province, Freemasons and their families are benefitting from grants and support for medical treatment, mobility aids, home adaptations, help with essential daily living expenses, help through bereavement, redundancy or other personal crisis, support for exceptional talent, essential costs of education and training, scholarships and travel grants, Masonic Care Homes and Respite Care. All thanks to the quiet diligence and commitment of our Almoners and Local Support Officers working closely with a dedicated team of grants officers at the MCF. Overall statistics are available showing numbers of cases and total expenditure on them. Provincial Grand Charity accounts are published on the Provincial website and other details are included in the Provincial Grand Almoner's Report in the Yearbook.

How will the Festival be administered?

The Festival's President is the Provincial Grand Master and its Chairman the Deputy Provincial Grand Master. They will be supported by the Provincial Grand Charity Steward and a Festival Committee on which there will be a representative from each area of the Province. The key Festival representative in your Lodge will be your Lodge Charity Steward. For details of your local Festival Committee representative please see your Lodge Charity Steward or the Provincial website.

What is an Honorific?

An Honorific is an award based on an individual Mason's level of contribution to the Festival and is marked by a Festival jewel that can be purchased for £10 and worn at all Craft and Holy Royal Arch meetings. To qualify for a Festival Steward's jewel a member must contribute, or pledge to contribute, £600 or more to the Festival over its six years life span. For higher levels of Honorific jewels please see your Lodge Charity Steward or the Provincial website. The wearing of the Festival jewel is a matter of personal choice but it is a visible acknowledgement of support for the Festival.



How do I know if I qualify for an Honorific?

Just ask your Lodge Charity Steward. He will be able to tell you.

How can I find out more?

- your Lodge Charity Steward or Provincial Grand Charity Steward
- Provincial website - <http://www.northants-huntsmasons.org.uk/2024festival>
- MCF website - <https://mcf.org.uk>
- Facebook N&H 2024 Festival
- Twitter, @2024festival, @GerryPrGChStwd, @NHMasons, @Masonic_Charity
- MCF leaflets that should be available in your Masonic centre