

THE CHARITY FORUM

S H A R I N G I D E A S

- *Charity Steward Notes* •

NOW YOU ARE A CHARITY STEWARD

Benevolence and charity are the cornerstones of Masonry and therefore the position of Charity Steward is a very important officer appointment.

Make your mark by doing the job in your own personal style. In addition to making the Lodge/Chapter aware and encouraging support of Masonic charities, developing an awareness of more local charities and good causes should also be encouraged.

It is the Charity Steward's duty to assist the Master in raising money for various causes. The Lodge/Chapter probably has a balance between what causes the Master/MEZ may wish to support and those which are supported by agreement by the members more generally.

It is important to make sure that the brethren are regularly reminded that there are Masonic charities which receive their income from Masons and do not raise funds from the general public. If we as Masons don't support them, no one else will.

Make sure you use the Charity Steward's report to say something of interest for the brethren by planning what you say in advance. Something brief but informative.





Being Charity Steward can be a very rewarding position and better if done by the same person for 3 to 5 years. Take the opportunity of getting the brethren used to giving to charity both at the alms collections using the gift aid envelopes and by signing up for a regular monthly donation into the relief chest. That way everyone can participate in our charitable support without really noticing it.

REGULAR GIVING

Charity is at the heart of Freemasonry

The Three Grand Principles by which we stand are Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. Freemasons are taught to practise charity and to care, not only for their own, but also for the community as a whole, both by charitable giving, and by voluntary efforts and works as individuals.

From its earliest days, Freemasonry has been concerned with the care of orphans, the sick and the aged. This work continues today. In addition, large sums are given to national and local charities including most of the Hospices in England and Wales.

Initiation

Included in every initiation ceremony is a reminder of those Great Principles and especially the importance of charity.

As with many charitable organisations regular giving is very much encouraged and every Charity Steward should try to persuade all of the members to sign up to a regular payment promise using the form provided as part of the relief chest scheme.



Completing a regular donation form

A regular donation form makes everything easy and efficient.

- Gift aid relief (where applicable) is automatically recovered;
- Funds are deducted directly out of the donors bank account at the agreed rate and agreed regularity;
- The money is held in the Lodge/Chapter's own relief chest so that it can be used for the charitable purposes of the Lodge/Chapter;
- Paying a little amount often is much less noticeable than coming up with a larger sum all at once.

Getting organised

Create yourself a list of members. Those who regularly go to Lodge/Chapter meetings you will be able to talk to, others you can write to and perhaps phone. You might not know all the members and maybe someone who has been in the Lodge/Chapter may be willing to help you contact those you don't know.

All you are doing is offering them the opportunity to participate in the support of charitable causes.

If there has recently been a festival, some may still be contributing to that, so find out who they are and note when that finishes. Some may still be willing to take out another regular payment ahead of it finishing. It is also a good idea to suggest paying a proportion of what is given regularly toward the next festival by saving up during the years out of festival to make achieving an honorific both personally and for the Lodge/Chapter easier.





This is one of a series of notes for Charity Stewards produced as part of the Middlesex Charity Forum Charter for Charity Stewards.

September 2009

