



Somerset Masonic Charities Grant Presentations, April 2011

The Somerset Masonic Charities Management Committee has approved the following:

Wedmore and Axbridge Community Health Fund

Following an appeal from the local Community Health Fund, the three Craft lodges in Wedmore and the Somerset Masonic Charity agreed to jointly fund the purchase and installation of a defibrillator at a cost of £1,750. The defibrillator is now installed in a secure box outside the Newsagents in Wedmore and is accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, via an access code that would be given on dialling 999. The equipment can be safely used by anyone as it incorporates recorded instructions on how to use it. The prompt use of a defibrillator can make the difference between life and death, and in rural areas such as Wedmore they can be invaluable whilst awaiting the arrival of the Emergency Services. A Presentation is being arranged by Fred Body of Alfred and Guthrum Lodge

British Red Cross – Fire Emergency Support Service

The Emergency Support Vehicle, based at Bridgwater Fire Station, provides immediate short-term practical & emotional support to people affected by a domestic fire or other emergency. The vehicle operates in one of the largest non-metropolitan areas within UK, covering the entire County of Somerset and the M5 corridor to Exeter as well as Bideford in North Devon and Exmouth in South Devon. The vehicle has a fully fitted kitchen enabling crews to provide hot meals and drinks, and there is a well stocked wardrobe with 3 of every possible size of garments such as sweatshirts, jogging bottoms, underwear and shoes for people affected by fires and other emergencies. Our grant of £1,000 will help the Red Cross maintain this vehicle and valuable voluntary service. A Presentation is being arranged by Terry Leach of the Lodge of St George.

Keynsham & District MENCAP Society

This local Mencap Society provides activities and support for children & adults with severe learning difficulties in Keynsham and the surrounding district. They are currently supporting over 160 members aged from 5yrs – 70yrs. Adults with severe learning difficulties suffer extreme isolation and a recently opened evening social club provides the opportunity for 70 members to mix with friends, peers and other people; not surprisingly it is very popular and they already have a waiting list for spaces. The needs of younger members are addressed with an 18+ Club which helps them to develop their life skills as well as engage in a range of activities. Four weekly children's clubs provide vital social opportunities for 90 children aged between 5 and 18, and valuable respite care for their families. Two of the clubs cater specifically for teenagers and help them through the difficult transition from adolescence to adulthood, whilst the other two clubs focus on providing a wide mix of social & leisure

opportunities for 5 – 11 year olds. Our grant of £500 will help the Society with the general running costs of these groups. A Presentation is being arranged by Reg Brown of Backwell Lodge.

Lakeside Social Activity Club, Worle

This Club provides a range of social activities, including films, guest speakers, craft activities, computer skills training & theatre trips for over 30 residents and others people from the local community. This minor grant of £250 will go towards the costs of a project worker to help organise the wide range of activities. A Presentation is being arranged by Phil Giorgetti of the Lodge of Agriculture.

SWALLOW Charity, Radstock

The Swallow Charity was established 17 years ago and is run for and partly by people with learning difficulties in the Midsomer Norton and Radstock area. It provides help and support for over 60 members and aims to give people independent living skills and the experience they need for successful employment as well as encouraging them to get fit through exercise and healthy eating. Their residential project, 'Base House', enables people to stay overnight occasionally, and this is often their first experience of living away from their usual family home. Our grant of £1,000 will help the charity extend the Base House opening hours to cover weekends. A Presentation is being arranged by Michael Adams of Love and Honour Lodge.

Girl Guides – Somermead Camp

A grant of £1,000 will help towards the costs of the final stage of building a lodge at the permanent camp site in Somerset which is used by over 9,000 girls and young women from across the County. This new facilities will enable year round use and be available to Guides from across the world as well as other youth groups and local schools. When complete the new lodge will have sleeping accommodation for 24 young people and 6 adults, with showers, toilets, kitchen and a large hall that can be used for meetings and training, as well as a disabled bedroom with en suite facilities. Modern Guiding aims to help girls and young women gain the confidence, skills and experiences necessary to broaden their horizons and reach new goals. Staying away from home at a facility like Somermead Camp is the single most popular activity amongst today's Girl Guides. A Presentation is being arranged David Maddern of Tyntesfield Lodge.

Parkinsons UK

We are pleased to learn that following a recommendation by the Somerset Masonic Charities Management Committee, which had been supported by the Provincial Executive, the Grand Charity had approved a grant of £250,000 to 'Parkinsons UK'; the grant will be split into grants of £5,000 to be presented by Provincial Grand Lodges to their local branch of 'Parkinsons UK' .

A Beneficiary's Feedback

Some while ago we gave a grant to 'Newlife – the foundation for disabled children'. Newlife recently wrote to thank us for our generous gift and they took the opportunity to tell us something about how our money was being used. Our grant helped the charity to assist a 7-year old girl from Somerset who has Cerebral Palsy. Clare is unable to walk or even sit

independently and her speech is affected by weak muscles in her tongue, yet she attends a mainstream school where she receives one-to-one support. Clare needs expensive Lycra splinting for her trunk and arms to improve her posture and enable her to undertake two-handed tasks, and new splints are regularly required as she grows. Our grant has gone towards the cost of new splinting, which will help prevent long term complications from developing as well as increasing her ability to become independent and improve her education.



I hope that this snapshot of how the Somerset Masonic Charities are helping disadvantaged people in Somerset will have been of interest and hopefully will encourage Lodges make donations to our Masonic Charities so that we can have greater impact in our communities.

Roger Poynton,
Provincial Grand Charity Steward