

# Grand Council of the Order of Royal & Select Masters

## District of Warwickshire

**R. III. Comp. Peter J Wellings**  
**District Grand Master**



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To Council Treasurers and Almoners

August 2022

Dear Companions

The District of Warwickshire now has its own Relief Chest, held as usual within the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF). Many of you will already be very familiar with the operation of a Relief Chest, as many of our Lodges and Chapters already operate their own to handle their donations to charity.

A Relief Chest is a charitable account, which is owned collectively by a group of Freemasons, such as a Lodge, Chapter or Province. Donations made by Council members are collected and held securely in the Relief Chest, until sufficient is available to distribute them to registered charities, local worthy causes, festivals and those in need within our members.

Funds donated attract gift aid for those members eligible to claim. At present, Gift Aid adds a further 25% to the contributions made by the Council members – A very substantial benefit you will agree.

Today, there are over 5,000 Relief Chests which hold funds totalling more than £21 million. Every year, Relief Chest holders donate over £10 million to charity.

Our Relief Chest bears the name RSMWKS (Royal & Select Masters Warwickshire) and its use has now commenced. Although use of the Relief Chest is optional, the District Grand Master is encouraging Councils to use the facility to build up an amount with the gift aid added, which will be recorded by Council. This will be distributed approximately annually, having first obtained the instructions of each Council on the destination charities.

Attached to this letter is a dedicated editable form, which is to be used to send a cheque (with the completed gift aid slips) for the charity collection during a Council meeting to the MCF for crediting to the Relief Chest. **I shall be grateful if you will send me a scanned copy of the form, so that I can keep a record of funds being credited to the Relief Chest.**

There is a stock of Gift Aid Envelopes kept at each centre, but if the supply has been exhausted, let me know and I will get envelopes to you.

On the Masonic Charitable Foundation website, there are very good explanations of the way in which the Relief Chest system works. Use this link - <https://mcf.org.uk/support-our-work/relief-chest/>

I am circulating with this letter, guidance notes for this purpose.

I hope this makes sense – if I can help or any clarification is required, please let me know.

Regards to all

Yours sincerely and fraternally

*John Hayward*