



Information release

14 October 2009

Non-Masonic charities awarded nearly £400,000

Projects supporting people living with disabilities and research into the cause and treatment of illness and disease are amongst the latest beneficiaries of grants to non-Masonic charities. In total, £397,500 will be shared between eleven national charities bringing many positive benefits to the wider community.

A grant of £50,000 was approved for Calibre, a charity that provides a library of recorded books for people with disabilities. The grant will fund a project to update from audio cassettes to CDs. £75,000 was approved for Cancer Research UK to help fund a trial for treating pancreatic cancer. The Leonard Cheshire Foundation will receive £40,000 to help fund the building of a high dependency unit. Scope, the charity that supports disabled people, particularly those with cerebral palsy, has had approval for a grant of £50,000 over two years, to fund a volunteer befriending service.

All of the grants are part of The Freemasons' Grand Charity's programme of support for non-Masonic charities that reflect issues of interest, concern and relevance to Masons and their families.

Major grants approved at the General Meeting of The Grand Charity

Charity	Grant awarded	Purpose of grant
Calibre	£50,000	Project to update postal library of recorded books to digital format
Guideposts Trust	£12,000	To fund employment training
Leonard Cheshire Disability	£40,000	Grant to fund building of a high dependency unit
National Star College	£20,000	Grant to fund an independent living studio flat
Rainbow Trust Children's Charity	£25,000	Grant to fund family support worker
Scope	£50,000 over 2 years	Grant to fund face to face befriending service
Soundabout	£10,500	Grant to fund outreach programme in 40 special schools
Trail-Blazers	£10,000	Grant to fund mentoring
Cancer Research UK	£75,000	Research into the TeloVac Trial for pancreatic cancer
Exeter Cathedral	£5,000	Grant to fund a new flat copper roof of stonemason's yard
Acorns Children's Hospice Trust	£100,000	A special, one-off grant in memory of Rodney Pitham.



VULNERABLE PEOPLE

CALIBRE AUDIO LIBRARY. A grant of £50,000 to Calibre Audio Library to fund the conversion of the existing library from cassette tape into MP3 format and the production of new digital audio books was approved. Calibre Audio Library provides a free postal library service to over 19,200 members who are unable to read print as a result of a physical disability, visual impairment or dyslexia. The library has over 8,000 adult titles and 1,400 children's books.

GUIDEPOSTS TRUST. A grant of £12,000 to Guideposts to fund an employment training and work experience scheme in Hertfordshire for people with learning difficulties was approved. Guideposts provides direct services for people with dementia, learning disabilities and mental health problems across England including vocational training, help at home, befriending schemes and community activities.

LEONARD CHESHIRE DISABILITY. A grant of £40,000 to fund a new high dependency unit in Bedfordshire providing palliative care for people with severe physical disabilities was approved. The unit will be located alongside an existing residential service and will provide specialist care and become a centre of excellence in end of life care for severely disabled people. Leonard Cheshire provides support for about 20,000 disabled people through more than 200 services including 80 residential homes.

NATIONAL STAR COLLEGE. A grant of £20,000 to the National Star College to fund a studio flat within a new student residence for use by severely disabled young people to practise independent living skills was approved. National Star College provides specialist further education, therapy and independence training at a college in Gloucestershire for young people with severe physical disabilities or acquired brain injuries.

RAINBOW CHILDREN'S TRUST. A grant of £25,000 to the Rainbow Children's Trust to fund a family support worker in Manchester was approved. The charity provides emotional and practical support to families who have a child with a life-threatening or terminal illness through personal home-based and community care and respite breaks. Family support workers provide family care for 24 hours a day giving support to the child and advice and practical help to the family.

SCOPE. A grant of £50,000 over 2 years to Scope to fund the Face2Face Befriending Service was approved. Face2Face provides a trained volunteer to befriend a family whose child is newly diagnosed with a disability and the network is expanding to include a web-based, online service. Each volunteer is also a parent of a disabled child and so has a unique understanding of the issues and is well-placed to offer emotional and practical support. Scope supports more than 20,000 disabled people through schools, colleges, employment services and residential homes.



THE FREEMASONS'
GRAND CHARITY

SOUNDBABOUT. A grant of £10,500 to Soundabout to fund an outreach service providing training in specialist schools to enable profoundly disabled children to communicate and interact with the world around them using music and sound was approved. The outreach programme includes taster days and intensive training in using sound to stimulate movement and expression for children with complex disabilities who are unable to communicate verbally.

ACORNS CHILDREN'S HOSPICES. In memory of a past member of the Council, WBro Rodney Pitham, PSGD, who died since its last meeting, the Council recommends that a sum of £100,000 be placed at its disposal for a project in support of the Acorns Children's Hospice Trust. The late Brother Pitham, who had been a member of the Council for the past four years, three of which he had been Chairman of the Non-Masonic Grants Committee, was also a trustee of the Acorns Children's Hospice Trust. The Trust operates three hospices in Selly Oak, Walsall and Worcester. The Council will determine a suitable project and will report further at a later date.

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

TRAIL-BLAZERS. A grant of £10,000 to fund a mentoring project for young people at Brinsford Young Offenders Institution in Wolverhampton was approved. The charity recruits, trains and supervises volunteers to become mentors to young offenders aged 15 to 21 for six months pre-release and nine months post release

MEDICAL RESEARCH

CANCER RESEARCH UK. A grant of £75,000 to Cancer Research UK to fund a research project on pancreatic cancer led by Professor Neoptolemos at Liverpool University was approved. The TeloVac trial for people with advanced pancreatic cancer will add a new vaccine to standard chemotherapy and thereby the researchers hope to create a new standard of care for the disease.

RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

EXETER CATHEDRAL. A grant of £5,000 to contribute to the Third Millennium Campaign to support repairs and renovations to the Cathedral.

Visit The Freemasons' Grand Charity website at www.grandcharity.org

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