

Warwickshire Masons support Hospice in Need

The highest ever single charity donation in OSM has been made by Warwickshire conclaves.

Following an appeal by the Order of the Secret Monitor's Grand Supreme Ruler, M. Wy. Bro. Andrew Sweeney, the province of Warwickshire set about changing its somewhat disjointed charity structure. The principal aim being that by creating a more assistive and cooperative framework, conclaves would be able to increase the value of their charitable donations. For example, the scheme enables conclave to achieve a further 25% just by tapping into the UGLE Relief Chest Scheme and it encourages conclaves to work with other conclaves within the scheme, to broaden their appeal and enhance their donations.

Recently, this cooperation across 4 conclaves, (Athelstan, Godiva, Rocheberie and Sutton Coldfield) resulted in the highest single charity donation ever made by the Order of the Secret Monitor. It was donated to The Myton Hospices, who are the only Hospice in Coventry and Warwickshire providing specialist palliative care, including end of life care, and the only local Hospice with inpatient beds. This collaboration across Warwickshire and supported by the OSM Province of Warwickshire, was to help to refurbish inpatient bathrooms at Coventry Myton Hospice, but despite their highest collections ever, they were still almost a £1,000 short of the optimum donation.

On hearing about the shortfall, and the commendable efforts and commitment of so many conclaves working together, the Grand Supreme Ruler, Andrew Sweeney, stepped in, and with the assistance of Mark Masons Hall's Charity Manager, Darren Coleman- Heald, made up the shortfall from special reserve funds.

The recent national and international news reports about the funding crisis in UK Hospices was enough to spur the OSM conclaves and other Masonic orders in Warwickshire to go to extraordinary lengths to support The Myton Hospices. The sadness is that as reported on the news outlets, this funding crisis means that nationally, hospices are only able to keep open about 67% of beds. At The Myton Hospices, they currently can only afford to keep 25 out of 36 beds open. A hospice bed costs roughly half the cost of an NHS bed and includes the highly specialist care needed for palliative and end of life care, and yet only around 20% of funding comes from the NHS. For The Myton Hospices, this means trying to raise another £12 million annually to fulfil all their services.

Many masonic orders across the UK give very large amounts of funding to UK hospices and OSM Warwickshire are really pleased to be able to play its part. Racheal Ryan, Community Fundraising Manager for The Myton Hospices says, "It is hard to express the deep appreciation of The Myton Hospices, it's staff and those we support, not just for the much needed funds, but also for the sincerity and warmth we all receive from Warwickshire Masons".

It is hoped that with more awareness and cooperation, we at OSM, and other Masonic orders across Warwickshire, can do more to support this critical end of life care and the many, many other worthwhile charitable causes that deserve our support.