



WEST KENT NEWS



COVID-19

WEST KENT FREEMASONS LAUNCH "THE WEST KENT EMERGENCY FUND" TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY IN ITS FIGHT AGAINST THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19

The Provincial Grand Master of West Kent Mark Estaugh has launched The West Kent Emergency Fund to the tune of £100,000.

The fund was first discussed on the 30th March and, within a week the WKEF, had been properly established and application forms were agreed. This has already resulted in funds being provided to various groups and individuals for many different COVID-19 related efforts.

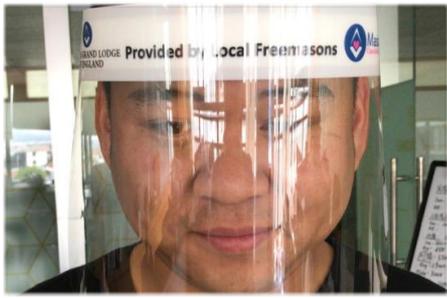
Edition



The last two months have left many in disbelief at what we have experienced as individuals, as a community and as a global society. Countless members of our Province have taken their time and resources and assisted people and voluntary organisations in the locality. Our Province has been incredibly busy giving much valued support where required by setting up the West Kent Emergency Fund (WKEF).

The WKEF has been 'established for the purpose of supporting members of the Province of West Kent, who are experiencing extreme financial difficulties due to the impact of COVID-19, and to provide support for worthwhile projects in the community in response to COVID-19'.

There are many 'Good News Stories' to be appreciated from around the Province in this difficult time, and this publication sets out to illustrate many of them.



WKEF

These include funding the manufacture of protective equipment (PPE) to keep key workers healthy, to support volunteers in the field, to support hospitals and hospices, to support care in the community, to fund food banks, and many other initiatives too numerous to mention. Of course, the donations to those individuals who have requested financial assistance will remain strictly confidential, but suffice it to say that the WKEF is assisting where needed.

Mark Estaugh, Provincial Grand Master of West Kent Freemasons, said,

"It is great to see that West Kent Freemasons are once again providing vital funds and equipment at such a critical time."

BIGGIN HILL MEN'S AND SHE SHED

Brethren,

I thought it about time to give you an idea of what we at Biggin Hill Men's and She Shed have achieved with the help of the money given so freely by Biggin Hill Lodge and by the West Kent Emergency Fund (WKEF).

By working steadily with a team of local 'Shedders', helped by others and the valuable assistance of our landlords, London Borough of Bromley, we have produced over 150 full face high specification reusable visors.

Rather than go down the extremely tenuous route of NHS Procurement, we opted to use personal contacts within our group.



This has enabled us to distribute over 150 visors to many healthcare providers both within the NHS and within the care home sectors. Our material appears in a plethora of hospitals, including our own Princess Royal University Hospital, and Sevenoaks Hospital. I was able to hand over a batch to Martin Griffith, a consultant surgeon at St Barts - he also happens to be a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of London! He told me that this would enable his 'firm' to have their own protection and not have to be at the vagaries of supply from the regular source.

As well as funding from Freemasonry, we have been well supported by local individuals, groups, churches and companies. We intend to continue so long as there is a need and as long as we're able to purchase the raw materials needed.

A huge thank you to the Province all other Brethren for support so far.

Finally, if you know of any organisation that needs these items of PPE, please let us know. We will be happy to try and help.

By Peter Martin, Biggin Hill Lodge No 8659

NORTH KENT 3D FACE SHIELDS

Donation has been gratefully received from the West Kent Emergency Fund. This will enable this team to continue production of PPE to support local front-line workers. Thanks from all the team at [North Kent 3d Face Shields](#).

North Kent 3D Face Shields managed to make the front page of the Gravesend Messenger to spread the gospel, of the wonderful work they have been carrying out in the community.

Contribution by Andy Staples, Oxleas Wood Lodge No 8110



SCRUBS FOR THE NHS



Fred Hiley's daughter Mel, is working 'in harm's way' on the front line of the NHS.

Fred applied to the West Kent Emergency Fund (WKEF) for a grant to purchase material to make scrubs (gowns, hats, gloves etc) for his daughter and her fellow NHS workers.

The WKEF made a donation, which resulted in over 400 items of scrubs being provided. Fred is a member of Ordnance Lodge No.2399 and their Secretary, David Birch mentioned the Lodge is currently unable to approve a contribution towards this initiative at the present time. However, David said he would personally underwrite a contribution of £500 until the Lodge members could formally approve a donation.

Brethren by pulling our resources together and with your support we are making a difference throughout West Kent.

By Peter Brooker, Provincial Grand Charity Steward

THE GOOD WORK OF THE WKEF IS RECONGNISED IN THE SEVENOAKS CHRONICLE



'The West Kent Emergency Fund of The Province of West Kent recently made a donation of £1000 to Mr Mark Addy of Design Etch Cut who is making full face acrylic masks on a laser cutter in a warehouse in Northfleet. The money will enable the purchase of supplies so that these masks can be donated free of charge to local hospitals, hospices, maternity units and care homes as well as hospitals as far afield as Exeter and Cambridge! His friend Tom Weaver who is the proprietor of the premises is supplying the space and the electricity free of charge to assist this wonderful cause. The deliveries are being taken care of by a team of motorcycle volunteers to ensure that the 200 or so masks made each day reach the front line as soon as possible!

The masks are made to an improved design created by the University of Bath and are fully adjustable to fit any head – however big! They are made from a fully sterilisable acrylic and will protect vital staff wherever they are needed.

Dr. Helen Clayton of The Oaks Surgery in Swanley told us

"We are very grateful for these masks; they will be very useful! They will be used by all the medical practitioners (Doctors nurses and so on) in the building"

Mr. Mark Estaugh, Provincial Grand Master of West Kent Freemasons, said:

"It is great to see that West Kent Freemasons are assisting in the production of vital equipment in the fight against COVID-19"

ST CHRISTOPHER'S HOSPICE IN SYDENHAM



Here are 3 members of Heart of Oak Lodge No 6416 on duty at St Christopher's Hospice in Sydenham -Gary Bassom, Peter Bassom and Bro Dave Williams. The Hospice is now caring for COVID-19 patients as well.

Peter has had the virus, recovered and is now back at work as they are so short of staff. We are proud to have *these three young heroes in our lodge*.

Our thanks to Mark Addy and Tom Weaver, for the provision of PPE, funded by WKEF.

By Bob Blanchett, Heart of Oak Lodge No 6416

DARENT VALLEY HOSPITAL

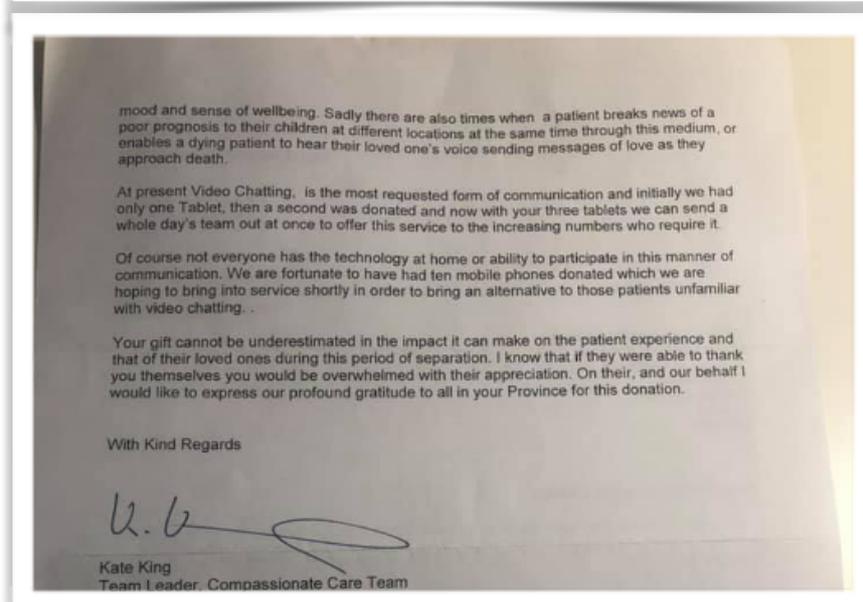
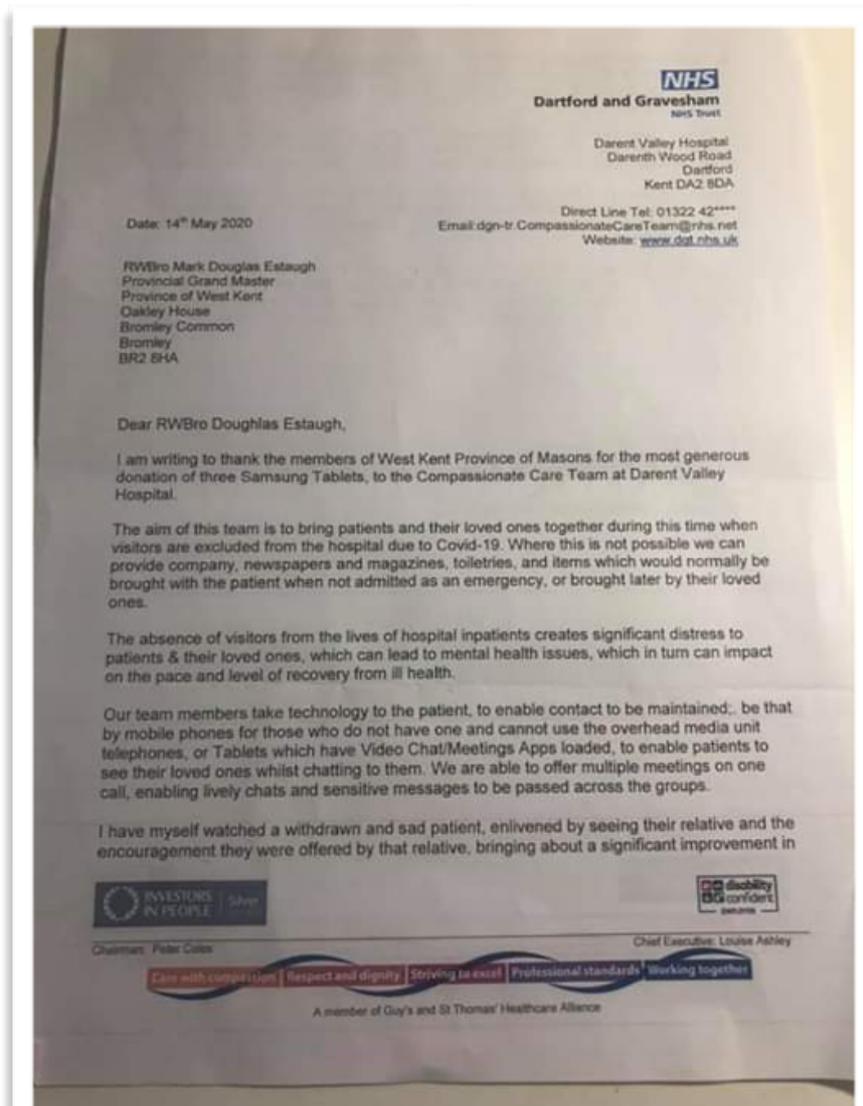
Julian Rowley from Nethinim Lodge donated six Samsung tablets to Darent Valley Hospital. Three for Willow Ward and three for the Compassionate Care Team to use, so that patients can communicate with their families whilst staying in hospital.



We have been able to provide 50 tablets across the Province, due to an initiative by UGLE and the MCF by setting up the Freemason's COVID-19 Community Fund. *"The donations were coordinated through a new COVID-19 Response Group, which was formed by the United Grand Lodge of England as an emergency structure in response to COVID-19.*

Its purpose is to work together to deliver life-changing initiatives - on a national scale - to those in need. Using the full capacity of its network, the Freemasons have been able to draw together supplies to source tablets quickly and efficiently" (UGLE).

Kate King, the Team Leader for Darent Valley Hospital's Compassionate Care Team, extends thanks to the Province.



COMPUTER TABLETS GIVEN TO HOSPICE IN THE WEALD

Tablets provided, being given to Hospice in the Weald, Pembury, for patients to use, who, due to COVID-19, cannot be with their loved ones. It is without doubt, a valuable item for Hospice and an excellent way Freemasonry works in our community. Bro Dean Selmes, one of Tunbridge Wells' newer members handed the tablets to Kathryn of Hospice in the Weald.

By Duncan Annells



OXLEAS NHS TRUST

A further consignment of 10 Samsung tablets from West Kent Freemasons, on this occasion, for Oxleas NHS Trust, which will enable patients in isolation to contact families and loved ones at this challenging time....

By Mark Estaugh, Provincial Grand Master - Grand Superintendent



“Brethren,

Question: How many special treats and essentials supplies especially asked for by Oxleas NHS Trust can you fit in a Porsche? These treats are for all the nurses, doctors and essential staff who are working double shifts and sometimes sleeping over so that we all stay safe and well at this time. And no, there isn't a prize - just pat yourselves on the back because they were all funded by the West Kent Emergency Fund and topped up by a kind donation from Nethinim Lodge. No name checks, just the satisfaction of a job well done.”

By Robert Order Past Provincial Grand Almoner

DARENTH GRANGE CARE HOME

West Kent received an urgent request from Darenth Grange Care Home on 11th May for face visors. On 13th May, we delivered them. Fantastic effort from everyone involved. Thank you!



Due to the COVID-19 crisis, hospices are suffering difficult financial situations and are in urgent need of additional funding. Fundraising events and funding via hospice charity shops has ceased and yet demand for hospice services within our communities is at an all-time high. Hospice patient numbers have also increased to free up NHS beds, which has resulted in the need to employ additional professional nursing staff. Through the West Kent Emergency

Fund (WKEF) and with matched funding from the Masonic Charitable Foundation, we have been able to donate meaningful sums to The Greenwich and Bexley Community Hospice, Heart of Kent Hospice and the Ellenor Hospice.

Brethren, by pulling our resources together and with your support we are making a difference throughout West Kent.



WEST KENT SUPPORTS LIFELITES

'Lifelites' is a charity which gives life-limited and disabled children using hospice services the opportunities they wouldn't otherwise have, through the magic of assistive technology. In plain English, that means through the use of technology, children in hospices have the opportunity to do so many things they never thought possible, such as paint a picture, create music, play a game, or communicate with their family. This can completely change a child's life and for the children - quite simply magical!

Our Provincial Grand Master is well aware of the great work done by this charity and keen for West Kent to support them. I am really pleased to inform you that by utilising matched funding from the Masonic Charitable Foundation, we have been able to make a donation to Lifelites.

WEST KENT DONATES TO LOCAL FOODBANKS



During the early part of the COVID-19 crisis, the Provincial Grand Master asked me to research the major foodbanks in West Kent. Shortly after going into lock-down, demand for foodbanks services rocketed, particularly from those self-isolating and in urgent need of food parcel deliveries. Through the West Kent Emergency Fund (WKEF) and by obtaining matched funding from the Masonic Charitable Foundation, we were immediately able to make a donation to each of the main foodbanks based in Bromley, Swanley, Bexley and Tunbridge Wells.

Brethren, by pulling our resources together and with your support we are making a difference throughout West Kent.



Many lodges across our Province have been making donations to food-banks in our communities, either in terms of funds or members giving up their time to assist.

Please tell us what you have done, it will fill our Brethren with much pride to hear of your contributions.

Congratulations to St Barbabus Lodge No 6315, who donated £285 to Bexley Food-bank, and £285 to Greenwich Food-bank.

BEXLEY SNAP

Thanks to a grant from the WKEF Bexley Snap has been able to start up a specialist mobile toy library to support disabled children in the homes during this COVID-19 lockdown. Bexley Snap is a registered charity founded in 1994 serving the London borough of Bexley and surrounding areas. Bexley Snap provides specialist respite, short breaks and family support services for children aged 0-24 with severe to



profound disabilities. Many local families rely on the services provided by Bexley Snap as outside of specialist schools they are the only accessible service in the community catering for children with this level of needs; providing a range of groups, sessions and clubs at the Normandy children's centre.

Parents of children with disabilities can find it challenging to meet the complex needs of their child under normal circumstances and the prospect of lockdown was a daunting one for many of these households. Thanks to the generosity of West Kent

Freemasons, Bexley Snap has been able to modify some of their services, to provide 1:1 sessions, video linked play therapy sessions, and now a new mobile toy library. This has meant that although many of these children are currently not accessing education (many fall into high risk and so shielding category) or traditional sessions at Snap. They are now able to have access to specialist sensory and developmental toys at home which would otherwise be cost prohibitive for many parents to provide. Through your support Bexley Snap has been able to provide some sense of normality and continuation of learning through play for these children under these unprecedented times.

Many thanks to the Province of West Kent and its members, as your act of kindness is truly changing lives.

WEST KENT FREEMASONS DONATE CAKES AND ELECTRONIC TABLETS TO OXLEAS NHS TRUST



Mark Estaugh, Provincial Grand Master of the West Kent Freemasons, recently spent an enjoyable morning speaking to staff in several parts of the Oxleas NHS Trust - and delivering them cakes!

During his trip, Mark visited: Holbrook Dementia Ward; Lesney Mental Health Ward;

Meadow View Community Rehab Ward at Queen Mary's Hospital in Sidcup; and Barefoot Lodge Mental Health Ward at Goldie Leigh Hospital, Abbey Wood.

The newly established Province of West Kent's Emergency Fund has funded a number of recent projects - and this was another local initiative, to show how much the Freemasons appreciate the outstanding work of the NHS, and the remarkable quality of service they provide to us all.

This simple gesture touched the hearts of those who received it. One of the nurses said there was genuine appreciation and happiness on the wards when the cakes arrived. Another told of the stress involved in losing so many patients to COVID-19 and explained how the expressions of support they had received over the past few weeks had really raised their spirits during this sad time.



Mark Estaugh also visited Pinewood House, in Dartford - another part of the Oxleas Trust - to present 10 Samsung 'tablets' - in addition to two tablets which had been donated earlier in the week. These devices are critical for patients on wards to stay in contact with families and loved ones, whilst they are in isolation and unable to receive visitors.



The team were delighted to receive them and explained that they will make a real difference to patients' lives.

Mark Estaugh, Provincial Grand Master of West Kent Freemasons, said, *"West Kent Freemasons are honoured and proud to be able to show their appreciation to the front-line NHS staff who look after us during these difficult times. It is a privilege to make some small contribution to improve the lot of patients by giving them a means to communicate with their families and loved ones. We will continue to assist wherever and whenever we can to support our local communities at this critical time."*



WEST KENT SUPPORTS 'WE ARE BEAMS'



'Beams' is a local charity supporting disabled children, young people and their families. These children and young people typically have one or more learning difficulty, complex health needs, physical or sensory impairment.

The aim of this wonderful charity is to be a leader in transforming the lives of disabled children and young people, enabling greater independence and control of their lives and futures.

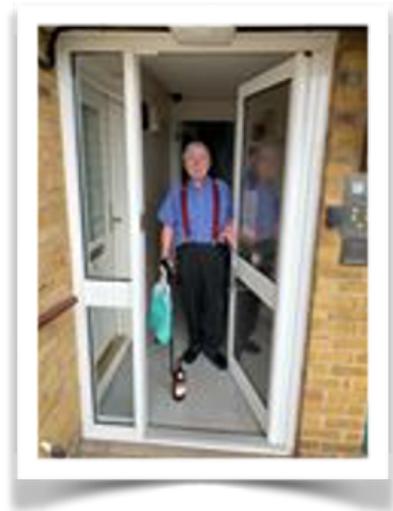
The COVID-19 crisis ended all fundraising support for 'Beam's and yet demand for their services significantly increased which put enormous strain on the charity's finances.

The West Kent Emergency Fund together with matched funding from the Masonic Charitable Foundation has been very pleased to donate and give support to 'Beams'.
Making a difference in West Kent.

HEART OF OAK LODGE

The Heart of Oak Lodge Courier Service (me) has delivered some essential supplies (plus some medicinal brandy) to one of our senior members, Reg Warren. Reg is in good spirits (forgive the pun) despite not leaving his Crayford flat for several weeks and, at 92, he has just applied to join the Holy Royal Arch.

By Bob Blanchett



MESSAGE FROM THE PROVINCIAL GRAND ALMONER: NEIL MOAKES



Well, it's certainly an interesting time to be taking over from Rob Order as the new West Kent Provincial Grand Almoner, and I have had to hit the ground running. I wanted to take a moment of your time to update you on some changes to the Almoners team, and to let you know how your Province is supporting you, your fellow Brethren, your families and our widows in these unprecedented times.

You may be aware that we have set up the 'West Kent Emergency Fund' or WKEF for short. This fund has been established to help the Brethren of West Kent should they find that their finances have been adversely affected by the Corona Virus. Already the fund has helped numerous Brethren who are struggling to make ends meet through no fault of their own. The WKEF committee meet regularly through the week to

consider applications, and if approved funds can be in the recipient's bank account within 24 hours. To find out more visit the Members Welfare section on the Provincial website <https://westkentmasons.org.uk/members-welfare/>

As a member of the West Kent Masonic family, you are able to contact your Lodge or Chapter Almoner should you feel you need support, either just for someone to talk to or if you are concerned about how to survive during lockdown. In addition to this I have a team of Group Almoners who are also available for you to call should you feel that you would prefer to talk to someone outside of your Lodge. Your Group Almoners are:

- Group One (Dartford, Wilmington & Greenhithe) - Julian Rowley
jrowleyuk@yahoo.co.uk 07771 598 967
- Group Two (Welling & Wrotham) - Kevin Killick lodgehousealodge@aol.com
07903 682 348
- Group Three (Sidcup, Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells & Edenbridge) - Mike Bowyer Jones mike@winterfieldffarm.co.uk 07881 825 600
- Group Four (Bromley) - Graham Tarran g.tarran@ntlworld.com 07790 492 665

We are extremely fortunate to have a highly trained and experienced team of volunteers who are experts in the qualifying criteria for applications that can be made to the MCF for financial assistance. This team would ordinarily be dispatched by the MCF to visit a claimant's home (be it a Brother, a family member of a Brother, or a widow of a Mason) to assist them in completing the application form. Unsurprisingly, during lockdown they are no longer allowed to perform physical visits, but they are available on the end of a telephone, should you feel that you would like to discuss an application for help. They are now co-ordinated by Steve Archbold, who can be contacted by email westkentv@gmail.com or by phone 07453 306413, and Steve will get the appropriate person to contact you. Please visit the MCF website for information on who could put forward a claim for help <https://mcf.org.uk/eligibility/>

We have a team co-ordinator, Andy Butler wkalmoneradmin@btinternet.com, so if you are in any doubt you should contact Andy who will be able to direct you to the appropriate person to deal with your enquiry.

And finally Should you need to contact me I am available by email ProvGAlm@westkentmasons.org.uk or by phone on 07739 249398

