The East Lancashire Masonic Charity

THE EAST LANCASHIRE MASONIC CHARITY

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD AT STANLEY HOUSE, AUDENSHAW MASONIC HALL, MANCHESTER ROAD, MANCHESTER, M24 5BG ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2025

Introduction by the President

The President welcomed all attendees to the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the East Lancashire Masonic Charity and thanked all present for their attendance and showing support for the Charity.

The President said that before the commencement of the formal business of the Annual General Meeting there were to be two presentations from recipients of Grants during 2025. The President went on to say that the support given to the ELMC and its work made differences to the lives of many, and we were fortunate enough to have grant beneficiaries with us this evening. The grant beneficiaries giving presentations to the Meeting were the Rochdale Children's Moorland Home and Thea Bentley who was financially supported in a special young person's scientific educational event arranged by the Guiding organization and which took place in the United States.

The President referred to the grant made to the Rochdale Children's Moorland Home. The Home has two main functions being the provision of residential based services and facilities for school children during term time and the caring for children referred to them by children's social care, schools and community groups during the school holidays. ELMC had made a grant to enable the Home to purchase catering equipment facilitating provision of healthy meals to the supported children.

The President introduced Gary Bradbury, Peter Malcolm and Bob Stirling, members of the Home's Committee of Management,

Gary Bradbury, a Freemason, set out with his colleagues the background and development of the Home set high in the moors above Rochdale from the time of its establishment in 1892 to its present function. The Home had historically supported disadvantaged and needy children and provided special short-term residential care and respite. Notwithstanding the creation of the NHS and the development of the welfare state the need still existed today and had still to be met. The Home was a residential care resource for children of school age with particular needs not found and met in their usual home, environment, and domestic circumstances. In the last financial year the Home had accommodated 960 children of which 120 were referrals via neighbouring Local Authorities. The Home met from charitable donations the cost of care staff provision and bore all the outlay associated with accommodation. Despite being a resource for surrounding Local Authorities there was little or no financial support from them. The representatives of the Home praised the work of dedicated staff and volunteers. The Home relied on charitable donations such as those from ELMC to continue in its work. The Home gave grateful thanks for the ELMC donation and described the benefit it would bring to the Home.

The President thanked the Rochdale Children's Moorlands Home for its presentation and acknowledged its charitable work.

The President welcomed Thea Bentley, a Ranger Girl Guide, and outlined the grant made to her from the ELMC Education Fund to assist in the funding of a special Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics trip to Florida, USA, during 2024. The President invited Thea to give her presentation.

Thea gave her presentation by reference to a number of photographic slides. Thea explained her association with the Guide movement. Thea had assisted with the Brownie movement and had become a Ranger Guide with the 21st Rochdale Rangers Unit based in Littleborough. Thea was involved in the Guiding 'Young Leader' movement. The movement was for girls aged 14 to 17 years who wished to learn and develop new skills and pass on that knowledge to younger members of the Guiding movement. Thea, then aged 15 years was selected as NorthWest representative to attend the Florida, USA, 2024 'Women in Space/Science' conference coupled with its associated visit to the Kennedy Space Centre. Thea was one of but 12 UK nationals selected to attend the event. Other countries were represented at the conference and together all attendees joined in camp, shared experiences and acquired new skills. The event recognised the role of women in science and technology. A trip to the Kennedy Space Centre was a feature of the conference arrangements. Thea was shown aspects of astronaut training and experienced in a practical demonstration the astronaut 'anti-gravity' sensation. There was a museum filled with space memorabilia. There was a trip to the Orlando Science Center with exhibits ranging from fossils through to those associated with high tec. Not all was educational. There were social events including a pool party and a BBQ. Thea said that the experience was great fun but there were benefits in self-development. Thea said she had now the confidence to seek her full leadership qualification and help in recruitment within the Guiding organisation. Thea felt more self-assured and had shared her Florida conference experience in a talk she gave at a recent Young Leader event. Thea was grateful for the opportunity made possible by the grant.

The President thanked Thea for her presentation and wished her every success in future life.

The President gave his thanks to all the Presenters and said they might wish to leave but extended to them an invitation to stay for the finger buffet that would follow the AGM.

The Annual General Meeting ('AGM')

The President said that before the AGM formally commenced, he was to ask the Hon Secretary ('the Secretary') **Philip Price** to:

1 Take a register, and;
2 Explain the procedure as to voting by Appointed Representatives.

The President said that those not able to be present had been invited to vote by proxy.

The Secretary explained the arrangements in respect of the attendance register and in respect of voting arrangements.

The President said that he was to hand over to **Chad Northcott**, the Chairman of ELMC (the Chairman') who was to chair the Meeting for the formal business agenda.

The Chairman took the Chair.

Agenda

1. Notice of AGM and ancillary documents – Apologies for Absence

The Chairman said that Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 26th September 2024 and the Annual Report & Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024 had all been published on the Charity's website as has had the formal Notice of this AGM.

The Chairman said Notice of this AGM setting out the agenda items and signposting access to ancillary documents has been distributed individually to those Members using e-mail, and by post to those members who do not.

The Chairman said that he was to take the Notice convening the Annual General Meeting as read unless there were any objections.

There were no objections.

The Chairman said that he was to ask the Secretary to read out apologies for absence.

The Secretary read the names of the Brethren and Companions unable to be present at the AGM, many of whom were on other Masonic business.

(the names have been recorded but other than in these Minutes)

2. To approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 26th September 2024.

The Chairman said that next business was to approve the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 26th September 2024, which had been published on the ELMC website.

The Chairman asked if there were any corrections, or suggested amendments to the Minutes?

There were none.

The Chairman called upon **WBro David Lightbown** to make a proposition that the minutes be approved, and invited **WBro William Waite** to second the proposal

A vote was taken

The vote proved in favour of the proposition

The Chairman declared that the Minutes were approved.

The Chairman asked if there were any matters arising from the Minutes.

There were none.

3. To receive the Annual Report and Statement of Financial Activities for the Year ended 31 December 2024

The Chairman said that the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet and the notes on the accounts had been circulated and were available on the Charity's website.

The Chairman invited the Hon Treasurer, **WBro Malcolm Roe,** (the Treasurer') to summarise the accounts and offer some explanatory comments.

The Treasurer said that during the year income increased by £55,382 to £1,092.086.

Donations were slightly down and legacies up slightly.

Income from Hewlett Court was up by £123,175 on the previous year.

Investment income was yp on the previous year by £14,995.

However the costs for the year increased by £292.924 including a £116,217 increase of costs at Hewlett Court.

Listed investments of the Charity showed gains of £295,2024 compared with the previous year.

Overall assets for the Charity have increased during the year by £81,703 to £9,584,000.

The Chairman invited questions

There were no questions

The Chairman gave his thanks to the Treasurer for his presentation.

4. To receive the Auditors Report.

The Chairman said that the next item on the agenda was to receive the Auditor's Report.

The Chairman said that he was pleased to advise that the Auditors were present that evening.

The Chairman introduced **Andrew Warren**, a Partner in the Auditors, Percy Westhead & Co and invited him to read out the Auditor's Opinion

Andrew Warren read out the Auditor's Opinion.

The Chairman invited questions on the accounts and reports of the Charity's activities, advising that the Committee Chairmen are present to answer any questions put to them.

There were no questions.

The Chairman gave his thanks to the Auditors, Percy Westhead & Co and especially **Andrew Warren** with whom the Charity worked directly.

5. Resolution to Adopt the Annual Report and Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2024.

The Chairman said that in his capacity as the Chairman of ELMC he was to propose that the Annual Report and the Statement of Financial Activities, which have been approved by the Board on 4th August 2025, be adopted.

The Chairman invited the President to second the proposal.

The proposition was made by the Chairman and seconded by the President.

A vote was taken.

The vote was in favour of the proposition.

The Chairman declared that the Annual Report and Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2024 were adopted.

6. To Elect Directors.

The Chairman said that the next item on the agenda was the election of Directors to the Board of the ELMC.

The Chairman said that the Board structure comprised of between 12 and 15 Trustees, up to 11 of whom are elected at each Annual General Meeting.

The four ‘ex officio’ Directors were the Provincial Grand Master, Robert Ian Frankl, as President of the Charity, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, John Griffin, as Deputy President of the Charity, the Provincial Grand Almoner, Tony Stephenson, and the Provincial Grand Charity Steward, John Taylor.

The Chairman invited the President to identify his nominees and to make a proposition that they be elected as Directors of the Board.

The President said that before he did that he would wish to thank the Directors for the excellent manner in which they had managed the affairs of the Charity during the last year.

In addition to including the four ex officio Directors as previously identified by the Chairman, the President said that his nominations for those to be elected as Directors were:

Chad A Northcott	**Chairman of the Board &** **Chairman of The Grant Making Committee**
Philip Price	**Honorary Secretary**

Malcolm Roe	**Honorary Treasurer**
David Lightbown	**Chairman - Committee of Benevolence & Chairman Hewlett Court Advisory Committee**
Stephen Thomson	**Chairman of the Fund-Raising Committee**
Peter L Nicholson	**Chairman - Museum Committee**
Mrs Julie Ward	**Director Operations / Non-Executive Director**
William R Waite	**Non-Executive Director**
John R Farrington	**Non-Executive Director**
Mark W Davis	**Non-Executive Director**

The President formally proposed that those named be elected to serve as Directors of the ELMC.

The President invited **Alston Hall,** Chairman of the Comforts Fund Committee, to second the proposition.

The Chairman put the proposition to the vote.

The Chairman declared the proposition carried and thanked those agreeing to continue to serve the Charity in their various capacities.

7. To appoint the Auditors for the ensuing year.

The Chairman said that the next item on the agenda is the appointment of auditors until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting.

The Chairman said that the present auditors, Percy Westhead & Co have signified their willingness to continue as our auditors if so elected. Before a proposal was put to the Meeting, the Chairman said that he would like to take this opportunity of thanking Auditors for the service they have provided in the past.

The Chairman invited **WBro John Farrington** to make the proposal.

The Chairman invited **WBro Tony Stephenson** to second.

A vote was taken.

The vote was in favour of the proposition.

The Chairman said that he was pleased to confirm the re-appointment of Percy Westhead & Co as auditors of the Charity for the 2025 financial year.

8. To Note Members Appointed to the Committee of Benevolence.

The Chairman said that the next item on the agenda was to appoint the Members of the Committee of Benevolence. The Chairman went on to say that each Area, via the APGM, was invited to propose a member to represent on the Benevolence Committee, and each APGM has invited his Area Almoner to serve.

The Chairman invited the Secretary to read out the names of those Brethren who were to be appointed to the Committee of Benevolence for the forthcoming year.

The Secretary read out the following names:

David Lightbown	**Chairman**
Alan Potts	**Deputy Chairman/City West Area**
Julie Ward	**Director of Operations**
Alston Hall	**Eastern Area**
Colin Barton	**Northern Area**
Geoff Worsley	**City East Area**
John Friend	**Western Area**
Victor Murphy	**Southern Area**

The Secretary said that in addition to those Brethren the Provincial Grand Almoner, the Provincial Grand Charity Steward, the Honorary Secretary of the ELMC and the Chairman of the Comforts Fund Committee are "ex officio" members of the Committee. A Guest Almoner is also invited from the Mark Degree.

9. To Note members appointed to the Grant Making Committee.

The Chairman asked the Secretary to read the names of those who were to be appointed as members of the Grant Making Committee for the forthcoming year.

The Secretary read out the following names:

Chad Northcott	**Chairman**
David Dunn	**Deputy Chairman**
John Taylor	**Provincial Grand Charity Steward (ex officio)**
Tony Stephenson	**Provincial Grand Almoner (ex officio)**
Karen Hall	**Secretary**
John Farrington	
Peter Faulkner	
David Hudson	
Julie Ward	**Director of Operations (ex officio)**

Rachel Cookson	**Communications**

10. To Note the members appointed to the Fund-Raising Committee.

The Chairman asked the Secretary to read the names of those who were to be appointed as members of the Fund-Raising Committee for the forthcoming year.

The Secretary read out the following names:

Stephen A. Thomson	**Chairman**
John Taylor	**Vice Chairman (ProvGChStwd)**
Paul Sellers	**Secretary**
Julie Ward	**Director of Operations**
Beverley Schofield	**Manager Hewlett Court**
Rachel Cookson	**Communications**
Eric Baker	**City West Charity Steward**
Martin Van Der Swan	**City East Charity Steward**
Russ Perks	**Eastern Area Charity Steward**
Simon Gilrain	**Northern Area Charity Steward**
Nigel Johnson	**Southern Area Charity Steward**
Chris Wildman	
Tony Stephenson	**Provincial Grand Almoner (Ex Officio)**

11. To note the appointment of Members to serve on the other Committees' and Sub-Committees' during the ensuing year

The Chairman said that within the Membership there was a range of talent, skills and abilities, and the Charity was always keen to determine if there are Brethren who are able and who would be willing to work on one of the Committees. The Charity would be pleased to receive nominations for the consideration of the President.

The Chairman said that nominations could be made through the Hon Secretary.

The Chairman said that he was to now ask the Secretary to read the names of those who had been appointed to serve on the other ELMC Committees for the forthcoming year.

The Chairman read out the following names:

Hewlett Court Advisory Committee

David Lightbown	**Chairman**
Julie Ward	**Director of Operations**
Beverley Schofield	**Manager**
Chris Wildman	**Treasurer**
Dennis Heskett	**Secretary**
Mike Stubbs	
Paul Thornton	

Museum and Library Committee

Peter Nicholson	**Chairman**
Tony Costello	**Librarian**
Ivan Eastwood	**Museum Curator**
Andy Tong	**General Secretary**

Comforts Fund Sub-Committee

Alston Hall	**Chairman**
Julie Ward	**Director of Operations**
Beverley Schofield	**Hewlett Court Manager**
Rachel Cookson	**Team Leader Hewlett Court**
Jim Hilton	
Vic Murphy	

The Secretary said that the Chairman of the Committee of Benevolence was an "ex Officio" member of the Comforts Fund Sub-committee.

Young Peoples Sub-Committee

Roger Tinker	**Chairman**
Gary O'Neill	**Deputy Chairman**
Karen Hall	**Secretary**
Raymond Evans	
Andrew O'Neill	
Stuart Taylor	
Julie Ward	

The Secretary said that Chairman of the Committee of Benevolence was an "ex-Officio" member of the Young Peoples Sub-committee.

Investment Sub-Committee

David Rothburn	**Chairman**
Malcolm Roe	**Treasurer**
Ian Connor	**Secretary**

Martin Entwistle
Nigel Moore

The Secretary said that **Robert Race** of WH Ireland Ltd attends committee meetings to offer advice on investments.

The Chairman said that he would like to place on record his thanks to **John Scott** and **Derek Calrow** who had both hitherto served on the Investment Sub-committee for many years and John Scott most recently as its Chairman.

The Chairman thanked all those who had agreed to serve on the committees for the coming year.

The Chairman said that he was also wished to thank the retiring members of the ELMC committees for their valuable work and who had been custodians of the Charity during their tenures.

The Chairman said that the formal business of the AGM was concluded.

The Chairman said that he was to hand back to the President.

The President thanked the Chairman for conducting the formal business of the AGM.

12. Any Other Business.

The President asked if before he closed the formal part of the Meeting was there any other business.

There was no other business.

The President said on behalf of the Board of Directors he wished to thank **Julie Ward**, the Director of Operations, **Karen Hall,** the Administration Officer, **Beverley Schofield**, the Manager of Hewlett Court, and **Rachel Cookson**, the Hewlett Court Team Leader, for their work within the ELMC, for the additional work they do for the various committees which they support, and for the additional work they have all been doing to support our Provincial Festival.

The President said that he also wished to thank the Directors, and all of the volunteers who work on the various ELMC Committees, the Hewlett Court Staff and all those who form part of our extended family who arrange social functions, events and fund raising activities supporting our work.

The President said he restated his thanks to you all attendees for attending this evening’s Meeting and for the ongoing support provided to the ELMC.

The President stated that it was a privilege to be President of the great Charity.

13. To Close the Meeting

The President said that the business of the AGM was concluded and he extended an invitation to all to enjoy the refreshments provided and to enjoy the rest of the evening.