

Talk Given on Thursday 15 May at Cumberland & Westmoreland Provincial Grand Chapter

Grand Superintendent, Companions, Gentlemen.

Thank you for your kind invitation; the President (James Newman) sends his best wishes.

The RMBI is in very good shape and thriving as one of your charities.

I am assuming you know about the RMBI so I will concentrate on what has changed.

The headlines are that we have 1100 residents in 17 care homes; 200 sheltered tenants; 1500 staff, a turnover of £40m; the average age of our residents is 90 years.

Since the Festival launched/last 3 years we have:

- Increased the number of beds by nearly 10%
- Doubled the number of specialist dementia beds; over 50 staff members have obtained the Dementia Diploma; and all staff have received basic dementia training
- We have refined the 'end of life' care so the vast majority of residents can die in their Home and not in a hospital
- There has been a fundamental change of care culture
- We have made a significant investment in staff training
- We have opened a second new care home; James Terry Court in Croydon, to complement Scarbrough Court, near Newcastle
- A major refurbishment programme has been completed throughout the portfolio
- There has been investment in IT systems for both care and staff
- We have identified a range of efficiencies to ensure we get the best possible value for money

All of the above has enabled us to provide a better service to more Freemasons and their dependants. People like Douglas and Audrey Lowe. I had lunch with Audrey in April; she is fine but missing Douglas a lot.

All of this has been achieved in some very challenging conditions:

- Regulatory (CQC)
- Financial; and
- Media environment

However, I am confident we have a strong management team that can handle these issues.

However, James Newman and I are very keen to do even more for the Masonic community and I'd like to mention two exciting initiatives:

- Day care; and
- Dementia Awareness Training for the Masonic community

Brief update on the Central Masonic Charities.

I would like to close by thanking you for your support of the RMBl in the following ways:

- Your Festival
- Scarbrough Court
- The wider Masonic community

All of which has helped us to improve, develop and expand the services we provide.