



St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group



Knights Templar's gift to the West Bank

The Knights Templar has made a major donation to the St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group for the purchase of a floor of a new building in the West Bank to provide a new home for the Hebron Hospital. The Very High and Right Eminent Great Senechal presented the cheque to the Chairman of the Group, Nicholas Woolf, C.St.J., at the annual meeting of The Great Priory of Malta at Freemason's Hall in Great Queen Street, London last Tuesday.

The gift of £200,000 covers the remaining cost required to build, design and fit out the third floor of the Almajd Building, which is currently under construction.



Cheque presentation at
Freemasons' Hall, London



Architect's design for the
new Hebron Hospital



Architect's design of new reception area

Isla Richards, the Group's Director of Fundraising, said "Since it is a newly built shell not yet ready for occupancy, it provided us with a cheaper buying price than most other suitable options. It also provides more space and allows us to furnish and equip it exactly as we would like for the best patient experience."

The current Hebron Hospital has been invaluable in ensuring eye treatment services are available for an increasing number of patients in the West Bank. In 2013 some 11,600 patients were treated, over 430 of them provided with sight-saving surgery.

Isla continues, "Our current facility is rented and is becomingly increasingly expensive to run. The lift has recently broken down, there is no working sprinkler system, and there is water leakage in the roof. The owners are not willing to pay for repairs. The hospital is also some distance from town, making it difficult to access for some patients, and for many it is too expensive to travel by taxi."

The new facility will allow treatment for an estimated 20% more outpatients and increase major operations by around 10%.

Ownership was preferred by the hospital's trustees to protect the hospital against rent increases. It means that investment can be made in the refurbishment and appropriate design of a small hospital with the very best equipment, without the risk of needing to move in the years ahead.

Diana Safieh, responsible for the relationship between Knights Templar and St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group, says "Here at St John we are all incredibly grateful to the Knights Templar for this donation, which allows us to continue to achieve fantastic results in the area, and even to better our services."