

February 2019

Wales, Midland and South Western Area Newsletter



A belated Happy New Year!

Area Conference is fast approaching!

We look forward to seeing you all again at this year's Area Conference which will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on the Plymouth Hoe over the weekend Friday 22 March to Sunday 24 March. A new venue in terms of our Conference – so let's experience it together! Please book your accommodation at your earliest opportunity – package details are attached.

Does the Exeter Office know who is representing your branch? Have you returned the branch delegate form? The programme for the weekend will be packed with opportunities to receive Association updates and discuss the way forward, as well as reunion and relaxation. There's even a rumour of RAF Association branded wine being available at NAAFI prices (well – better than hotel prices!). Join us for the weekend.

Membership Matters

There is nothing more important to branches than their members, but are your members aware of what's happening in their branch?

Please make sure we are continuing to reach out to all members and especially those that may have lapsed.

Remember that a lapsed member could be in need of support and welfare.

Please ask for a lapsed members list following your AGM and make contact with them.

For all membership list requests please contact Gary Larsen Area Administrator.

gary.larsen@rafa.org.uk

01392 462088

**AREA
MEMBERSHIP**
17,770

BRANCHES
83

RMGs
10

CLUBS
22

**AREA LAPSED
MEMBERS**
1029

Honorary Life Membership for Edith!

Recognising her longevity as a member of the Association at the Worcester Branch (renamed Worcester and District in 2015) and following a resolution that was passed by the branch, so it was that Council appointed Mrs Edith Glover Honorary Life Membership of the RAF Association.

Edith Glover – now aged 96 – was ‘demobbed’ from the Royal Air Force as a sergeant in 1946 and immediately joined the RAF Association (so... 72 years of unbroken full membership!)

The branch came together recently, and Edith was suitably surprised.



National and Area President Certificates Recipients

It gives us great pleasure to announce that the following members have been recognised with the award of a National President’s Certificate in conjunction with The Queen’s New Year Honours List 2019:

- Mr Paul Branson – Mid-Somerset Branch
- Mr John Taylor – formerly Salisbury Branch (now RMG)
- Mr Dave Stanbury – Plymouth Branch
- Mr John Mason – Worcester and District Branch

We are also pleased to announce that the following members have been recognised with the award of an Area President’s Certificate in 2019:

- Mr Iain Norris MBE – Weston-super-Mare Branch
- Mr Richard Stoner – Tywyn and Aberdovey Branch
- Mr Alan Kidson – Bridport & Lyme Regis RMG
- Mrs Judith Collett – Poole Branch

In need of extra help?

The Area team is fortunate to have our very own volunteer coordinator in Lucie Paddison. Lucie works out of our Newbridge Office in South Wales and is on hand to meet your volunteer requests.

Whether you need an extra pair of hands on the committee, a team for a membership drive or befrienders, Lucie will try and help you.

Attached in this newsletter is Lucie’s report, and you can see the current vacancies she is working on.

For more information you can visit our volunteering website at www.rafa.org.uk/volunteer

You can contact Lucie on lucie.paddison@rafa.org.uk or 07775959376.



Let's get out there and speak to the community

Your Branch Support Officers (BSOs) are a great asset so please use them for your membership.

The only way the Association can sustain our branches and clubs is by increasing membership and getting out into your local community.

The team have several assets at hand; the Mobile Exhibition Trailers (METs), gazebos, leaflets, banners etc. All of these create a unique presence in the high street or at an event and a good platform for branches to talk to potential members.

Please contact your BSO and get some dates in the diary.

Attached is the event request form. Please complete and send to your BSO.

Social Media

More and more branches are using the likes of Facebook and Twitter to engage their membership and potential members. Well done, and please continue to share the positive news coming from your branches and the Association.

For branches that would like to use social media but are unsure how, please contact Ian Campbell BSO for assistance.

Rafa.org.uk/promotion

This website is the go-to site for promotional items for your branches and clubs - clothing, branch websites, letter templates, press releases etc.

Take a look and see how this site can help your branch this year, and use the resources available.

Sign up for the Great North Run and support the Association

Runners are invited to sign up for the Great North Run, taking place in Newcastle on Sunday 8 September 2019.

The Great North Run, broadcast live on the BBC, sees thousands of runners take on the half-marathon challenge every year. Starting in Newcastle upon Tyne the 13.1 mile course is lined with supporters all the way from the iconic Tyne Bridge, right out towards the coast in South Shields. Since 1981 the world's greatest half marathon has welcomed over one million people across the finish line.

Our places are limited for this event, register now and run proudly wearing the Royal Air Forces Association colours!

For all the details and registration, go to our dedicated Eventbrite page: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/2019-simplyhealth-great-north-run-registration-54970338763>

Please help us to spread the word far and wide to ensure maximum uptake for this amazing event. We have 25 spaces and fundraising opportunities to fill.

Thank you so much.

The shape of the future?

What is the best structure for the RAF Association? How can we make sure we run our organisation effectively and provide welfare support for our members without buckling under the pressure of 'red tape'? The second resolution at the 2018 Annual Conference asked Council to look into the formal side of these issues and to report back to Annual Conference 2019. At the halfway point between Conferences Air Vice-Marshal John Cliffe, Chairman of Council, gives members an update on progress so far.

"Few will disagree that there has been an increasing burden on the Association's branch committees, not least because of a growing number of regulations that must be complied with to run each of our branches (the vast majority of which are charities in their own right). Northern Area Council formally noted this and, seconded by the South East and Eastern Area Council, proposed that Council review the individual charity registration of branches. In essence, this asks us to find out the pros and cons of branches legally becoming part of the Association, under a single charity registration.

"Since the review was voted through last May, Council has asked the Secretary General to contact the regulators in each UK nation (The Charity Commission for England and Wales, OSCR – the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland). Unsurprisingly their approaches differ, but they will be pleased to help us consider the nation-specific implications of the proposal, and we will continue to liaise with them.

"A series of Association roadshows has started, allowing branches to attend seminars to check they are fully up-to-date on their governance and finance. As well as supporting branches, this has provided an ideal opportunity to get feedback on the challenges of running a branch today. By May 2019, 25 to 30 of these roadshows will have taken place, and all the feedback will help inform Council's report.

"I want to assure members that Council is investigating options that will ensure we maintain the local identity of branches, keep funds raised specifically for geographical areas in those areas, and reduce the burden of complying with data protection, finance, safeguarding and other regulations. We will seek ways to reduce the personal financial liability of local trustees/committee members should anything go awry at a branch. Of paramount importance will be to ensure branches can continue to provide much needed welfare, friendly support and comradeship.

"Council is also aware that we have much to learn from the successes and mistakes of other charities that have gone through a similar process. It is particularly useful to look at their experiences early in our own research, so we can try to avoid the same pitfalls.

"This project is not going to happen overnight – and nor should it. We need to conduct the research carefully so any process we might propose minimises the risk to all concerned. I look forward to telling you more in the future."

The timetable for the research and, if approved, the rest of the process is:

- Early 2019
 - continue our background research
 - further meetings with the charity regulators in each nation
 - detailed progress reports and discussions at Council meetings
- May 2019
 - Report to members at Annual Conference
 - Ask for Conference's affirmation of our work so far, and for permission to continue
- May 2019 – May 2020
 - Work up formal resolutions and proposals, including more detail for each nation and area. If approved, formal changes could start to be put in place from 2021 onwards, in a measured way, to an agreed timetable.

To take part in a governance and/or finance roadshow, sign up for one at your 2019 Area Conference, or contact your area office team to find other local dates that might suit you.

Resolution No 2, RAF Association Annual Conference, May 2018

Proposal: The Conference resolves that Council examines and reviews the continued individual charity registration of branches, vis-à-vis branches becoming legally part of the Association, under a single charity registration, consulting with regulators as appropriate. Reporting back its findings, along with any details of proposed changes (if appropriate) to the Association's governance documents and administrative structure to effect the findings, to Annual Conference 2019.

Proposed by: Northern Area Council
Seconded by: South East and Eastern Area Council

Votes for: 82.4 per cent
Votes against: 13.7 per cent
Abstentions: 3.9 per cent

Flowerdown House Open Day

Flowerdown House in Weston-super-Mare is having an open day on 13th February 2019. They are able to offer holidays for those who have a military connection, they have a variety of beautiful hotel rooms, some with sea views as well as in house staff and specially adapted rooms for those who may need some additional personal care and welfare support. Stays are on a full board basis with evening entertainment and trips to local areas of interest included subject to availability.

If you would like any further information please do contact us on the details below or take a look at our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/RAFAFlowerdown/ or Website: www.rafa.org.uk/wingsbreaks/flowerdown-house/

Members' Code of Conduct

Our members, in over 400 branches worldwide, are at the heart of the Association. We're 74,000 people, all standing together because it's the right thing to do.

It's safe to assume that we all agree on our mission to support the RAF family in times of need, but we are individuals and with our own opinions and we all act in different ways.

A variety of views, beliefs and behaviours is healthy and to be encouraged, yet sometimes things can go awry. For this reason, our members, through Council, have developed a Code of Conduct, which is based on the shared values of the RAF and the Association: Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence. The Code sets out the standards members would expect of each other and it's there to protect our Association and all its stakeholders. It applies to all members, whether as an individual or as a member of Council, area council, regional, branch or branch club committees.

Please do have read the Code of Conduct here: <https://rafa-portal.force.com/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00P1n00000tPpppEAC>. If you feel that someone has breached the code, you can make a complaint by following the complaints policy: <https://rafa-portal.force.com/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00POY00000MifJrUAJ>. Where a complaint is upheld, sanctions may be applied in accordance with the members' administrative procedures: <https://rafa-portal.force.com/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00P1n00000tPpqxEAC>.

You can get access to the members portal via www.rafa.org.uk/portal

Membership Matters

This 'doughnut' gives you the very latest area membership update, broken down by membership category, showing for the first time that our 'Give As You Earn' (GAYE) members are larger in sum than Lifetime members. An inevitability at some point but also an example of how connected the area remains with today's serving RAF.

Let's keep growing the area and if each branch can increase its membership base by 10 per cent, then the area will be on target to achieve 20,000 members!

The more members you have the larger your rebate and the more support you can get for fundraising and events.

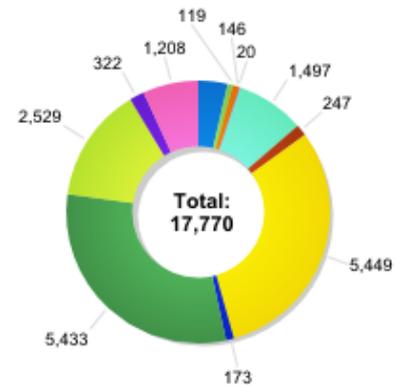
This 'doughnut' represents our biggest challenge – lapsed members!

If we can work to drive this number down together, then we will be doing exceptionally well.

So how can we reduce this number?

- Keep in regular contact with all of your members via letters, emails, social media and in person
- Request membership lists from Gary Larsen to make sure you regularly know what is happening with your members
- Keep meetings relaxed and enjoyable to harness your members' interest in the work of the branch and the wider Association

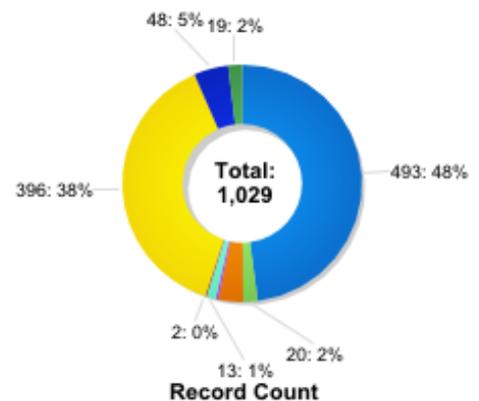
Active Members by Type



Membership Type

- Associate Membership 1 Year
- Associate Membership 1 Year with Airmail
- Associate Membership 4 Years
- Associate Membership 4 Years with Airmail
- Associate Membership Anniversary 1 Year
- Associate Membership Anniversary 1 Year with Airmail
- GAYE Membership
- Honorary Lifetime Membership
- Lifetime Membership
- Ordinary Membership 1 Year
- Ordinary Membership 4 Years
- Ordinary Membership Anniversary 1 Year

Lapsed Members Last Year



Record Count

Membership Type

- Associate Membership 1 Year
- Associate Membership 1 Year with Airmail
- Associate Membership 4 Years
- Associate Membership 4 Years with Airmail
- Associate Membership Anniversary 1 Year
- Associate Membership Anniversary 1 Year with Airmail
- Ordinary Membership 1 Year
- Ordinary Membership 4 Years
- Ordinary Membership Anniversary 1 Year

Welcome to Gary Larsen

As we bid a fond farewell to Debbie Byam who provided more than 5 years' service as our area administrator, so we welcome Gary Larsen who will provide support from the Exeter office for 3 days a week on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Gary is well known in the South West for his welfare befriending coordinator work and he looks forward to helping and supporting branches and members as required.



Dates for your diary

- Devon County Regional AGM (Dawlish) – 9 February (1400)
- East Glamorgan and Gwent Regional AGM (Treorchy) - 23 February (1400)
- Mid Wales Regional AGM (Knighton) – 2 March (1400)
- Cornwall Regional AGM (tbc) – 9 March (1100)
- Area Conference (Plymouth) - 22-24 March
- Annual Conference (Birmingham) - 10-12 May

- Cosford Air Show (RAF Cosford) – 9 June
- National Armed Forces Day (Salisbury) – 29 June
- RIAT (RAF Fairford) – 19-21 July

The RAF Association Concert Band

Every year the Concert Band is engaged throughout the area on various taskings for events, dinners, concerts and other performances. The band, led by musical director Peter Skellon is always open to new bookings to help bring entertainment to an event. Why not get in touch and book them?

Contact the Musical Director: Peter Skellon - peterskellon@btinternet.com

Please visit the band at - www.rafaconcertband.org.uk

Newsletter Attachments

- Welfare revue update
- Volunteer Coordinator update
- Event assistance form

The Area Team

A quick reminder that you can call the team direct:

- **Paul Baker (Area Director)** – 01392 341392 or 07796887195. Paul.baker@rafa.org.uk
- **Gary Larsen (Area Administrator)** – 01392 462088. Gary.larsen@rafa.org.uk
- **Lucie Paddison (Volunteer Coordinator)** 07775959376. Lucie.paddison@rafa.org.uk

Branch Support Officers

- **Alan Goudge (BSO South West)** – 01392 341390 or 07827962766. Alan.goudge@rafa.org.uk
- **Ian Campbell (BSO Central)** – 01793 967019 or 07584577064. Ian.campbell@rafa.org.uk
- **Mike Logue (BSO Mids and Mid/North Wales)** – 01902 297935 or 07776392899.
Mike.logue@rafa.org.uk

Wales Welfare Team

- **Barbara Howells (Area Welfare Manager Wales)** – 01495 368341. Barbara.howells@rafa.org.uk
- **Andrew Carter (Deputy Area Welfare Manager Wales)** – 01495 368342. Andrew.carter@rafa.org.uk
- **Stacey Edwards (Welfare Administrator Wales)** – 01495 368343. Stacey.edwards@rafa.org.uk

Midlands Welfare Team

- **Tracey Khan (Area Welfare Manager Midlands)** – 0121 449 9356. Tracey.khan@rafa.org.uk
- **Audrey Huggins (Welfare Administrator Midlands)** – 0121 449 9356. Audrey.huggins@rafa.org.uk

South Western Welfare Team

- **Glenford Bishop (Area Welfare Manager South West)** – 01392 341395. Glenford.bishop@rafa.org.uk
- **Sally Hall (Deputy Area Welfare Manager South West)** – 01392 341393. Sally.hall@rafa.org.uk
- **Gary Larsen (Deputy Area Welfare Manager South West)** – 01392 341393. Gary.larsen@rafa.org.uk



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
Registered Charity 226686 (England & Wales). SC037673 (Scotland).

Welfare review update

Our members have asked for an ambitious organisational growth and development strategy that gives our Association a clear way forward to 2030 and beyond.

To fulfil our vision and meet our objectives, we must be fit and ready for the future. For this reason, we are exploring where our strengths lie and where we have to make improvements across the entire Association.

We already know that demand for our welfare services continues to increase exponentially. We also understand that the care needs of our aging population have changed significantly in the past few years alone. Additionally, there are ever more regulatory and legislative changes and we must ensure we are compliant. These statutory demands and changes continue to intensify and, should we be found to be in breach of the legislation, the risks to our reputation are significant.

It is crucial that our welfare structure and delivery is fit for the future too. Through a Council-led initiative, Council and committee members, volunteers and employees have recently invested a great deal of time and expertise to review both the structure of our welfare delivery and the effectiveness and regulatory compliance of our respite hotels.

The findings were reported to Council yesterday and, as a result, they have proposed changes to the area welfare structure and to our provision of respite breaks, and have made decisions on changes to welfare policy to bring all branch welfare activity under the Association's welfare governance and practices.

Please click here to read more: www.rafa.org.uk/welfare-review-update/

Lucie Paddison
Area Volunteer Coordinator
Wales, Midland & South Western Area



Although the festive season is over, the New Year brings with it many new possibilities for 2019. Many of us make New Year's resolutions to try something new, to embrace new challenges and perhaps to help someone else in our local community. Indeed winter can be a difficult time for those members of the RAF family facing loneliness and isolation, with the Christmas festivities over, short days and dark nights, and the prospect of warmer weather still some way off.

Therefore, if you are thinking of making a meaningful New Year's resolution then 2019 could be the ideal opportunity to consider volunteering in support of the RAF Association. Volunteering is both exciting and rewarding, with a range of different roles and opportunities available across the Wales, Midland & South Western Area.

Below is a list of all the current volunteering roles we are advertising and the up-to-date list can always be found at www.rafa.org.uk/volunteer/search. If you would like to volunteer your time or find out more about any of our roles, please contact me on volunteers@rafa.org.uk or call 07775 959376.

Region	Role vacancy required	Location of role
Midland	Caseworker	Birmingham (Central)
Midland	Befriender	Birmingham (Dudley and West Brom)
Midland	Befriender	Birmingham (Rubery)
Midland	Caseworker	Bromsgrove
Midland	Befriender	Cheltenham
Midland	Befriender	Gloucester
Midland	Caseworker	Kidderminster
Midland	Befriender	Leamington Spa
Midland	Befriender	Walsall
Midland	Befriender	Wolverhampton
Midland	Befriender	Worcester
South Western	Caseworker	Barnstaple
South Western	Branch Volunteer	Bristol
South Western	Caseworker	Christchurch
South Western	Caseworker	Dorchester/Weymouth
South Western	Caseworker	Exeter
South Western	Befriender	Falmouth
South Western	Befriender	Lyme Regis
South Western	Branch Volunteer	Swindon
South Western	Befriender	Torbay area
South Western	Caseworker	Yeovil
Wales	Befriender	Aberystwyth

Wales	Caseworker	Aberystwyth
Wales	Caseworker	Anglesey
Wales	Caseworker	Brecon
Wales	Befriender	Builth Wells
Wales	Befriender	Cardiff
Wales	Befriender	Cardigan
Wales	Befriender	Carmarthen
Wales	Befriender	Gwent
Wales	Befriender	Llandudno
Wales	Caseworker	Llandudno
Wales	Befriender	Merthyr Tydfil
Wales	Befriender	Newport
Wales	Caseworker	Pembrokeshire
Wales	Befriender	Port Talbot/Bridgend
Wales	Befriender	Rhondda Cynon Taf
Wales	Caseworker	Swansea
Wales	Caseworker	Wrexham

Wales, Midland and South Western Area

Request for area trailer/gazebo

BRANCH:

BRANCH OFFICER:

CONTACT DETAILS:

EVENT SUMMARY

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Event Name:

Event Location:

Area Asset: Trailer Gazebo

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT

HOW MANY VOLUNTEERS/CADETS WILL BE ATTENDING TO HELP?

DO YOU NEED RAFA MERCHANDISE/WINGS ITEMS?