

ON THE RADAR

SUPPORTING FORMER AND SERVING MEMBERS OF THE RAF AND THEIR FAMILIES



HERE FOR YOU

A warm welcome to our latest newsletter, full of information about how we can help you.

Summer is here at last! Covid-19 restrictions are easing and we're returning to more freedom and optimism. But as things change again, we're still here for you with any financial, practical or emotional support you may need.

With the Government currently scheduled to end many of its Covid-19 support schemes shortly, our Benefits Advice Service is there for anyone in the RAF Family facing financial difficulties – you can read more on page three.

In this edition you can also find more about our Listening and Counselling Service, available to both veterans and serving personnel, our support for carers, and the help we offer the RAF Family worldwide. Plus, enjoy a fun quiz, wordsearch and our Battle of Britain podcast.

Whatever kind of help you need, just give us a call or send us an email – we're here for you, no matter what life sends your way.



CALL: 0300 102 1919



EMAIL: welfare Navigators@rafbf.org.uk



Some of our Ambassadors – people we've helped who go on to speak about their experiences and represent the Fund – at RAF Odiham.

- ✓ EMOTIONAL WELLBEING
- ✓ FRIENDSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS
- ✓ FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIPS

- ✓ INDEPENDENT LIVING
- ✓ FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

@rafbf



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Our Listening and Counselling Service has been there for the RAF Family throughout the pandemic.



“I could vent my feelings and frustrations.”

It's been a really difficult year for lots of us. Our Listening and Counselling Service has been on hand with much-needed support for RAF Family members dealing with depression, anxiety, stress and bereavement.

When the pandemic hit, we continued to make it possible to talk to counsellors remotely. Former Senior Aircraftman Michael Goody received virtual counselling after his dad died. "I felt completely lost," he said. "The Fund's counselling helped massively. I learned techniques to cope. People suffer in silence, but it's OK to ask for help – that's the hardest step."

Do you need support? Visit rafbf.org/wellbeing to find out more about our Listening and Counselling Service or call 0300 222 5703.

CELEBRATING 80 YEARS OF RAF AIR CADETS

Were you an air cadet? If so, we want to hear from you!



To mark the Air Training Corps' 80th anniversary, we'd like to hear from former RAF Air Cadets. Visit rafbf.org/aircadets to share your memories in our online commemorative book.

To coincide with this milestone, we're delighted to announce that - in certain circumstances - our support is now available to RAF Air Cadets, including Combined Cadet Force members, staff cadets and uniformed volunteers. From emotional wellbeing and counselling, to financial support, we're here to help.

“Like many other air cadets, I learnt to fly before I could drive!”

- Flight Lieutenant Chris Wilce, Officer Commanding, the RAF Falcon Parachute Display Team, on his time as an RAF Air Cadet.

To share your memories of being an air cadet, head to: rafbf.org/aircadets

QUIZ

Give our quiz a go and see how well you know your RAF!

1. The Dambusters raid was planned to coincide with a full moon.
A) True B) False
2. The Voyager is twice the size of a Lancaster bomber, but how long is its wingspan?
A) 55m B) 65m C) 60m D) 68m
3. Who was the first patron of the RAF Benevolent Fund?
4. What is the longest running airlift in the RAF's history?
A) Operation Cheshire B) Operation Coral C) Operation Vigour D) Operation Valour
5. During the Battle of Britain, where was the Battle of Britain bunker based?

1. A, True 2. C, 60m 3. King George VI
4. A, Operation Cheshire 5. RAF Uxbridge

WELFARE BENEFITS ADVICE

We can help you navigate the benefits system as Government Covid-19 support comes to an end.

With Government measures to help people through the Covid-19 pandemic coming to an end in the autumn, including furlough, the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme and uplifts in Universal Credit and Tax Credit, we know some members of the RAF Family may find themselves applying for welfare benefits.

Our Benefits Advice Service is there to support you through what can sometimes be a complicated system. We can check what benefits you're entitled to, and advise you how to make claims, and how to challenge benefits decisions you disagree with.

If you're worried about how changes might affect your benefits, or if you would like any other advice, get in touch with our Benefits Advice Team on 0800 169 2942 or advice@rafbf.org.uk.

SUPPORTING THE RAF FAMILY AROUND THE WORLD

Did you know we support members of the RAF Family in every corner of the globe?

Margaret Wilson, a former Flying Nightingale nurse who now lives in Australia, turned to us for help with living costs.



Margaret Wilson is thought to be one of the last Flying Nightingale nurses who served during the Second World War.

Now 99, Margaret joined the WAAF and was assigned to fly across the Channel, tending to wounded servicemen and accompanying returning prisoners of war.

Margaret left the RAF at the end of the war and in 1968 she emigrated to Australia. Recently, Margaret came to us when her finances became stretched by care costs.

Margaret's son Clive Wilson said: "The Fund's support has taken a burden off her shoulders. Before the Fund stepped in to help, she was living on just \$3 a week after her rent had been paid.

"Mentally, she is now a lot less stressed and a lot more relaxed. She now has a very active life and enjoys getting out and about."

BATTLE OF BRITAIN PODCAST

Tune into our podcast, bringing to life the remarkable stories of the RAF Family, and head back to 1940...

You can listen to our *All Stations* podcast from the comfort of your own home any time.

On *All Stations* series two we hear the inside stories from the Battle of Britain. Journey with us back to 1940 as the pilots of Fighter Command, supported

by those on the ground, took to the sky to defend Britain against a Nazi invasion.

The podcast features historians, the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight organisation and the Red Arrows. It was recently nominated for Best Independent Podcast at the Radio Academy Audio and Radio Industry Awards.

All Stations is available on Apple and Google Podcasts, Spotify or your preferred podcast app.

SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Do you look after a loved one? We have lots of resources to help you.

Caring for a family member or friend is an important but sometimes challenging role. We're here to support you. RAF Family members who are carers can access our full range of help, including our Listening and Counselling Service, Telephone Friendship Groups, relationship support, advice on benefits, as well as a digital resource, in partnership with Carers UK.

The *Digital Resource for Carers* platform has e-Learning courses, essential reading guides as well as *Upfront Guide to Caring*, a simple tool you can use to get all the information you need relevant to your situation.

To use the resource visit carersdigital.org, click create account and use the access code **DGTC2878**.



WORD SEARCH

N S H W D L N T O J H E
J W I N G R R V Q I F D
L Z S B L A C T M Y A A
I S T A R F V H U L I M
P Q S S X F T U S C R B
K U G U R A D A R X C U
U A K C M M J F T G R S
M D U T Y I Y C A D E T
S R Q J T L B J A R W E
U O G T A Y O Y O M R R
I N U H Q G T S Z D C M
E A G B S T A T I O N X

RADAR
SQUADRON
AIRCREW
WING

CADET
ISTAR
STATION
RAF FAMILY

DUTY
DAMBUSTER

GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK

What do you think of *On The Radar*?

On The Radar is your newsletter, and we want to make sure it's the best it can be. So we'd really appreciate it if you could complete a short survey to let us know what you like about it and any changes you'd like to see. Your comments will shape future editions.

You can find the survey at
surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ontheradar2021

You can also get in touch with us to give feedback by emailing newsletter@rafbf.org.uk or calling **0203 928 0561**.

To read previous editions of this newsletter visit: rafbf.org/ontheradar



Royal Air Force
Benevolent Fund