

ON THE RADAR

SUPPORTING FORMER AND SERVING MEMBERS OF THE RAF AND THEIR FAMILIES



BY YOUR SIDE THIS WINTER

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

We are living through difficult times. But please remember, from help with fuel bills to support to build friendships and feel less lonely, we are always here for you.

In this edition we have some great tips on coping with the cost of living this winter – plus even more in the booklet that comes with this newsletter.

We don't believe anyone who has served their country should have to struggle, and nor should their families. Get in touch using the details below to discuss how we can support you.



CALL: 0300 102 1919



EMAIL: welfare Navigators@rafbf.org.uk



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

- ✓ INDEPENDENT LIVING
- ✓ FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

@rafbf



TIPS FOR COPING THIS WINTER

Our advice for managing rising prices and falling temperatures as we move towards Christmas.

1. Check you're claiming all the benefits you're entitled to

If you're on a low income – or if you have an illness or disability or are a carer – you may well be entitled to welfare benefits from the government.

Did you know our Advice and Advocacy Service advised on £2M worth of benefits that RAF Family members could be missing last year? We can help you too – give us a call on **0300 102 1919** or email advice@rafbf.org.uk and we can run a check to see if you're claiming everything you're entitled to.

This includes the various payments available this year to help with rising energy costs, such as the Warm Home Discount. There is an automatic £400 payment for all households with an electricity connection. You get £66 in October and November and £67 per month from December to March.

2. Prepare your home for winter weather

Now is a good time to think about what you can do to your home to make it more energy-efficient – and to prevent any winter disasters.

Having a boiler service and bleeding your radiators will make sure they're in good working order, and able to keep you warm this winter. Checking for draughts around your home and plugging gaps is also a good idea.

You can stop your pipes from freezing too by wrapping any you can see in unheated areas (like your loft or garage) with tape and insulating materials from your local hardware shop. If you go away over the winter, remember to leave your heating on a constant low temperature to stop pipes freezing.

3. Read our income maximisation booklet

Our new booklet, enclosed with this newsletter, has lots more information about how you can maximise your income and reduce your outgoings in these difficult times. Give it a read through for some more tips.

Helping Davina with the cost of living.

When 85-year-old Davina Griffiths began to struggle because of rising energy costs, she turned to the Fund for support. We gave her a grant to help pay her fuel bills.

"I was just about managing, and then this money came through, and I couldn't believe it. It was really a great help," says Davina, whose husband Caleb served in the RAF during the Second World War as a Pilot.



If you are of pension age and on a low income, you may qualify for Pension Credit. In some cases, a new claim can be backdated by three months. If you claim by 18 December and your claim can be backdated, you may qualify for a £324 cost-of-living payment. Call 0300 102 1919 before 18 December to find out.

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, true or false?
2. What does the code word 'Angels' refer to?
3. How many RAF Fighter Command aircraft were lost during the Battle of Britain?
4. The Voyager is twice the size of a Lancaster bomber but what length is its wingspan in metres?
5. During the Blitz, which UK city was bombed for 57 consecutive nights?

1. True 2. Height in thousands of feet
3. 1,023 4. 60.3m 5. London

FANCY A HOLIDAY ON YORKSHIRE'S EAST COAST?

Our charming new holiday home is now open for breaks all year round.

The Folly is a lovely four-bedroom, four-bathroom chalet bungalow, available to serving RAF personnel and veterans.

It's a 15-minute walk from the traditional seaside town of Bridlington, where you can find lots of shops, restaurants, and popular attractions. It's a great place to visit for a holiday with kids or for some peace and quiet.

Our bungalow is suitable for wheelchair access and has a disabled-friendly bathroom. A real home from home, it has everything you need for a memorable break.

Visit rafbf.org/thefolly to find out more and apply to stay.



“Our welfare break gave us the quality time we needed as a family.”

Al Dyer, who enjoyed a much-needed break at The Folly in 2022 with his family after having a stroke.

NEED SOME HEADSPACE?

Our free Headspace app memberships, available to serving personnel, their partners and veterans who use our Listening and Counselling Service, can help you reduce stress through mindfulness.

Mindfulness trains your brain to pay more attention to the present moment and helps you cope better with life's stresses.

It can have a positive impact on your mood and mental wellbeing – increasing levels of happiness and reducing levels of stress, anxiety and depression. It can also improve your health, relationships and sleep quality.

The Headspace app offers guided, 10-minute mindfulness exercises, delivered to your phone, tablet or computer. You can choose exercises focusing on specific areas such as health or happiness. Or you can just put on music or stories to help you sleep.

We offer free Headspace membership for serving RAF personnel (including Reservists), their

partners, and veterans who are using the Fund's Listening and Counselling Service.

To start your membership, all you need to do is fill in the online form at rafbf.org/headspace. If you'd like more information, please contact headspace@rafbf.org.uk or 0203 928 0561.

“The first night I tried it, I slept twice as long as I had in the last six to eight months.”

Serving RAF Sergeant

CAN YOU HELP US?

We need RAF veterans to tell us what prevents them asking for support.

We want every member of the RAF Family to feel they can come to us for help when they need it.

That's why we've commissioned Middlesex University to research what barriers veterans feel there are when it comes to approaching us for support. We'll use the research to find ways to overcome them, so we can help more people.

We're looking for RAF veterans who haven't received support from us, to fill out a short online survey.

Then, if you're willing, our researchers may ask to interview you online, using Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

If you'd like to help, or know of anyone who could, please visit rafbf.org/barriers.

A DECADE OF THE BOMBER COMMAND MEMORIAL

We held our annual remembrance service in June, our 10th since the Memorial was unveiled.

As guardian of the Bomber Command Memorial in Green Park, London, we were honoured to hold the 2022 service to remember all those who served.

The service marked 10 years since Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II unveiled the Memorial in 2012.

Veterans, supporters of the Fund and the Memorial, and representatives from the Commonwealth and Allied nations involved in Bomber Command all gathered at the Memorial to pay tribute to those lost.

Rev (Sqn Ldr) Andrew Chapman, Station Chaplain at RAF High Wycombe, led the service, which was live streamed around the world. It included readings, stories of Bomber Command crew, a minute's silence and wreath laying.

You can see a recording of the service at rafbf.org/bcmservice.



WORD SEARCH

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

MEMORIAL	DAMBUSTERS	CONNECTIONS
MINDFULNESS	VOYAGER	THEFOLLY
CHRISTMAS	LANCASTER	RAFFAMILY

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

