



Update to Supporting Trusts

September 2016

The RAF Benevolent Fund would like to thank you for your continuing generosity. We are delighted to share with you some of the news and developments here at the RAFBF and through our regular updates, introduce you to some of our beneficiaries, who you help to support.

Welcome to our New Controller



Air Vice-Marshal David Murray joined us in September as the new Controller (Chief Executive) of the RAF Benevolent Fund.

David served in the RAF for 33 years and has spent the last four years as Controller at SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity. Under his leadership, SSAFA has conducted a comprehensive modernisation programme, increased the number of beneficiaries by more than 10,000, and introduced a number of new welfare services.

His last tour of duty in the RAF was in the Ministry of Defence as the Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Personnel and Training), where he provided strategic level world-wide welfare support to serving RAF personnel and their families.

Air Vice-Marshal David Murray said: "I am very honoured to have been given this opportunity to lead the RAF Benevolent Fund, an organisation that I have worked with and admired for many years. The RAF is clearly close to my heart and I am looking forward to carrying on the excellent work that Chris has been undertaking to support those members of the RAF Family who find themselves in need."

David took over the position from Air Marshal Chris Nickols, who leaves us after four years as Controller. Chris joined the RAF Benevolent Fund after 35 years service in the Royal Air Force. A fast-jet pilot for many years, his last position in the RAF was as Chief of Defence Intelligence.

Air Marshal Nickols oversaw the first ever major report into the size, profile and needs of the RAF family and has been responsible for the introduction of a range of new welfare services and partnerships to meet today's needs in the RAF family.

Meeting our Supporting Trusts

On 29 June, our Director of Strategy & Fundraising, Group Captain Mike Neville, hosted some of the longstanding supporting grant makers for a tour of the Bomber Command Memorial. Many of those attending were associated with veterans, Bomber Command, and the serving RAF.



The Trust Team were really happy to meet, thank and acknowledge the many trusts, foundations and livery companies for their support. In addition to a Welfare update, we were fortunate to hear from Bob Greig, a beneficiary. His story and others like his demonstrate the ways in which the RAF Benevolent Fund helps the RAF family in their hour of need.

Bob's Story



Sergeant Bob Greig joined the RAF in 1979 and was serving as a parachute jumping instructor when he was seriously injured. Whilst on a routine exercise Bob's main parachute failed and his emergency one tangled, resulting in him falling almost 2000m.

Due to the quick reaction and determination of his colleagues, which included landing the helicopter in the hospital car park, Bob miraculously survived the fall but dislocated and shattered his jaw and suffered severe spinal injuries.

After three weeks in intensive care it was apparent Bob would be confined to a wheelchair. Bob was determined his injury and subsequent disability would not hold him back. Having served as a PT instructor Bob firmly believes sport offers a medium for independence.

After his nine month stint in hospital, during which time he had his jaw rebuilt, Bob was medically discharged from the RAF. Following that Bob enrolled at Hull University where he became the first disabled President of an Athletics Union in the country.

After university Bob joined a project to research Independent Living for the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. He spent ten years helping those with disabilities to live independently, and played a key role in empowering people to take control of their own care.

Bob said: "I wanted to give something back and inspire and encourage people with disabilities to engage with other activities and remind them that their life was not constrained to a wheelchair."

The RAFBF was there at the very beginning for Bob. Whilst he was still in hospital, and unbeknown to him, the charity had stepped in and helped pay for some furniture or carpets Bob had on credit. We then bought a suitable bungalow for Bob in 2001 and he has been part of our Housing Trust since then.

Current Priorities

The RAFBF supports its beneficiaries through a wide range of programmes to meet their evolving needs. We are currently fundraising towards the cost of new services. Including:

- Princess Marina House - Our respite home on the South coast is undergoing refurbishment and extending its reach to offer new services. We have expanded our weekly lunch club to seven days a week, providing local RAF veterans and their guests a chance to catch up with friends old and new. In an effort to tackle loneliness and isolation amongst elderly veterans we are now able to provide respite care in the comfort of their own homes. This also gives carers a break and a chance to recharge their batteries, knowing their loved one is well cared for.
- Airplay & Ben Clubs - With accumulative pressures on current personnel at their highest since the 1980s, the RAF requested support from our charity in 2010. Since then, the Airplay programme- youth clubs provided by the RAF Benevolent Fund on almost all RAF stations- has assisted thousands of Serving families on RAF stations by providing educational recreation to their children. Further to the continuing success and benefits of the Airplay programme we are expanding our delivery by providing play clubs for the younger, five to eight year old children of Serving families living on stations. These will be known as Ben Clubs.
- RAF Disabled Holiday Trust - Formed as the first of its kind in 1982, the RAF Disabled Holiday Trust makes it possible for serving and ex-Royal Air Force personnel or their dependants, who have a severe disability, to take holidays in the UK and abroad on equal terms with able-bodied people. The RAFBF became corporate trustee of the trust in 2014, having supported its work for many years through the payment of user charges and the provision of staff support. We are proud to have incorporated it formally within our portfolio of welfare. Having established an effective transition, we are now seeking to expand the numbers of holidays open to a greater number of disabled members of the RAF community and their families.



Contact Us

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