

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen.  
Incorporated by Royal Charter. Full recognition by the Royal Navy.



**ROYAL NAVAL  
ASSOCIATION**



# **Royal Naval Association Annual Trustees Report 2021**

**Includes**

## **Report to Annual Conference 2022 Annual Accounts for Financial Year 2021**

Central Office  
Building 1/087, Scott Road  
HM Naval Base PORTSMOUTH, PO1 3LU

[www.royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk)

Registered Charity Number 266982

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Covid has affected RNA activity throughout the year but also brought opportunities. Thanks to RNRMC support, the new funding model, to allow subscriptions to be set to Zero, has seen growth in the organisation in Year 1, with nearly 3000 new members joining in 2021. By the end of the year membership numbers sat at 12750, already above the Year 2 target of 12500. The development of welfare and wellbeing aspects of the organisation is being recognised and welcomed by the membership with the SPARKO Project now sitting alongside Project Semaphore, a tool to help tackle loneliness. A successful annual conference and AGM was conducted in Nottingham. As the World Governing Body for Uckers, the Association hosted its first World Uckers Championships in Portsmouth Naval Base and as organisers of the Naval Associations Parade at the Cenotaph, the opportunity was taken to perpetuate the memory of our comrades who died in the service of their country and also to those Shipmates who Crossed the Bar during Covid. The relationship was reaffirmed with the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding between the RN and RNA, and the RNA also supported the homecoming of CSG21 and reinstated the Culture and Values Sessions given to Phase 2 RN trainees. A yearbook was delivered to the entire membership for the first time and new style membership cards issued. The AFC Employer Recognition Scheme Bronze Award was achieved in year. Vice Admiral Duncan Potts CB superseded Vice Admiral John McAnally CB LVO as National President.

## REFERENCE and ADMINISTRATIVE DETAIL

### 1. Central Office Address

Royal Naval Association  
Central Office  
Building 1/087  
Scott Road  
HM Naval Base  
PORTSMOUTH  
Hants PO1 3LU

### The Trustees

2. As at 31 December 2021 the Trustees of the Royal Naval Association were:

VAdm D L Potts CB	National President
Cdre M Slawson OBE RN	Deputy National President
S/M R Lock MBE	Vice-President
WO1 C Steedman	Vice President – The Warrant Officer to the Royal Navy
WO1 C Robson	Vice President – Serving Member
S/M K Ridley	National Chairman & NCM 6 Area
S/M P Stephenson	National Vice Chairman & NCM 12 Area (Ireland)
S/M M Foley	NCM 1 Area
S/M S Maclean	NCM 3 Area
S/M W Belfitt	NCM 4 Area
S/M P Chivers	NCM 5 Area
S/M L Higgon-Young	NCM 7 Area (S Wales and Gloucester)
S/M P Godwin	NCM 8 Area
S/M K Crawford MBE	NCM 9 Area and Overseas
S/M D Wright	NCM 10 Area

S/M I McQueen  
S/M S Elliot  
S/M I Irvin

NCM 11 Area  
NCM Scottish Area  
National Hon Treasurer

The No 2 Area NCM/Trustee billet remains vacant.

## Executive Staff

3. The Trustees delegate responsibility for the day-to-day management of the affairs of the Association to its General Secretary, Capt Bill Oliphant RN.



The Central Office team in 2021 consisted of (L-R): Sara Field (Membership Secretary), Kathryn Brindley (Finance), Nigel Huxtable (Membership Support – now retired), Lynda Pearson (Welfare Programmes and Wellbeing), Malcolm Little (Plans), Andy Christie (Operations), Julie Royston (Project Semaphore), Charlie Darlington (Communications) and Bill Oliphant (Gen Sec). Also, in the team but not photographed, Mike Gray (Communications).

## Independent Examination

4. The Association's Auditors acting as independent examiners are Messrs Brooms Professional Services Ltd of Broom House, 39/43 London Road, Hadleigh, BENFLEET, Essex, SS7 2QL. They are represented by Mr Kevin Cornelius a Director of the Company.

## Bankers

5. The Association's bankers are NatWest Bank plc, Chelsea Branch, PO Box 3048, 224 King's Road, Chelsea, London SW3 5XJ, although day to day transactions are overseen by the branch at 130 Commercial Road, Portsmouth PO1 1EJ. Our investment managers are Sarasin and Partners LLP under a custody arrangement with the RNRMC on a unitised basis. The National Hon Treasurer, Ian Irvine, represents the Association at the RNRMC Investment Committee.

## **Solicitors**

6. The Association's Solicitors are Messrs Coffin Mew; 1000 Lakeside North Harbour, Western Road, Portsmouth PO6 3EN. Messrs Blake Morgan, have also given legal support during the year.

## **Advisers**

7. In addition, the Trustees have appointed a number of Advisers to assist the Association Management Committee:

Lt Cdr H MacKenow RN	Hon Legal Adviser
S/M Nick Purkis	Head of Governance Committee
S/M Geoff Apperley BEM	National Welfare Adviser
S/M Bob Coburn	National Ceremonial Adviser
S/M Gareth Booth	National Branch Recruitment and Retention Adviser
S/M Steven Caulfield	National Events Adviser
S/M Les Yeoman	HMS RALEIGH Lead Mentoring Adviser

## **Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2021**

### **GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

8. The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2021. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the Charity's Royal Charter, the Charities Act 2011 (in accordance with note 1 to the Accounting Policies YE 31 December 2021 sub para a 'Accounting Convention') and the Statement of Recommended Practice 2015. The accounts have been prepared under the provisions of FRS 102.

9. The Royal Naval Association was incorporated by Royal Charter granted by Her Majesty The Queen on the advice of Her Privy Council on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1954. A Supplemental Charter was granted on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1990, which is the Charter now in force and forms the basis of the current Rules and Bye-Laws. There was a minor revision of the Charter and more significant revision of the Rules and Bye-Laws during 2014. The Charter and Rules are subject to minor amendments annually depending on Conference motions.

10. The Trustees comprise the National President, Deputy National President, National Vice Presidents which includes the Warrant Officer to the Royal Navy (WORN), in addition a serving Warrant Officer, National Honorary Treasurer and elected members of the National Council. Each elected member of the National Council represents a loosely defined geographical area and is elected for a period of two years by a simple majority based on a postal poll of Branches within the area represented. These are counted and reported on by members of the Standing Orders Committee at each Annual Conference. The National President, Deputy National President, National Vice Presidents, National Honorary Legal Adviser and National Honorary Treasurer (when not an elected NCM) are appointed by the National Council, as are the two RN Warrant Officers. The National Council of the Association delegates routine work to three sub-committees – the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC), Association Management Committee (AMC) and the Governance Committee.



11. Newly appointed Trustees are provided with information regarding their legal duties and responsibilities, as well as key documents published by the Charity Commission. As soon as practicably possible, Trustees training is also conducted.

12. Details of the Association's officials are included on the Association website ([available here](#)) which allows members of the public and Association members to know easily who represents them and manages the affairs of the Charity. S/M Keith Ridley (NCM 6) was re-elected National Chairman and S/M Paul Stephenson (NCM 12) was re-elected National Vice Chairman. The RNA enjoys membership of: COBSEO; International Maritime Confederation and the Conference of Naval Associations. The RNA signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding with the Royal Navy in 2021. There is a strong network of naval charities who are in regular communication. These include, but are not limited to: RNRMC, Greenwich Hospital, RNBT, NFF and RMA. The General Secretary acts as a managing member of the Irish ex-Services Trust disbursement committee.

13. 2021 saw the supersession of National President with VAdm Duncan Potts relieving VAdm John McAnally after over 20 years service in post. The Trustees would like to take the opportunity to reaffirm their gratitude to VAdm McAnally for his guidance, friendship, good humour and deep devotion to the Association throughout his dedicated tenure. VAdm McAnally has been conferred as a Life Vice Patron of the Association.

### Central Office

14. Having moved to their new premises in February 2020. The Central Office is now located in Scott Road and share the building with the Association of WRNS. The Board of Trustees would like to take this opportunity to thank the Second Sea Lord and the Naval Base Commander (Portsmouth) for their continued support of the RNA in providing premises within the Naval Base for use as RNA Central Office.



*RNA Central Office, HMNB Portsmouth*

### Objectives of the Royal Naval Association

15. The Objects are:

- (1). To further the efficiency and well-being of the Service, preserve its traditions and encourage recruiting.
- (2). To foster comradeship and "esprit de corps" among those who have served or are serving in Her Majesty's Naval Forces.
- (3). To provide facilities for bringing Members together.
- (4). To perpetuate the memory of those members of Our Naval Forces who have died in the service of their Country.
- (5). To provide relief from conditions of need, hardship or distress to persons who have served or are serving in Our Naval Forces and their dependants.
- (6). To advise members and other persons who have served in Our Naval Forces and

their dependants on subjects affecting their welfare, referring on to appropriate agencies where specialist advice is required.

(7). To advise and assist Members and other persons who have served in Our Naval Forces in their search for employment.

(8). To pursue any or all of objects (2), (4), (5), (6) and (7) above for the benefit of members or former members of the Naval Forces or former members of the Commonwealth at a time when those Naval Forces were part of Our Naval Forces, and either or both objects (5) and (6) above for the benefit of the dependents of such persons.

## FINANCE

16. **Funding Model.** At the end of 2020, a Special National Meeting was convened to set subscriptions to zero and switch to a donation funding model – this was reported on in last year's Annual Report. The Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity has underwritten this move with an arrangement which sees the RNRMC making up the difference between donations and the anticipated revenue from membership fees. This has allowed considerable growth of the organisation which has expanded by over 25% during 2021 and has allowed us to reach more of the wider naval family.

17. **Risk and Reserves Policy.** With the shift in funding model, the Trustees recognise that there is considered to be more financial risk however with the loss of approximately 1000 members per year for over 30 years, the risk in maintaining the same model was obvious – membership numbers had dwindled below 10k for the first time. The Trustees have concluded that the risk set against the Reserves policy remains satisfactory for the uses of the Association. The Association's Reserves Policy is reviewed annually and aims at holding sufficient Unrestricted and Undesignated Funds to provide funding for the following:

- a. To provide financial resilience if donations do not keep pace with the rising costs of providing services to members.
- b. To generate income to subsidise current activities.
- c. To provide future income.
- d. A reserve in case of a major business continuity issue.
- e. A contingency for wind up costs to cover legal requirements for redundancy payments; incomplete periods of contracts etc, which the Trustees will be legally obliged to meet.
- f. A contingency for other unexpected events.
- g. Future projects not yet mature in development.
- h. To provide the opportunity to purchase a freehold or leasehold property as the Central Office, since the lease for the present premises in HM Naval Base, Portsmouth is unsecured.

18. **Review of Reserves.** The Trustees have reviewed the level of reserves against their policy and, despite the additional risk of moving to a donation-based income model, have

agreed that they remain at a satisfactory level. The level of investment income deriving from the Association's Reserves is an important factor in deciding whether or not to expend or reduce them since investment income contributes significantly to meeting operating costs. The Trustees have also reviewed the policy of maintaining the designated Property Fund and have considered that this is still a valid necessity in order to secure funds needed to acquire property in the event of changes to our current arrangement. The Trustees note that despite presenting a deficit budget to draw down the level of reserves, FY2021 has seen a modest increase in level of reserves due to the improved stock market in 2021 which saw a recovery as the economy re-established after the falls created by Covid. In order to try to draw down the level of reserves, a hefty deficit budget has been approved for 2022.

19. **Restricted Funds.** The reserves figure is inflated by granted money held for various projects and which are held in Restricted Funds. The generation of income through investment of the reserves is an essential part of the RNA business model as donations alone do not cover expenditure. This policy has not changed with the shift to the donation-based income model.

20. **Offices.** The recent office move has provided the opportunity for a new 3-year lease within the Naval Base. Notwithstanding, the Trustees conclude that it remains prudent to make provision in the reserves to cover the potential costs of providing office space. The property fund stood unchanged at £491,375 at the end of FY2021. The Trustees have reviewed Portsmouth commercial rents, and the trustees consider this remains an adequate figure to provide office accommodation. The requirement to maintain funds in case of a major Business continuity problem remains valid, as does provision against wind-up costs and unexpected events.

21. **Standards Fund.** A minor reserve holding is made against the repair and replacement of Association standards.

22. **Finance Operations.** Due to a staff absence, in February 2021, RNRMC were kind enough to take on the payroll function on behalf of the Association giving more resilience to the payment of Central Office staff. Indeed, the RNRMC have offered to take on more of the back office financial operations of the RNA and this will be progressed during 2022. While the Board of Trustees recognises that this makes the RNA more dependent on the RNRMC, it is understood that our values and objectives are so compatible that this is not seen as a threat to RNA operations. Indeed, it is seen as beneficial as less funding is spent on administration allowing more to be spent on outputs to benefit the membership.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

23. The Trustees make the following observations:

**Overall. The Trustees report an overall increase in funds of £50,920 - an increase of 2.62% however this is inflated by the improvement of investments in the Stock Market which did well in 2021. Also, despite a planned deficit budget of £140,750, a deficit of £123,940 (excluding the net gain on investments), was achieved.**

**The Trustees are cognisant of the additional risk the switch to a donation based income model presents and are thankful for the support of the RNRMC to allow us to achieve this. Nevertheless, the Trustees are thankful for the level of strategic reserve which gives confidence to allow the safe transition and grow the Association.**

- a. Operations.** The Trustees were thankful for the £86,614 donated in legacies during the year and, equally thankful to the RNRMC for not including these with the donations in lieu of subs, on the understanding that we would have received these donations anyway. The RNA is also thankful to the RNRMC for taking on the staff payroll function.
- b. Donations in lieu of Subs.** £58,174 was raised in donations in lieu of subs while RNRMC made up the difference to £140k which was the anticipated income from 10k members at £14 each. As stated above, the RNRMC were kind enough not to include in this calculation, donations which would have come to the RNA anyway even if subscriptions were being paid.
- c. Operating Costs.** The operating costs of the charity increased in 2021 reflecting an increase in outputs for the membership and a recovery from Covid. This year they were £402,183 compared to the artificially low (due to Covid) figures of £302,541 last year. As a more relative comparison, the 2019 costs were £353,688.
- d. BCSF.** The Trustees continue to be delighted with the success of the Branch and Club Support Fund minor grants scheme introduced in 2018. The scheme allows the GS to approve grants of up to £250 with minimal bureaucracy. Applications this year have included Branch annual Zoom fees and payments to some Branches during lockdown to print and send out the Semaphore Circular to Shipmates not connected to the internet.
- e. Trading income and VAT.** There is an uncertainty of the Association's VAT status now that we have moved to a donation-based income model, so it has been decided to pay back the input tax previously reclaimed throughout 2021 and renegotiate our position with HMRC. This will be taken forward during the current FY.
- f. Gift Aid.** The switch to a donation-based income model prompted a reissue of Gift Aid forms which has developed an improved income of £4427 against last year's £1335.
- g. Investments.** Investment income is reported under FRS102. Investments remain held in a Custodian arrangement with the RNRMC. The value of investments at Year End was £1,836,937 which reflects a recovery of the stock market from last year where the market value at year end 2019 was £1,696,873. Our National Treasurer, S/m Ian Irvin represents the RNA on the RNRMC's investment Committee.
- h. The Naval Service Memorial Fund.** Expenditure on the fund was £897 leaving £10,705. The fund stands at a sustainable level with 10 years worth of insurance and maintenance in hand.
- i. Standards Fund.** The standards fund had exceeded the cap of £10,000 so the surplus has been transferred to the BCSF.

## Annual Accounts

24. The main element of the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 is the Statement of Financial Activities for the year, which is an annex to this report.

25. It is important that the Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet are read in conjunction with the Notes, which appear in the Accounts. The market value of Investments



is as stated in Notes to the Financial Statements.

26. The Trustees remain indebted to the auditors Brooms for their continued support and guidance.

### **Public Benefit**

27. The Trustees confirm that they have taken due regard of the guidance contained in the Charity Commissions guidance on public benefit, set in 'Charities and the Public Benefit – Section G', when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives; and in planning future activities and setting the grant making policy for the year. The Trustees note the ongoing exceptional public benefit provided by Project Semaphore iPads, the SPARKO Project and the LIBOR minibuses.

### **Risk Management**

28. Risks have been assessed by the Trustees, and the Risk Management Policy is reviewed annually and The Risk Register at the National Council meeting regularly. Financial risk is assessed in the 10-year forecast. The most significant financial risks are: the switch to a donation based income model will not realise the funds required to operate the Association, movements in financial markets affecting investments and the MoD unexpectedly terminating the lease on Semaphore Tower offices.

29. The main strategic risk is to membership numbers. The strategy of switching to a donation based income model and the development of Special Interest Groups where members are encouraged to form groups to feed their interests and hobbies, demonstrate relevance to a younger cohort and serving personnel and are already proving attractive – the Association has grown by over 25% during 2021. Marketing and communications are tuned to this goal.

30. Risks to the Association and to the RNA's support of its Trustees are mitigated by adequate insurance, which has provided a significant protection to RNA funds in previous years. Insurance has been expanded to include the activities of the mentoring at HMS RALEIGH and also includes liability insurance for the National Standard Bearer when on RNA duties. The Association is GDPR compliant and has invested in strong security of members' data held in the new database server. Nevertheless, insurance also exists for data breaches including hacking and theft.

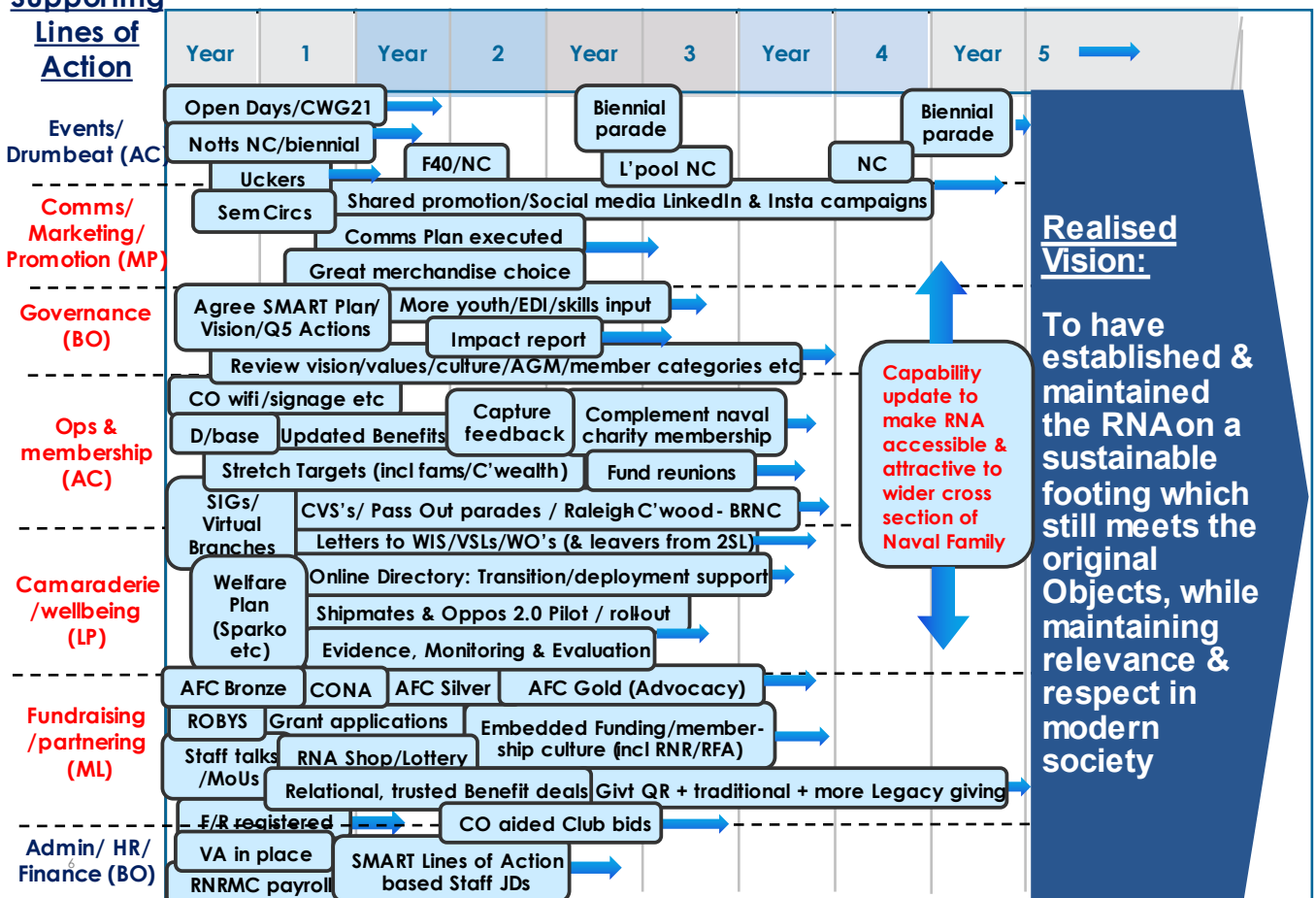
31. The most serious operational risk is slip, trip and medical emergencies during RNA events. The Charity mitigates this risk by training all the Central Office (HQ) staff as Red Cross qualified workplace first aiders and the acquisition of an Automated External Defibrillator

### **STRATEGY AND 5 YEAR PLAN**

32. Year 1 on the top left of the slide below represents 2021. We benefited from a pro bono series of Q5 Consultancy sessions which helped us to articulate this 5 year Plan. Broken down into a number of mutually supporting 'Lines of Action' on the left hand side (each with a CO staff member lead) all effort aligns to our Objects in Paragraph 14 above, pointing in one direction towards a realised RNA vision. This is only a late 2021 snapshot, albeit quite a busy one. It will certainly mature and develop as a living Plan, according to future priorities, decisions and shifting realities, and the input from Shipmates is always welcome.

**Mutually  
Supporting  
Lines of  
Action**

**RNA 5 Year Plan**  
(underpinned by our values & history)



## ACTIVITY REPORT

### Key Lines of Action activities for 2021 – Year 1 of a 5 Year Plan

#### 33. Events/Drumbeat

Central Office arranged a curtailed number of Open Days in 2021 due to the pandemic, which were much enjoyed by Shipmates. The Open Day features a sandwich lunch, RNA Brief and Boat trip of Portsmouth dockyard. Branches from all over the UK have previously enjoyed this event.

The Events 'squad' were fully engaged during 2021, despite the pandemic, organising the monumental production of two national events within days of one another.

Firstly, the RNA Conference held in early September 21 in the Crown Plaza Nottingham. On Friday, prior to delegates arriving, staff provided in-depth briefings to National Council members on the current drumbeat featuring a plethora of current projects/programmes, from IT to the Uckers World Championship (more of which later). Saturday featured the National AGM with the supersession of the National President. Our guests included the Sheriff of Nottingham and Naval Regional Commander, Cdre Rob Belfield RN, and 2SL's Naval Presentation Team who delighted the Shipmates with their dazzling presentation. Sadly, it was the last appearance of colleague Shipmate Nigel Huxtable BEM as a member of staff at Conference, where he was

commended for his 12 years' continuous service and awarded Life Membership. Sunday saw the Chaplain of the Fleet, The Very Reverend Andrew Hillier, conduct a service in the Hotel, and on completion the Shipmates headed home after a very successful evolution.

Secondly, two weeks later, the RNA and Naval Associations paraded in Whitehall. Over 500 hundred personnel formed up from the RN, RNA, Naval Associations and led by a RM Band were reviewed by Rear Admiral Phil Halley CB MBE as they moved past the Cenotaph saluting base.

**34. Communications.** The Trustees remain grateful to Greenwich Hospital for the funding of the Communications Manager's post which has been absolutely fundamental to the success of 2021. To ensure we achieve our 5-year goals our Comms Plan will be rolled out, with new projects and branded RNA merchandise ready to be set up. This includes the creation of an Instagram, a rejuvenation of the Dit-On Podcast, media coverage for the F40 weekend and new Special Interest Groups that appeal to a wider age range. A key element for recruitment this year will be exposure and the more online spaces we can reach as well as physical (such as open days) the better.

### **Ongoing Projects/Initiatives**

- (1) Semaphore Circular.** This is the monthly newsletter of the Association which is published on the first Monday of the month.
- (2) Semaphore Short.** The Semaphore Short is a weekly publication sent out on the Mondays when the Semaphore Circular is not published. As with the Semaphore Circular, it now goes out to all the membership who have an email address on the Central Database which is 96% of the membership.
- (3) Falklands 40 –** this is the Main Effort for 2022 and comms are crucial to the success of the weekend which is planned to *Reunite, Relive and Remember*. There are now approximately 7 x more Falklands veterans in the membership than there are WW2 veterans. On a strategic basis, it allows the Association to achieve the objective, *To perpetuate the memory of those members of Our Naval Forces who have died in the service of their Country*. A logo has been designed for the occasion.
- (4) Dit On Podcast.** In 2021 we ran a very successful Podcast called *Dit On*, with funding from the Morrisons Foundation (the supermarket's charity). Our host is a lady called Jenna Brodie, who is a veteran herself. She plans a second season in 2022.
- (5) Fireside Chats and Saturday Night Virtual Tot.** The twin online initiatives of the Saturday evening virtual tot hosted by the Wrexham Branch (BZ!) and the Monday evening Fireside Chats, continue to be popular. A list of Fireside Chats from 2021 is enclosed.
- (6) Yearbook 2022.** The Central Database has allowed us the ability to post a copy of the Yearbook to all members' households. This is the first time that this has been achieved and although a costly evolution, it is the only occasion that something physical is despatched to the entire membership so is considered a worthwhile exercise. It also gave the opportunity to remind those who might not have already set up a Standing Order to donate to the Association.

- (7) **Sparko TV/Project Semaphore/Reaching Out By Your Side.** Support to all Welfare/wellbeing projects and programmes has also been a priority.
- (8) **QR Codes.** We have used QR codes to drive people to our 'Join Us' page on the website across all of our marketing material. A general QR code was used for our 'Once Navy Always Navy' marketing material and by our Central Office staff on signatures/stationary. We then generated a new one for the Raleigh Marketing material specifically. You can then measure how many clicks we are getting with the different codes. You can make this more specific as you go – eg having a new one for any Falklands 40<sup>th</sup> marketing material. It is a really useful way of measuring the success of specific campaigns and we will be able to report next year on this. We generate the codes through a website called QR Code Generator Pro – log in details on the list below. <https://app.qr-code-generator.com/>

Current QR Codes:



General QR Code



HMS Raleigh QR Code

35. **Governance** (see paras 8-12 above)

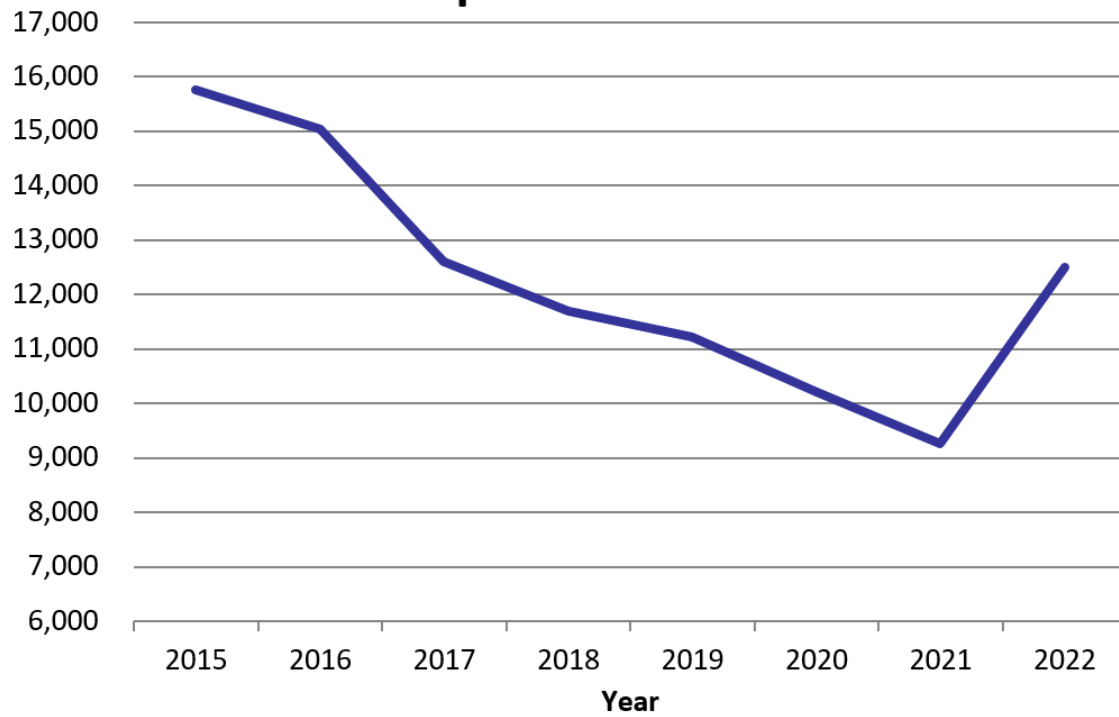
### 36. **Operations and Membership**

In Central Office a new database was unveiled and brought up to FOST operational standards, a vast difference from its predecessor - the 'paper file' located in the Storeroom! Now we can send emails directly to all members who have email and draw reports only dreamt of previously. Secretaries have access and can update membership information instantly. Another change staff are getting used to is the deletion of the Subscription funding model and installation of the Donation model and substantial increase in membership. (See graph below).

This has been the first increase in membership numbers for over 30 years so the Trustees are proud to be able to say that the Association finds itself in a period of growth. Other than London and overseas, all Areas have improved membership numbers and we believe that the dips in these Areas are more due to not registering members on the new Database. This will be addressed in 2022.

More staff has meant that the Association has been able to offer more to our beneficiaries (the membership) through improved Welfare/Wellbeing Support and other benefits of membership. As well as growing in size, using the Objects of the Charity as a scorecard, the Association can clearly demonstrate an improvement to its outputs during 2021.

## Membership of the RNA 2015 to 2022

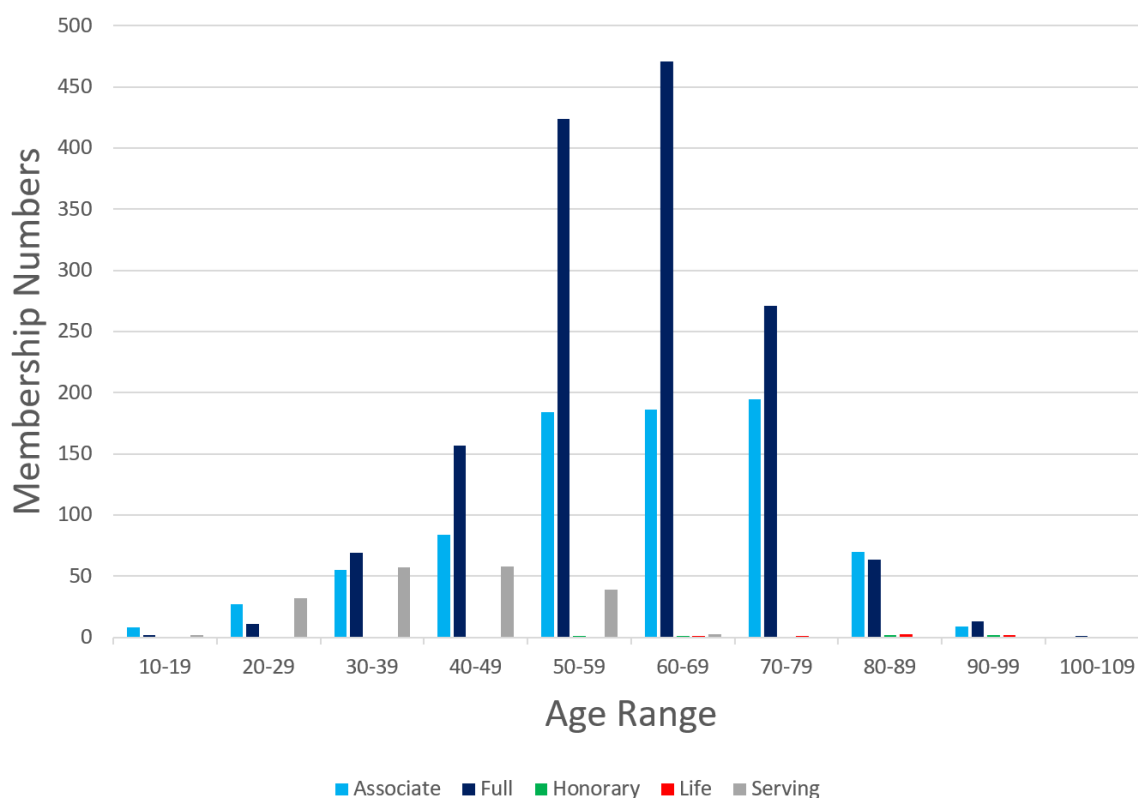


2021 Membership Matrix								
Area	Life	Full	Assoc		Year 2021		Year 2020	
1	11	59	204		274		364	
2	41	335	250		626		520	
3	59	713	511		1283		1048	
4	91	761	356		1208		1022	
5	44	352	472		868		765	
6	27	217	333		577		405	
7	34	254	317		605		502	
8	52	368	561		981		780	
9	38	236	406		680		416	
10	64	501	538		1103		924	
11	51	345	227		623		433	
12	21	145	196		362		363	
Scotland	31	326	138		495		246	
Overseas	8	152	138		298		509	
HQ	66	2219	473		2758		1278	
TOTALS	638	6983	5120		12,741		9,866	

The new database has also allowed us to add new fields so we can have a better understanding of the demographics of our membership. We are keen to attract younger Shipmates into the Association to give the organisation a younger feel and to give it some longevity. The data below is encouraging in that it shows that the majority of new joiners are Full members and the numbers of Serving members who have joined the Association are also increasing.



Membership Type and Age Range – Joiners since 1 January 2021



2021 also resulted in an increase in Special Interest Groups (SIGs – see below), ranging from Model Making to Cricket, and it is envisaged they will play a significant role in the Falklands 40 (F40) weekend in mid-June 2022.

Central Office has also learned, with everyone else, the new world of ‘Zoom’ and ‘Teams’ and await an uplift in Wi-Fi capability, to facilitate this better. Outside the building new RNA CO signage has been ordered and should arrive shortly (ships stuck in the Suez Canal aside!). Shipmates will then discover where we have been hiding (see Paragraph 13 above) since our move from Semaphore Tower two years ago.

### 37. Welfare and Wellbeing

The continued collaboration and support of RNRMC provided Central Office with the new position of ‘Welfare Programme Manager’. The main role, to establish and centralise the Welfare and Wellbeing piece, continues to scope current business activities and desired outcomes which support the 5-year Strategy Plan. Early engagement with key stakeholders – NCMs, National and Deputy National Welfare Advisors, Area Welfare Officers, Branch Welfare Officers and external supportive agencies (RNBT, VOS, etc) has provided insight into desirable appetite for change, opportunities for collaboration and future partnerships along with outstanding concerns. Significant requirements remain to establish legal and safe practices within the operations of low-level case management – Enhanced DBS checks and adherence to GDPR, supportive and effective supervision and safeguarding training. The Branch Welfare Officer’s Handbook is nearing completion and will provide Advice, Information and Guidance for any Shipmate who engages in, or is concerned with the welfare or wellbeing of another. Scoping has identified the requirement to develop and support a volunteer recruitment and training project to support those who so admirably give of their time.

Project Sparko (fully funded by RNRMC). Initially a pilot project to the Northeast/Northwest and Midlands is now national (not however in Ireland yet). We have successfully reached 108 beneficiaries. KPIs were set at 200, however quality of engagement is currently being embedded over quantity. Lessons learned are that significant support is required to beneficiaries and branches to develop the communities of support indicated as success markers by Sparko management. There remains much to do with building local communities and as with Branch Welfare Officers there is a requirement to recruit individuals into volunteering roles to achieve this project's expected outcomes and successes.

Project Semaphore (funded initially by LIBOR, now Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund AFCTF). Jules Royston moved on to other challenges in November after successfully delivering this project for several years. Gemma Swanson, formerly a Grants Administrator at RNRMC joined us in January 2022 and brings with her significant skills and understanding of the charitable sector and further cements our desire to align our ambitions to those supportive Naval charities for the benefit of our membership.

Business As Usual activities and general requests for help continue to filter through Central Office via telephone and email and the number, breadth and context indicate shipmates and their families' complex concerns and requirements for help and signposting. An encouraging development has been the awareness of the Association from within the Naval Service Welfare Organisation – RNFPS - and the potential reach of our support for the benefit of serving personnel and their families. This step-change is backed up with activities supporting the CSG21, the St Vincent Serving and veteran community with recognition of value to membership and support outcomes.

Finally, following the end of Shipmates & Oppos 1.0 in early 2020, it was nevertheless felt that a separately funded opportunity might still exist to kick-off an upgraded S&O 2.0. In close liaison with RNRMC and the new SO2 Leave Well in RN Personnel & Training, we successfully sought Veterans Foundation funding in late 2021, and look forward to seeing this develop as a vital RNA-led tool for service leaving shipmates to link up with those oppos already gainfully employed outside of the RN (in some cases to persuade them to remain in a fair bit longer!).

### **38. Fundraising/Partnering**

With a clear aim to work closely alongside RNRMC a new Fundraising and Special Events role in Central Office was created in early March 2021. Our newly introduced free membership model needed an equally new fundraising perspective, and this has been provided. Although corporate fundraising was always going to be limited and beyond our remit (despite BAES granting £3000 to underpin our F40 activities), we have explored other untapped sources of potential support and sponsorship. Principally, we aimed to reinforce RNA welfare programmes (such as Shipmates & Oppos 2.0, with £20,000 from the Veterans Foundation for 2022), and provide greater merchandise choice and revenue (still very much under review: [Shop | Royal Naval Association \(royal-naval-association.co.uk\)](https://shop.royal-naval-association.co.uk)). As well as the RM Shop, we have built refreshed, trusted and relational benefit deals with Forces Cars Direct, the UK Holiday Group, HMCA Insurance et al, hopefully suiting a broader range of RNA member types and ages, seeing much improved contributions to the Association over time.

Solid, collaborative, mutually supporting partnerships are key to extending our reach, capability and membership. We have actively strengthened our connection with RNRMC in many areas, including shared Reaching Out By Your Side (ROBYS) programme governance, designed to

deliver wellbeing outputs together. 'Staff Talks' with the Naval Families Federation and RN Benevolent Trust have also taken place, with important joint actions agreed, and future engagements with other likeminded naval charities are planned as an ongoing part of our approach. With the RN itself, especially in the personnel area, we are closely linked, and seen as an important enabler for their own work – as such, our National President signed a refreshed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Second Sea Lord in September, and 2SL has agreed to send a letter to all Commanding Officers of RN/RM Ships, Shore Establishments and Units, asking them to encourage leavers to join the RNA and experience the benefits.

Lastly, by securing the AFC Employer Recognition Scheme Bronze Award in 2021, we are well placed to achieve Silver in 2022, and we aspire to Gold the year after.

## National Chairman's Report of the National Council

Reference to the National Council and elected National Council Members (NCMs) within this report should be read as National Trustees of the Association's Registered Charity. As with previous years' reports, I do not intend to repeat what you have already read up to this point within the Main Report but will touch on just a few matters.

The year started with the ongoing epidemic of Covid-19 preventing National Council, and National Sub-Committees being held face to face unless the regulations allowed, but having to hold virtual meetings using Zoom, thus adhering to the Government's policy on restricted travel and social distancing. With 50% of meetings being held via Zoom, financial savings resulted to the Association from reduced travelling and accommodation costs.

Similar restrictions with regards to holding face to face meetings throughout the Association at both Area and Branch Levels presented the challenges experienced in 2020.

During the year both myself and Shipmate Paul Stephenson NCM 12 (Ireland) were re-elected by the National Council as National Chairman and National Vice Chairman respectively for our sixth year in office. Both Paul and I feel privileged for the confidence placed in us by the National Council to allow us to continue serving the membership and representing the Association.

During 2021 several changes took place among elected Members of the National Council. These were NCM 2 Victor Allen who retired after several years of loyal service. NCM 4 Arthur Gutteridge stood down and was succeeded by Warwick Belfitt. NCM 5 Jim Hammond sadly passed away in September with Peter Chivers being elected. NCM 7 Gordon Williams retired to become the Area Chairman with Lance Higgon-Young being elected. NCM Scotland Ian Irvin stood down to pursue his responsibilities as the Association's National Hon. Treasurer with Stephen Elliot being elected. The service of Jim Hammond and those who retired or stood down is acknowledged.

As mentioned elsewhere in the Report, the Association's Finances continued to hold a steady course throughout the year, with our funds remaining well cared for, being invested on a custodian agreement with the RNRMC. The National Council acknowledges the expertise of the RNRMC Investment Team in achieving this. The Association's National Hon Treasurer now represents the Association on of the RNRMC Investment Committee.

The National Council expresses its gratitude to all members of the Association for their endless hours of support, the Good Deeds they have done in representing the Association and supporting the naval veterans' community. In particular, I thank all Members of the National Council in giving numerous hours of their time to deal with National and Area business. The demanding work and dedication of Central Office staff is acknowledged in the administration of the RNA, for producing the statistics and contents of this, the Association's Annual Report, and their support to the National Council.

The National Council commends the General Secretary for achieving his vision of reversing the decline in the membership by introducing his plan approved by the NC and the membership of Zero Subscriptions in lieu of Donations. This could not have been achieved without the support of the RNRMC for which the National Council is gratefully thankful. The National Council acknowledges the entire Central Office Team who have worked extremely hard throughout the

year with new members of the team getting to know their new roles and the entire team for delivering a first-class service not only to the membership, but naval veterans alike. The introduction of Donations in lieu of an annual subscription, and the amazing increase of almost 3,000 new members certainly gave our membership secretary a challenge to keep her on top of the mountain of both physical and online copies of application forms. It certainly brought home the meaning of 'Watch on, Stop on.' As mentioned in my 2020 Report, recruitment is not just something that must be left to Central Office Staff, we the members cannot afford to sit back on our laurels. New members are out there, let us continue to do our best to recruit them into this 1st Class Naval Association.

The eruption of the stratovolcano La Soufriere on the Caribbean Island of St. Vincent prompted an immediate Grant of £5000 by the Association to the disaster appeal fund. This helped assist those from the Island serving in the Royal Navy to communicate with family and loved ones back home. In addition, an appeal in the Portsmouth Area and to the membership for clothing, food, and any useful household items to replace those which residents had lost when they abandoned their homes. Our Portsmouth Minibus was mobilised and driven into action by Central Office Staff who set about a collection service in and around the Portsmouth Area and travelling as far north as Cambridgeshire. An outstanding example of Comradeship and morale support to Shipmates from the Island serving in the Royal Navy and supporting the Islanders. This reflected two of the Association's Core Values; Loyalty and Comradeship of which members can be Proud.

With the Association's new Database asset bedded in, Central Office can now communicate directly with all members connected to the Internet. For those who are not, we rely on Branch Secretaries, Welfare Officers, and Members to make that local friendly contact. In addition to the Central Office Team, the work and commitment by six Members of RNA Bracknell, Huntingdon, Portsmouth, and Wrexham Branches is commended for their unstinting background support in providing the Royal Naval Community Site, the Virtual weekly delivery of the Fireside Chats and Saturday Night Virtual Tot Nights, not forgetting the General Secretary for providing the speakers for the Fireside Chats. These have brought Shipmates together both country and worldwide who may never have previously met but have now become friends and indeed have met up.

The National Council acknowledges the outstanding service and commitment given by Nigel Huxtable BEM who was the Assistant General Secretary/Membership Secretary for 13 years. Nigel retired towards the end of 2021 and was awarded a BEM in the New Year's Honours List. We also acknowledge the service of Michelle Bainbridge, who left the Association after some 10 years as our Finance Controller. Our thanks go to Julie Royston who stood down from her contribution over several years to make Project Semaphore a remarkable success. The project distributed almost 1000 iPads to digitally isolated naval veterans. The voluntary work of Julie and her dedicated team, who continue to train and give ongoing support to existing and new recipients of the iPads as and when required, is acknowledged.

With the relaxing of Covid regulations towards the end of 2021, our Branches throughout the UK, Europe and Overseas have been able to make the Association's presence known in attending Annual Commemoration and Remembrance Services in respect of those who made the Ultimate Sacrifice in the Service of their Country on active service or fell victim to Covid. We shall not Forget them. Lest we Forget.

The easing of the Covid restrictions during the year allowed me to attend several Area & Branch Meetings, from which I came away secure in the knowledge that Shipmates are doing a fantastic job representing the Association within their communities. The National Council

acknowledges the contribution made by members in not only supporting fellow Shipmates who had to isolate, but also other isolating elderly naval veterans throughout their communities.

*Keith Ridley*

Keith Ridley  
National Chairman

Annexes:

- A. Life memberships awarded in 2021
- B. List of Fireside Chats conducted in 2021
- C. List of SIGs with lead contact details



## Annex A

### **Life Memberships awarded to Shipmates in 2021**

T Hill	Ramsgate
A Hamilton	Monmouth
J Garfield	Londonderry
E Mitchell	Londonderry
A Rootes	Lee-on-the-Solent
K Elliot	Scottish
G Meredith	Shrewsbury
N Huxtable	HQ Roll
R J Barker	Letchworth
M Belfitt	Liskeard
T Lapsley	Londonderry
R Tipping	Plymouth

## Annex B

### Fireside Chats Programme 2021

11-Jan	WO1 Ian Wilson	2SL Warrant Officer
18-Jan	Capt John Voyce	CO HMS SULTAN, The history of the Naval Sword
25-Jan		Burns Night
		CO BRNC Dartmouth - the challenges of training in the Covid environment
01-Feb	Capt Roger Readwin	
08-Feb	Sir Robin Knox-Johnston	
15-Feb	Alex Sharpe	China Fleet Club
22-Feb	Mike Milne	Scapa Flow
01-Mar	Dr Jann Witt	Mutiny and Piracy
08-Mar	Ian Cameron	Vaccines and The Immune System-A Layman's guide
15-Mar	Craig Jones	Fighting with Pride
22-Mar	Spike Timpson	Gallipoli and the submarine VCs
29-Mar	Terry Corner	Submarine Cables
05-Apr		Easter Monday FSC slipped to Tuesday
06-Apr	Mike Milne	Op Chariot - The St Nazaire Raid
12-Apr	Janet Daykin	Prostate Cancer Briefing
19-Apr	Terry Corner	The Zeebrugge Raid
26-Apr	Bill Oliphant	RNA Strategy and Update
03-May		Bank holiday - slipped to Tuesday
04-May	Jon Pearson	BAE Systems Support to the RN
10-May	Paul Godfrey	The Story of HMS Ark Royal IV - 1955 to 1978
17-May	Ralph Dodds	Norway 1940 - War in the Fjords
24-May	tbc-HOOD Assoc	The sinking of HMS HOOD
31-May		Bank holiday - slipped to Tuesday
01-Jun	Terry Corner	Dunkirk
07-Jun	Nick Hewitt	D-Day - The Story of LCT 7074
14-Jun	Steve Bomford	Company of Makers
21-Jun	Dr Jann Witt	Mutiny and Piracy
28-Jun	WO1 Carl Steedman	RN update from the Office of 1SL
05-Jul	Andy Dodds	CRAM - Phalanx on a lorry in the desert in Iraq
12-Jul	David Griggs	Op Rheostat - Mine clearance in Suez 1974/75
19-Jul	Ian Cameron	The Battle of Hastings
26-Jul	Brig Ian Gardiner	Oman - the vital, unknown war 1965-75
02-Aug	Capt Bill Evans	Marine Accident Investigation Branch DOT
09-Aug	Zoe O'Gorman	RM Bands
16-Aug	Tom Palmer	Arctic Star - writing fiction in a historical context
23-Aug	Mike Milne	HMS BELFAST - The story of a Ship
30-Aug		Cancelled Bank holiday
04-Sep	Live at Conf	Winston's Back!
06-Sep	Richard Jones	Maritime disasters - Finding the truth
13-Sep	Anthony Moth	K Class (Kalamity) Submarines and the sinking of K13
20-Sep	Orit	SPARKO
27-Sep	Richard Jones	History and Writing
04-Oct	David Griggs	Life in RN submarines in WW1

11-Oct	Mike Milne	<i>Ark Royal</i> (1937-41) - Her life, death and rediscovery
18-Oct	John McAnally	The Battle of Trafalgar - the Immortal Memory
25-Oct	Angus Konstam	HMS Hermione Mutiny
01-Nov	Andrew Whitmarsh	D-Day through collections of The D-Day Stor
08-Nov	David Griggs	SSAFA
15-Nov	Alan Gregory	CWGC
22-Nov	Anthony Moth	Leander Class Frigates
29-Nov	Nigel Huxtable	Career Highlights
06-Dec	Richard Jones	The Sinking of HMS PoW and REPULSE
13-Dec	Matron Dodds	The Confessions of a Health Professional

## Annex C

### **List of Special Interest Groups/Branches with lead contact details**

Camping and Caravanning – Ron Shilton: [rna.camping.caravan.motorhome.club@gmail.com](mailto:rna.camping.caravan.motorhome.club@gmail.com)

Classic Cars – Mike Burnham: [hon.secretary@rnarayleigh.org](mailto:hon.secretary@rnarayleigh.org)

Cricket – Mark Smith [Markmiff1962@gmail.com](mailto:Markmiff1962@gmail.com)

Cycling – Craig Fulton: [craig@govguide.co.uk](mailto:craig@govguide.co.uk)

Divers – Bill Lawless: [billylawless40@yahoo.com](mailto:billylawless40@yahoo.com)

Fishing – Gus Honeywood/Selwyn Davies/John Stephenson: [rna.fishing.sig@gmail.com](mailto:rna.fishing.sig@gmail.com)

Golf – Colin Dinsdale: [rna.golfers@gmail.com](mailto:rna.golfers@gmail.com)

Model Makers – Gary Daisley [gddaisley@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gddaisley@blueyonder.co.uk)

Riders – Dave Ives: [secrnariders@gmail.com](mailto:secrnariders@gmail.com)

Rugby - Gus Honeywood: [gus.honeywood@gmail.com](mailto:gus.honeywood@gmail.com)