

EDINBURGH, LOTHIANS AND BORDERS BRANCH
Branch Future Analysis
(linked to PEST Analysis provided by George Prentice)

SWOT ANALYSIS (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

(updated from February 2018 – Way Forward 2018 and Beyond Discussion Paper)

Membership update (as at 10/6/2019)

Total = 530

Give As You Earn (GAYE) – 'serving'	178 (33.6%)
Ordinary	167 (31.5%)
Lifetime	146 (27.5%)
Associate	35 (6.6%)
Honorary	4 (0.8%)

Lapsed Members = 90 (majority Ordinary)

NOTE:

91% of our members (GAYE, Ordinary & Lifetime) may (for different reasons) not wish/or be able to physically engage with the branch. Therefore; further analysis of these statistics might be useful to identify and take positive action to rectify the situation.

Strengths

- Healthy Branch Membership Numbers
- Healthy Finances
- Committed (if small in number) Committee/Trustees (and active supporters)
- Good (evidenced) Governance
- Regular and widely distributed Branch Newsletter
- Active Branch Facebook Page & Branch Website
- Current contact with partners i.e. Air Cadets, 603 Squadron, Church of Good Shepherd, Veterans Breakfast Clubs in area
- Acceptance and use of technology (email, Skype, website, social media)
- Positive profile profile within S&NI Area and nationally
- Active within Wings, Welfare activities
- Large branch territory (south east of Scotland, now including a significant number of ex Dunfermline/Stirling members).

Weaknesses

- Small number of active members (including Committee/Trustees)
- Lack of Social interaction between members
- Widely spread membership
- Poor (non committee) attendances at Branch Meetings
- Small number of active members doing everything
- Inability to contact/communicate with members directly (without GDPR restrictions)
- Low level of partnership interaction
- Large branch territory i.e. 'whole of South East of Scotland'
- Reduced/reducing Wings income and reliance on partners, public events (air shows etc.)

Opportunities

- To influence the rejection (or at least mitigate) the One Charity threat
- To utilise benefit of Holland Bequest for more social interaction activities
- To utilise forthcoming 'Branch Admin Portal' to enhance communication with members & re-engage with members, volunteers and potential members (including past members)
- To influence the outcomes of the 2019 Scotland Welfare Review
- Enhance local Partnerships (Air Cadets, 603 Squadron, Church of Good Shepherd, Veterans Breakfast Clubs)
- Re-establish/re-invigorate the branch, its aims, objectives and profile
- To positively engage in 'active Succession Planning' (Committee, Officer posts)
- To review the branch Wings, Welfare, Comradeship, events aspirations

Threats

- Consequences of a 'One Charity' merger
- Loss of branch charitable status/independence if One Charity merger is implemented
- Loss of direct control of finances if One Charity merger is implemented
- Loss of members, particularly GAYE members
- Increasing 'centralisation' organisational and policy changes – not geared towards the needs of branches
- 2019 Scotland Welfare Review and its impact on the branch
- Compliance with Charity law, Data Protection law, H&S Law (and others) and RAFA Governance
- Perception of a 'centralisation' agenda emanating from Leicester; in addition to poor communication with regard to new legislation and policies
- A similar sense of control from S&NI Area Council; but without a clear sense of purpose or objectives
- A sense of 'apathy' from branch members (and farther afield i.e. other branches and Area)
- Possible consideration of reverting to RMG status
- Possible consideration of closing branch

Conclusion(s):

1. As in February 2018 'Way Forward' Discussion Paper – **doing nothing is not an option for the branch.**
2. Succession Planning appears to be key in fulfilling the branch's future aspirations – including attracting/encouraging more 'active members' to support our aims and objectives.
3. The '**One Charity**' merger proposal (to be put to Conference in 2020) is in the author's opinion “the biggest threat to the future and survival of this branch”.
4. Although the 2018 Way Forward Strategy was agreed by the branch Committee/Trustee; it is unclear as to what (if any) difference has been made since that time.
5. The response to the now scheduled 'special meeting' (29 June 2019) to discuss the implications of 'One Charity' will be clear indication of the views (and interest) of our members on this clearly very important issue.
6. An analysis of the current membership may give some indication of where the branch needs to focus its attention.

Recommendation(s)

1. That the Committee/Trustees accept this paper as a working document to enable the branch to concentrate on its future.
2. That the Committee/Trustees focus on the implications/consequences of a possible 'One Charity' merger.
3. That the Committee/Trustees consider an 'analysis' of our current membership.
4. That the outcome of the 29 June 2019 special meeting be factored into any future deliberations.

Bob Bertram MBE
Chairman
10 June 2019