

Trustees' Annual Report for the period



Period start date			To	Period end date	
Day 01	Month 01	Year 2020		Day 31	Month 12 2020

Section A Reference and administration details

Branch name

Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders

(referred to hereinafter as either the "Branch" or the "Charity")

Other names / number Branch is known by

Registered charity number (if any)

SC001190

Branch's principal address

Silverdale Manse Road

Coldingham

Scottish Borders

TD14 5NW

Names of the Branch charity trustees who manage the charity (generally known as the Branch Committee)

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
George Prentice BEM	Branch Chairman/ Trustee, Honorary Welfare Officer / Branch Standard Bearer / Area Caseworker / Area Befriender	From February 2020	Members, ratified at Annual General meeting

2	Susan Kidson	Committee/Trustee, Secretary/Wings Organiser & Area Councillor & RAFA Trustee		Ditto
3	David Prior	Committee/Trustee Treasurer & Branch Webmaster/ Newsletter Production Membership		Ditto
4	George Megahy	Committee/Trustee		Ditto
5	Sue Gillott	Committee/Trustee & Social Secretary		Ditto
6	Jeff Bailey VR	Committee/Trustee Committee/Trustee & Air Cadet Liaison Officer	Until November 2020	Ditto
7	Stuart Baker	Committee/ Commit- tee/Trustee & Veterans Breakfast Clubs Liaison/Area Befriender	Until August 2020	Ditto
8	Robert Bertram	Committee/Trustee Governance / GDPR	Until Feb 2020	

Names of any other (non Trustee) roles for the Branch (termed 'Active Committee Supporters')

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year
Robert Bertram MBE	Branch Life Vice President, Lead for Governance / Lead for GDPR
Rev. William Mounsey	Branch Chaplain & Branch Life Vice President
James Scott MBE	Branch Life Vice President
Hamish Reid	Branch Assistant Honorary Welfare Officer/Area Caseworker/Befriender
Emma Kidston	Branch Newsletter Editor

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Independent Examiner	Norman Steven CA	(on file)
Law Advisers	Shepherd & Wedderburn LLP	Saltire Court, 20 Castle Terrace Edinburgh EH1 2ET

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the branch's trusts

Type of governing document
(e.g. trust deed, constitution)

Royal Charter, Rules, Bye-laws, Area and Branch Regulations of the Royal Air Forces Association. Royal Charter originally granted 1952 and renewed 2016)

How the Branch charity is constituted
(e.g. trust, association, company)

Unincorporated association

Trustee selection methods
(e.g. appointed by, elected by)

Nominated and Elected by the branch membership at Annual General Meeting

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the branch's organisational structure and any wider network with

Charity's organisational structure

The charity is a branch of the Royal Air Forces Association which is a Royal Charter body and registered as a charity in England and Wales under number 226686 and in Scotland under SC037673 ("the Association"). The Association has many branches all of which share the same charitable object as the Association and are subject to the same constitution.

Trustee induction and training

RECRUITMENT

Recruitment for branch volunteers, including Committee/Trustees is carried out by internal membership communication, Website, Facebook Page, local and other media and RAFA Volunteering Advertising service. Those RAFA Branch members

which the charity works;

- relationship with any related parties (including branch club); trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them

wishing to serve as Committee/Trustees are required to be nominated and seconded by members who must be members of RAFA and the Branch. The supported nominations will be put to the Annual General Meeting of the branch which takes place in February. It should be noted that no other external individuals or organisations are permitted to appoint/nominate a Committee/Trustee.

All trustees (post AGM elections) will complete an OSCR Trustee Declaration and a Branch Conflicts of Interest Declaration; in addition to signing the RAFA Form 1056 (Annual Branch Governance and Assurance Return).

Guidance and Information about the role of a Charity Trustee, Charity Law in Scotland and the requirements of the Association's Governing Documents (including Financial) are readily available on the Branch's Governance Section of its Website. Trustees when completing the RAFA Form 1056 complete a section confirming that this information has been brought to their attention and how to access it.

Various training opportunities are available for Branch Trustees; either from RAFA resources or from sources identified by the Branch Trustees.

Membership

Ordinary – 155 (29.87%)
Associate – 31 (5.97%)
Life Members – 136 (26.20%)
Serving – 193 (37.19%)
Honorary – 4 (0.77%)
Total = 519 (+4 from end 2019)

Leased Members – 24 =

Related party relationships – club (if operated)

Nil

Risk management

It should be noted the Branch Committee/Trustees are committed to 'Succession Planning' on an on-going basis. This aspiration is designed to refresh and add to the collective skills

and experience of individuals for the benefit of the Branch, the RAF Association and its beneficiaries. Though we have lost three Trustees for personal reasons during the course of the year we have been successful in recruiting two new trustees and retaining a one in the role of Branch President.

The branch follows RAF Association Policy and guidelines with regard to Data Protection & has developed its own GDPR Policy to compliment and support the Association policy for branch purposes.

Registered ICO Data Controller for 'non-member' data protection management and permissions

The branch follows RAF Association Policy and guidelines with regard to Health & Safety & has developed its own H&S Policy to compliment and support Association policy for branch purposes.

Current Challenges and The Future Carrying on from 2019, 2020 has provided many challenges relating to the RAF Association with potential impact on its branches:

- The reorganisation of the Areas resulting in the larger Scotland, Northern Ireland and Northern England Area.
- The reorganisation has seen the loss of our two Branch Support Officers being replaced by a single Regional Support Officer based in Preston.
- The reorganisation of the welfare services with our Area Welfare being incorporated into a larger grouping and with the incorporation of new technology which has yet to prove itself.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on fundraising with the resultant cancellation of the air-shows which provided a major portion of fund-raising effort.
- Equally the pandemic has curtailed the activities of the Air Cadet Squadrons, again, a major source of fund raising.
- Curiously, the move to using Zoom to overcome the problems of our committee being unable to meet has resulted in us meeting more frequently, having moved from quarterly face-to-face to monthly Zoom meetings and indeed, ad-hoc meetings on specific subjects such as governance.

Section C

Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the branch set out in its governing document

Object

The object for which the Association is established is to promote, through comradeship engendered by its members, the welfare by charitable means of all serving and former members of Our Air Forces, their spouses and dependents, together with the widows, widowers and dependents of those who died whilst serving or subsequently.

Purpose

The RAF Association is a membership organisation and registered charity that provides support to the RAF Family.

The Association exists in the recognition that RAF personnel and their immediate families dedicate their lives to their country, and to ensure that such sacrifice does not result in suffering, poverty or loneliness.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects

Good Governance

During the course of the year the continuing quest to ensure that we conform to the standards and requirements of the Good Governance Award (IGGA) award have ensured that this has been an item on the agenda of our meetings. Detail discussion on the standards ensure that all are aware of the role that they have in upholding the standards.

Welfare

Despite the restrictions caused by the pandemic, the Branch Welfare Officer (who is also an Area Case-worker) continues to ensure that those welfare cases allocated to the branch are undertaken in as prompt and caring manner as possible. It should be noted that all cases in our branch area are allocated by the Area Office to “Area Case-workers”, so a considerable number of cases are dealt with but the outwith the framework of the branch, however the important point is that they are dealt with and our “RAF Family” receive the help they need. As a branch, we have dealt with some 34 cases and have facilitated almost £40,000 in funding for our beneficiaries.

The branch has supported the RAFA initiative to relieve loneliness and isolation during the pandemic, Operation Connect, by four committee members undergoing additional training as ‘Online Befrienders’ and maintaining contact with a large number of members of the RAF Family who have been highlighted as being in particular need. This has also included delivering food parcels to those who have been ‘sheltered’ and thought to have been particularly in need.

In an effort to locate members of our branch who might require additional assistance, letters and / or emails were sent to every branch member and this resulted in us identifying additional individuals who required support. It is worth noting that these were sometimes members who were identifying “RAF Family” members who did not belong to our branch.

This initiative is ongoing but has been enhanced for 2021 with an initiative to contact all 171 branch members who are over 65 years of age in order to 'reach out' and assure ourselves that we are maintaining our commitment to our dedication and objective.

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) Public Benefit Statement

The Trustees are aware that "Public benefit in a charitable sense is only provided by activities which are undertaken to advance an organisation's **charitable purposes**."

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

Policy

The Association shall be democratic, non-sectarian and non-party political and shall not be affiliated, directly or indirectly, to any sectarian organisation or to any political party or party organisation or staff organisation. In no circumstances shall the Association or any of the Area Councils, Regional Committees or Branches publicly express any views in connection with any political or industrial dispute or engage in any activities in connection herewith.

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grant making;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

In addition to RAF Association Governance, including Policies and Guidance; the Branch has developed additional policies/guidance where the Trustees feel these will enhance and support the Association in a form more suitable for branch operation. Currently these include;

- Branch Conflicts of Interest Policy
- Branch GDPR Policy
- Branch Funding Policy
- Branch Lapsed Member Policy
- Branch Health & Safety Policy
- Branch Investment Policy

These policies are approved by Committee/Trustees and recorded in the minutes of the relevant Committee meeting.

Section D

Achievements and performance

- Through the commitment of the Branch Honorary Welfare Officer / Area Caseworkers); a creditable number of welfare cases resulting in good outcomes for the beneficiaries.
- Despite the restrictions of the pandemic, members of the branch, with the assistance of other service organisations marked 2020 Remembrance by laying 5 wreaths , in an attempt to lay one in every local authority constituency within the branch territory and laid single poppies on 7 RAF war graves in Dalkeith cemetery (an annual informal event).
- Continuing enhancement of Branch Communications via Website, Facebook, Skype, email and distribution of approximately 2,000 quarterly branch newsletters annually.

- The Branch actively supported the Operation Connect initiative by the donation of a total of £6,000 to the fund.
- The Branch continue to be recognised by again being award the Senior Branch Efficiency Award.
- The purchase of the licence to operate our Zoom has ensured that we have enhanced the number of committee meetings and also included ad hoc meetings on subjects such as understanding the requirements of the Governance Policy.

Section E Financial Information

Brief statement of the branch's policy on reserves

The approved Branch policy on reserves is as follows:
"The invested money and General Account balance as of the beginning of each financial year is assessed by the Branch Treasurer who will make a recommendation as to the projected available funds for branch activities; with reserve funds sufficient to sustain the Branch for a minimum period of 6 months".

Details of any funds materially in deficit

The Branch Committee/Trustees have agreed that any "operational difference" between Income & Expenditure should be viewed as evidence of effective use of charity funds ; *and not a 'deficit' as such.*

Further financial review details (Optional information)

Holland Bequest – a very kind and thoughtful bequest from two of our late branch members. Although not specifically restricted in the will/bequest; the Trustees have recognised that our 'social/comradeship' events were very much behind the bequest. Therefore these are flexibly ring-fenced within our investments for such purposes.

As a branch we adhere to the Code of Fundraising Practice set out by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). Our Trustees and members have visibility of OSCR's Fund-raising Guidance for Charity Trustees and e-links are published on our Branch website along with other governance documentation, including annual accounts.

Branch Investments (apart from working funds in bank accounts) have been lodged with the RAF Association's "CHQ Managed Account & CHQ New Court Fund" (details available on branch website under 'About Us - Finance')

Section F Other optional information

Brief history of the RAF Association

In 1929, in the Sergeants Mess at RAF Andover; Vernon Goodhand, Joe Pearce and Warrant Officer Bartlett met to discuss the formation of a single organisation dedicated to the welfare of serving and ex- serving RAF personnel – one which could replace the many smaller organisations that had grown to keep former servicemen and women in touch since the of the First World War.

By 1930 a provisional committee had been formed called '**Comrades of the Royal Air Forces Association**' (CRAFA) and the first general meeting of the new organisation took place in the Queens Hotel Leicester Square London Air Ministry support for CRAFA came in 1933 when the Air Council officially recognised the organisation with Lord Trenchard accepting the Presidency. In 1936 King George V gave his patronage – and the Association has been honoured with Royal Patronage ever since.

'The Women's Royal Air Force Old Comrades (created in 1919) re-formed and opened its membership to all ranks of the new female air service. In 1941 the two Old Comrade organisations for airmen and airwomen merged, resulting in a combined membership of nearly 20,000 (currently in 2019 around 70,000). In 1943 the organisation's name was changed to the 'Royal Air Forces Association', a National Council was formed the charities present structures were laid down during the remaining wartime years and beyond. The Edinburgh Branch (as it was) originates from the Comrades of RAFA.

A Royal Charter was approved by the Privy Council, signed by HM Queen in 1952 and renewed in 2016.

Outline of the Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Branch

With a branch territory covering the whole of the South East of Scotland and with current membership of 519, maintaining contact with them (and others who support us) and keeping them informed and engaged is a formidable task for the Branch Committee/Trustees.

However; we believe our quarterly branch newsletter, website, Facebook page, email plus the use of Zoom for monthly and ad-hoc meetings during the current pandemic, has enabled us to reach out to our wide-spread serving and veteran community. It is intended that when the current Covid-19 restrictions are lifted we will recommence social activities, visibility at public events, wings fund-raising, however, welfare delivery has continued using appropriate aspects of modern communications and social media.

Section G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the branch's trustees

Signature(s)



Full name(s)

George Prentice

**Position (eg Secretary, Chair,
etc)**

Chair

Date

21st March 2021