



The
Fire Fighters
Charity

Issue 22
Spring 2020

Shout!

Official magazine of The Fire Fighters Charity

www.firefighterscharity.org.uk

Welcome Home

From living in a shed to owning his own place,
Alistair McNab on how he rebuilt his life with
help from The Fire Fighters Charity

Looking Ahead

Chief Executive and Chair on the Charity of tomorrow

Open Day Guide

Find out how to boost funds at your next open day

A Gift for The Future

Jo has pledged to leave a gift to the Charity in her will after experiencing the support her father Bob, a retired firefighter, received following a road accident.

“I know for a fact my dad wouldn’t be where he is now without support from the Charity. I hope my money goes some way towards helping others who have shut down to start opening up again.”

Jo Stovell, daughter of retired firefighter

Visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/will to learn more about how you can leave a gift in your will to The Fire Fighters Charity.

You can watch Jo and Bob’s full story at
www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/bob-and-jo-stovell



Editorial

Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2020 issue of *Shout!* from The Fire Fighters Charity. Once again, we've got a great selection of features across the magazine that reflect the many and diverse ways in which we support our beneficiaries. From the heart-warming story of Alistair McNab, who we were able to help when times turned tough, to the inspirational account of a day in the life of Helen Mattinson, a member of our incredible nursing team. By shining a light on our work and

those we support, my hope is always that you – our readers – may be able to relate to the stories of others and reach out for support yourself, or help us to raise the funds we need to help others.

This process of sharing information with you is central to the future of The Fire Fighters Charity and I was delighted to sit down this month with our Chair – for an article that you can read on page 13 – to talk about our plans for the coming years.

Indeed, as this issue of *Shout!* is published we will have just begun a new strategic phase in the life of our Charity. Having achieved a huge amount over the duration of our previous 2017-20 Strategic Plan, the years ahead under the direction of

our new Strategic Plan will build on our successes and, I hope, allow us to provide even more people with the support they need today, in order to ensure that they can live a healthier and happier tomorrow.

Your support, as ever, is crucial to our future success and I wish all of you participating in a car wash, holding an open day or taking on a personal challenge on our behalf over the coming spring and summer months, all the very best. Every penny you raise really does make a difference and everyone you talk to about our work could also be another person we may one day support.

Enjoy the magazine.

Dr Jill Tolfrey
Chief Executive

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***Shout!* about it**

Contact the editorial team on shout@firefighterscharity.org.uk or 01256 366566

Shout! about it

Here's where you'll find out what we and our supporters have been working on over the last six months. We're always on the look out for interesting stories and if you've got something newsworthy that you'd like to Shout! about, let us know: shout@firefighterscharity.org.uk



25 years of Jubilee House

Back in 1993, as we celebrated our 50th anniversary, the foundation stone was laid on a plot of land in Eamont Bridge, Penrith, Cumbria. Over the next 18 months our first purpose-built rehabilitation centre took shape, designed to specifically meet the rehabilitation needs of the fire services community.

Built at a cost of £3.5m and including a swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool, gym and specialist exercise and physiotherapy facilities, as well as accommodation and dining facilities, Jubilee House was formally opened by HRH Princess Alexandra on 19 April 1995.

Upon opening, the new centre's treatment area featured equipment funded through donations given in memory of Iain McPhee, a 22-year-old West Midlands firefighter who

died as a result of injuries sustained on duty on 28 July, 1992. The wing of the building was consequently named the Iain McPhee Wing.

Twenty-five years later, Jubilee House has supported thousands of members of the fire services community, providing physical and mental health support, as well as a dedicated nursing service. It supports individuals from across all areas of the UK today and is staffed by a fantastic team of exercise therapists, physiotherapists, nurses, psychological therapists and support team members.

You can find out more about the impact Jubilee House has had over the last 25 years on page 38 as Director of Beneficiary Services, Sharon Bailey, looks back on how service delivery at Jubilee has evolved over that time.

Valentine's treat success

There was love in the air in the country's fire offices in February, as headquarters and control room staff came into work to discover a Valentine's Day treat, courtesy of The Fire Fighters Charity.

We left a card and chocolate on every desk, to remind support and control room staff that we are here to support them, as well as frontline firefighters.

"We know that there are people working in non-operational roles who don't realise they're eligible to be supported by the Charity," explained Engagement Officer, Nicky Young. "We wanted to do something to remind them that we're here for them as well and create a bit of buzz, and we thought what better time to share the love than Valentine's Day?"

"We've never done something on this scale before, with 20,000 cards going out across the country to remind people we're here for them. I'm really pleased with how it was received, with people saying how included it made them feel and proud to be part of something bigger."

Kent Fire and Rescue Service Charity Coordinator, Martin Pritchard, was in agreement; "It went down very well in our service headquarters and staff enjoyed the surprise," he said. "Everyone agreed it was a very thoughtful awareness campaign, they loved the poem on the back and many expressed thanks for it being the only Valentine they received."



National Car Wash league

The National Car Wash League, with AutoGlym, is once again underway, with events taking place throughout the year (with a focus on March and September).

To find out how your station can get involved, we've pulled together a useful toolkit with everything you need to know in order to run a successful car wash. Visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/carwash to view the kit and kick off your first car wash.

Winners of the National Car Wash League will also receive a money-can't-buy prize from our partners Autoglym. Good luck.

Volunteer Expo

This May 1-3 we'll be exhibiting at Volunteer Expo, NEC Birmingham. Showcasing some of the many ways you can volunteer to support us, we're looking forward to meeting people keen to find out how they can make a difference to the lives of members of the UK's fire services community.

Free to attend, this national expo is a family-friendly event with activities for children and young people. So, as well as finding out all about how you can help us – and what a positive difference volunteering can make to your life – you can enjoy a great day with your nearest and dearest.

Visit www.volunteere expo.co.uk and we look forward to meeting you there in May.



Oxfordshire pedal power

A team of retired firefighters from Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service will be getting back in the saddle to take on the gruelling challenge of cycling over 1000 miles from Land's End to John O'Groats in a few months to raise money for us and Bowel Cancer UK.

Having completed the reverse journey in 2016, the team will set off from Land's End on May 16th with their sights set on arriving in John O'Groats on May 30th.

Aged between 52 and 67 and consisting of former Chief Fire Officer Dave Etheridge, Gary Mattingley, Bob Patterson, Clive Durbin, Shaun Waters and guest rider, Gary Stables, the riders admit that this is set to be one of their most challenging rides yet.

"Having completed this ride from top to bottom, I am under no illusions as to how physically and mentally challenging this ride will be," said Dave Etheridge. "We have chosen an incredibly hilly route and will be averaging 80 miles a day, taking in Cornwall and Devon, into Somerset then crossing the old Severn Bridge to the Welsh borders, on to Cumbria then cycling up the west coast of Scotland before cutting across to our finish."

You can support the team by donating at virginmoneygiving.com/Team/BrikcoinEndtoEndChallenge2020

Welfare self-referrals

Beneficiaries staying at our centres will now be able to self-refer for a session with one of our Welfare Caseworkers during their time with us.

"People come to us for all sorts of reasons, but often there's more than one thing playing on their mind," says Welfare Services Lead, Carrie Pearce. "While they're focusing on their physical or psychological injury, it can be helpful to discuss what is waiting for them back at home to find out if there's anything we can do to take some of the pressure off."

The process has already existed for beneficiaries requiring a one-to-one with our psychological therapists, and now it will be available for Welfare as well. If you would like to see a Welfare Caseworker at any of our three centres, we will arrange an

appointment for you that fits in around their daily activities.

If you'd like Welfare support from the Charity – whether you're visiting us at a centre or not – get in touch with us and see if we can help. Call us on **0800 389 8820** or visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/support



Christmas fundraising

We all know that Christmas is a time for giving, but last year we were blown away by just how much the fire services community and public gave in support of the incredible array of fundraising activities that took place throughout December.

Engine pulls, Santa's grottos, bucket collections and singing firefighters could be found on streets, in stations and in communities across the country. Together, you raised a staggering £140,165 in December alone.

Stations were also competing to raise as much money as they could and our national Christmas champions were Preston Circus Fire Station in East Sussex, where crews raised an amazing £11,225.69.

Our regional winners included Hendon Fire Station in London (£352.04); Basingstoke Fire Station in Hampshire (£3,161.55); Coleford Community Fire Station in Gloucestershire (£3,747); Swansea Central Fire Station

in Mid and West Wales (£3,606.83); Shropshire Christmas Ball Committee (£7,250); Merseyside Fire and Rescue Headquarters (£3,000); Slaithwaite Fire Station in West Yorkshire (£229); Cambuslang National Training Centre and HQ, Scotland (£8,298.27); Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service HQ (£1,545.05); Grantham Fire Station, Lincolnshire (£5,791.26) and Yaxley Fire Station, Cambridgeshire (£2,980.07).

A huge thank you to all those who took part.



Bag it and bank recycling championship

Our Bag It and Bank It January Recycling Championship raised a staggering £70,322 as an incredible 319 tonnes of textiles were deposited in our banks across the UK.

The competition saw stations in England, Scotland and Wales competing to bank as much textiles as they could throughout January in order to be crowned Bag It and Bank It Champion in their respective countries.

Egremont Fire Station in Cumbria once again took the crown in England, collecting a staggering 10,738KG of clothing from their local community. In Scotland the title went to Broxburn Fire Station, which banked 1,175kg and in Wales the worthy winners were Treharris Fire Station, with 1,030kg of clothing deposited.

Huge congratulations to all our winners and thank you to every fire station that took part in the competition, as well as to everyone who donated their textiles. Every sock donated and penny raised will help to fund mental, physical and social support for the UK's fire services community.

The front line

We speak to Liz James and Simon Savage, two of the three Assessment Practitioners working on our Support Line, to find out what callers can expect when they dial 0800 389 8820.

So, first things first, how does the Support Line work?

Simon: The Support Line is a free phone number that is available 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and is the first point of contact for people to access the Charity's support. When someone calls us, it's our job to listen and gain the right information so we can provide the right response.

Liz: We take calls from serving or retired fire and rescue personnel, their colleagues or even partners who are enquiring about the Charity's services. We work together to help them in accessing the support that is right for them, whether that's from us or, if it's something we can't offer, we point them in the right direction.

What would you say to someone who felt anxious about calling?

Liz: We recognise the first step when it comes to asking for help is always the most difficult, so we try to make it as easy as

possible for people. If people are nervous about calling, you could always ask a friend or relative to be with you during the call.

Simon: It's often a massive thing for someone to admit they need help, and we understand that that first call is a big step.

“We recognise the first step when it comes to asking for help is always the most difficult, so we try to make it as easy as possible for people.”

We want people to know we're here to support them and do our best to help, so when answering the phone I try to normalise the situation as much as possible.

Liz: And if you prefer to make your first contact in writing, you can send an enquiry via our website and we'll call you back.

How do you put people at ease?

Simon: Every call is different and every caller is individual, so I just really try to listen and react as appropriate for each call.

Liz: We try to build a rapport over the phone to make people

feel comfortable to talk, so we'll have a quick chat about the weather or where they live.

What sort of questions do you ask people? What can someone expect from their call?

Simon: It really depends upon the nature of the call, which leads our questions. It's like any conversation, one answer tends

to lead to the next question. Ultimately, we're trying to get to the root of the issues so we can start to consider what solutions might look like.

Liz: After we've got the basics out of the way – name, address, connection to the fire service etc. – I'm just always looking to find out how we can help someone, so I ask about any difficulties they might be facing. If someone has an injury, I will ask about the onset and treatment, but also how it's made them feel and what impact it has on their wellbeing.

Does someone need to know what help they want from the Charity when ringing?

Liz: No, we're happy to have a conversation with them to find out what their needs are. As long as they're as honest with us as possible, we can work together to develop a solution.

Simon: Often people are looking for support but have no idea what it might look like. It's enough to know that they just need support. We'll discuss the

Support Line
0800 389 8820

options available through the Charity and externally, then plan the best way forward.

How long do first phone calls usually take?

Liz: That's a tricky question because there's no 'standard' amount of time, as people's needs are varied and we try to give people the time they need. Sometimes we might be the first person they've ever spoken to about something really difficult for them, so we don't want them to feel rushed or hurried.

Simon: On average, people are probably on the phone for between 10 to 15 minutes, but like Liz says, it all depends on the person we're speaking to.

You mentioned the website submission form, do you look after those as well?

Liz: Yes we do. Enquiries for services made through our website come through to our inbox. We'll then call people back and have a conversation in the same way as we would when someone calls the 0800 number.

“Our services are confidential within the Charity, so we don't share information with any fire and rescue service.”

Do you tell the fire and rescue services when one of their employees contacts the Charity?

Liz: No. Our services are confidential within the Charity, so we don't share information with any fire and rescue service.

Simon: We're an entirely separate, impartial organisation, so people can come to us secure in the knowledge that they can trust us entirely.

So what do you do with people's details?

Simon: We record the information on our secure computer system so other members of the team can see an enquiry has been made. The record of our conversation is confidential between you and our clinical and/or Welfare

teams, to help with their decision making about the best way to support you.

What sort of career backgrounds do you have?

Liz: I had a varied admin career in projects, databases and occupational health before retraining as an Occupational Therapist. Before coming to the Charity, I worked for the county council in a role that involved coaching people to make lifestyle changes to improve their health and wellbeing.

Simon: I qualified as a physiotherapist in 1993 and spent four years working for the NHS in Manchester. I came to Jubilee House as a physio in 1998 and thoroughly enjoyed being part of the team. Over 21 years of experiences here put me in good stead for this role when

I moved to the Support Line in May 2019.

What's your favourite thing about your role?

Liz: It's just so varied. It can be challenging, but it's really satisfying knowing people gain so much from being supported by the Charity. I've been the first part of that story, which is a really special feeling.

Simon: When the phone rings, you never know what each call will hold. It's nice to be able to try and help.

CALL US

If you'd like to seek support from the Charity, get in touch with our free Support Line on **0800 389 8820** or by visiting **firefighterscharity.org.uk/support**. Their offices are open from 9am and 5pm. Our Support Line is staffed by three Assessment Practitioners: Simon Savage, Liz James and Rachel Dodsworth.

Sheds & tales

After a change of circumstances forced him to move into a shed, Scottish firefighter Alistair McNab contacted our Welfare Services team. We caught up with him to find out how his life has turned around since then. From the depths of depression, to the safety of his new flat, this is a story of bravery in the face of adversity.

The journey to homelessness was not a sudden one for Alistair McNab. It crept up on him slowly, unexpectedly, following years spent battling depression and the painful worsening of arthritis in his neck and hips.

Things came to a head for the Scottish firefighter in September 2017, when he tried to take his own life while en route to a shift at his station in Pollock, East Kilbride.

"I just felt worthless," he says. "While cycling to work, I just had this instinct to end things, and I deliberately swerved my bike. Luckily, the driver behind me was switched on and managed to steer out of the way. But that was it, I'd purposefully tried to take my own life. I just felt like I was at rock bottom."

When someone at his station suggested contacting The Fire Fighters Charity, Alistair bravely picked up the phone and, after his needs were assessed following his application, he was offered a residential stay at Jubilee House, our centre in Penrith. A few weeks before he was due to attend, however, Alistair found himself in the wrong place at the wrong time. A strong wind dislodged a tree branch which came crashing down on him, hitting his head and severing two muscles in his arm. This set back meant that he was unable to take part in as much of the physical exercises for his arthritis as he had hoped during his stay. Instead, however, it enabled him to focus on his mental health and to explore mindfulness as a tool to help him cope with some of the more intrusive thoughts he'd been feeling.

"It was absolutely brilliant," he recalls. "You'd draw out your clouds on this big white board, all the things you carried around with you in your own wee bubble: stuff like hopelessness, dread, anxiety, and then talk





about ways to deal with them. They taught me the acronym RAIN, which stands for 'realising, acknowledging, investigating and nourishing.' It became a tool I could use when things were playing around in my head, turning each cloud into rain. They gave me back my mind, and that was the main thing."

And once his injury was healed, Alistair returned for a second visit to the Charity, this time to focus on his hips: "I didn't think I would get much out of a second visit," he says, "but they built on the processes put in place during my first visit and gave me both physical and psychological tools to help. Both the physical and psychological therapists were just fantastic. I still wasn't 100% right, but I definitely left Jubilee House feeling better about things."

However, things were going on at home that Alistair had not told anyone. Having split up with his partner and been off work due to stress, his finances had depleted and he found himself going from one sublet to another. In the summer of 2018, with warm temperatures and long days, he decided to move into the summer house in his mum's garden.

"I thought it would be okay, because it has electricity so I could have a TV, and has double glazing and looks out onto trees," he says. "I built a wooden cot, and folded a mattress up against the wall to make a sofa bed. It was quite snug and, to begin with, felt quite nice."

As summer turned to winter, Alistair's mental health again took a dip, especially around December. "You'd spend more and more time alone, and you'd just think, I'm 48, living in my mum's shed, this is where my life is. The only remnants of a Christmas I had in there was an old tree box propped up in the corner. My kids didn't want to come and visit me there, so I wasn't seeing much of them, and I just felt worse and worse. Plus I had issues with alcohol at the time, which wasn't helping things."

Alistair was told about the Charity's Welfare Services team, which is in place to help fire and rescue service personnel with the unexpected sides of life. So he reached out for support to see what they could do.

"I spoke to Carrie Pearce [Welfare Services Lead] and she explained that, because of my essential worker role in the fire service, I

could apply for council housing, helping me with my application," he says. "A month later, I got the flat and moved in January 2019. But I had barely any belongings and was looking at the prospect of having an empty property with no way to afford making it a home. Then Carrie told me they could give me Argos and Asda vouchers to furnish it. I just couldn't believe it. I didn't have a clue that the Charity could help people like this. And things just started to look up from there."

Through the initial vouchers to buy some basics, impressive DIY skills and some savvy browsing on second hand websites, Alistair has managed to turn his flat into a home, and is now regularly visited by his daughters and grandson.

He gets emotional when he reflects on how different Christmas 2019 was to the last: "I'm a wee bit tearful, because it just makes me think back to how it could have been, or where I might be now without the Charity. Last Christmas [2018] I was living in a shed, but this year I had a home for my kids to visit me in. It's made a major difference to everything."

"I was worried about taking money from the Charity, because I didn't want to be seen as some kind of sponger, and I struggled to accept that's just what it's there for," he says. "I thought if people found out I'd taken money from the Charity... well, it's a pride thing. I didn't used to talk about the support I've received, because I was worried about criticism. But I had no choice other than to accept help, I felt I had no other option whatsoever. So I started to tell people about the help I've received, encouraging others to get in touch with them and pay in each month. Since then, I've not stopped talking about how good the Charity is or how much they did for me."

As a way of saying thank you for the support he received, Alistair has held numerous fundraising events on our behalf. "It was important to me to do something to raise money and say thank you," he explains, "so I've completed a static bike ride covering the equivalent distance of Land's End to John O'Groats. We did it in the foyer of a couple of different Morrison's

stores, and over 10 days raised £4,720. So that's made me feel proud to be putting stuff back in, rather than feeling like I'm just taking. But on the same hand, if I hadn't had the help I did at that time, there's no way I'd have been able to do this fundraising, so being able to do it shows my ultimate appreciation.

"I'm not ashamed to talk about what happened to me any more. I wanted to share my story to show that I needed it, because other people might as well. You just never know. We all need to support the Charity, because you never know when you might need it. I'd have liked to have said I'd go my full career or whole lifetime without needing The Fire Fighters Charity, but I did, I had to use it and I'm just so lucky that it was there for me."

If you're struggling with a change of circumstance and don't know how to cope, let us help. Call our Support Line on **0800 389 8820** or visit **www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/support**.

How we can support you

We know that no two applications for financial hardship are the same. Circumstances brought about by an unforeseen emergency or life-changing situation can lead to all kinds of hardship.

This could be due to injury or illness, bereavement, changes to employment status, relationship breakdown, housing issues or many other reasons.

We can help to provide short-term hardship support during these difficult and challenging times. For example, we have supported beneficiaries experiencing hardship in the past with supermarket vouchers for food, the purchase of small household items, adaptations to the home in respect to disability need and a by a wide range of other means.

We are here to help you achieve a basic standard of living, so our team of Welfare caseworkers will work with you to ensure that you have taken advantage of all statutory benefits that you may be entitled to, to enable financial independence.

"I wanted to share my story to show that I needed support, because others might as well. You just never know when you might need it."





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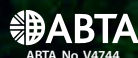
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Back and forward

We caught up with Chief Executive, Dr Jill Tolfrey, and Chair of the Trustee Board, Andrew Lynch, to discuss the progress made by the Charity over the past few years and the focus of our attention for the next few.

April 2020 marks the end of an ambitious three-year plan and the launch of a new strategic period for The Fire Fighters Charity. Having seen Royal recognition for our mental health support services, taken great strides forward in our service delivery and seen steady increases in fundraising income, there has been plenty to celebrate from the 2017-20 Strategic Plan. Looking to the future, meanwhile, new challenges await and – as Jill and Andrew told us when we sat down with them at Charity HQ in February – the rewards could see more people supported by the Charity in innovative new ways.

Shout!: Having reached the end of the 2017-20 Strategic Plan, what have been the key achievements for the Charity over that time?

Andrew: One of the successes that springs to mind has been the repurposing of Harcombe House and our services there. That highlights our move towards providing a greater range of mental health support for our beneficiaries and their families.

Jill: We are also doing much more now in the digital world. We are providing mental health support services for many more beneficiaries now, but the ethos of the Charity has developed considerably as well,

with everything now much more evidence based. We are now looking much more at developing bespoke pathways for individuals, rather than programmes that individuals can just join in with. We are also doing much more in regards to providing information, advice and support. In terms of increasing our connectedness with our community we now have a really burgeoning success around our Living Well Groups, providing support for the retired community.

“Our fundraising teams have worked really hard and we are in a good place for stepping forward into 2020-25.”

Andrew: All of these areas [of work] are about moving forward and constantly progressing. It's really important to note that we are constantly evolving, it is not a finished point and as the demands on our community change, we are constantly adapting to meet those demands.

Shout!: And what about the financial footing we find ourselves in now compared to where we were in 2017?

Jill: When we started in 2017 our financial

footing was nowhere near as secure as it is now. We had a sizable deficit. We had invested in our services in Marine Court and the austerity agenda had kicked in, fire services were changing their workforce structures. There were a whole range of issues which meant that we were struggling in terms of income. Over the last three years our fundraising teams have worked really hard to redress that balance and we now find ourselves in a very positive financial position. We are in a good place for stepping forward into 2020-25 now. That will allow us to continue with business as usual but also to bring in some innovation around the development of our services.

Andrew: We had a plan and it worked – and special kudos to our staff for making that plan work – but we have come full circle in that we now have a surplus and also more opportunities to increase our income further. It is all directed towards beneficiary support and to constantly improving our services, constantly moving forward and not taking anything for granted.

Shout!: What has been the most challenging thing to overcome over the last few years?

Jill: I think the most challenging thing has been the issue over income. We have met that challenge over the last few years and are in a good position, but we cannot afford

to be complacent. We need to continue that work and that support to ensure that we can continue what we are doing.

Andrew: Connected to that is the issue of awareness. Awareness internally of the services that we provide and engaging more with new recruits and existing people who may not be aware of our services. Also externally and public facing, it's a two pronged approach. We have made gains and we will constantly do so, but it is a constant engagement issue and that obviously connects with income generation. The more successful we are with engagement, the more successful we are with raising income.

Shout!: So with the Charity in a sound financial position today and having achieved so much across the lifetime of the last strategic plan, where do we go from here?

Jill: In terms of our future plan, I'd like us to focus more on the whole prevention agenda, training and education. We are looking at a whole range of different things around information and prevention. We will still maintain our respond element i.e. what we have always done, but also look at how we can take that forward into recovery and how we can keep in touch with our beneficiaries over time so that we are genuinely enacting a whole lifetime relationship with our beneficiaries.

Andrew: I think it's also important that we underpin all of that with evidence and research, so we really understand what we are doing and delivering, the needs of our beneficiary base and the changing needs of our aging population. Getting a real grasp and evidencing what we are doing is really important for the next stage of our development, so that we can provide the best service that we can.

Shout!: Can you expand a bit more on what you mean by prevention and why it's important that we move in to that area now?

Jill: It would be very easy for us to rest back on our laurels and say we provide this response approach, we are here if you need us, but if you look at how health profiles are changing across the community as a whole, but also particularly in the fire and rescue service, I think it's really important that we enable people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. The best way to do that is for people to have the knowledge and understanding about how they function and the potential impact of their role. By doing that you can front end the situation and prevent people from moving into those more difficult mental health and physical health situations. We can do much more to engage with the work force and the population to enable them to have the skills to be able to manage and cope better in situations.

"In terms of our future plan, I'd like us to focus more on the whole prevention agenda, training and education. We are looking at a whole range of different things around information and prevention."



Andrew: If we seek to provide the best possible service to our beneficiaries then preventing a lot of these issues from arising, or mitigating the impact, or helping build resilience and developing an awareness of health and wellbeing...that's really pivotal to what we do. If we can reduce the back end impact then that's all to the good.

Jill: There's an awful lot of health education information out there. We all know what we should and shouldn't be doing. What we can offer is information that is shaped around the fire services community, advice that allows you to engage with the knowledge and expertise, but also to fit it into your role. So it's not just flat information about eating well and exercise, but how it should fit in for someone working in a watch structure, working shift patterns, has got family challenges and all those kind of things. It's about us understanding and getting behind the uniform.

Shout!: And what are the challenges we face in the coming years in regards to raising awareness of the Charity?

Jill: Currently we think of our beneficiary base as being somewhere in the region of 300,000 individuals and we probably engage with about 10% of those people and that's really just not good enough. We need to do much more in terms of promoting the organisation and what we do. It's about people understanding what is available for them in terms of services and support. One of the things that is often said to me is; 'I'm not bad enough to come to the Charity,' well that's about changing that thought process and telling people that we are there for them whenever, even when they are fit and well. A lot of work has to be done in terms of engaging with the service and also with the public around what we do and how we are there to support the people who support them.

Andrew: Our strength is the unique service that we provide and trying to articulate that and the benefits of being involved from the off is really difficult. So we need to continue to engage with our beneficiary base, to keep getting those messages across and to encourage them to get involved, not just in times of need but also to engage with fundraising, in terms of helping and all sorts of ways to contribute to the Charity.

Shout!: How important will partnership working be over the next few years?

Jill: It is about the organisation recognising what it can do and what it can't do and being really clear about where its service offers lie and actually where we are going to move forward. So working in partnership with organisations like Big White Wall is absolutely fine. But looking at other organisations that we can perhaps direct beneficiaries to, we may even be able to fund them to go to those organisations for



"Our strength is the unique service that we provide. So we need to continue to engage with our beneficiary base, to encourage them to get involved, not just in times of need but also with fundraising."

services. We cannot do everything and it's really important that what we do offer is really high end and spot on, but recognising where our limitations are and never leaving a beneficiary wondering where to turn.

Andrew: One of the benefits of the Harcombe House re-opening and the Royal visit was that we had a lot of organisations there that we can link up with and signpost our beneficiaries towards. These same organisations could, in turn, provide us with an income source by sending their members to us for support. So working in partnership is absolutely essential for an organisation of our size.

Shout!: What would you message be to our beneficiaries and supporters in regards to the next three to five years?

Jill: The first message would be, thank you, in terms of the support they give us, the engagement, the volunteering activity. But also that there is an understanding that we will continue to be aware of what their needs are, we will be progressive in what we are providing. It will be a little bit different from the historical things that the charity has offered, but stick with it, we will be providing you with services to support you as you move forward through the 21st century.

Andrew: I would reiterate my thanks to all of our supporters and beneficiaries and I would say get involved. The more you put in, the more you get out. It's a great community, a great service that we provide and the more that you get involved with it, the more you find that it's self-perpetuating and a better service that we provide.



Fundraising focus

So many people take on amazing challenges for us all year round. Here we say thanks to those who've completed theirs and wish good luck to those who haven't.

Thank you...

Cornwall FRS Radio Takeover

On 24 October 2019, Chaos Online Radio teamed up with Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service for an epic non-stop 24-hour broadcast in aid of our Charity. Our Chief Executive Dr Jill Tolfrey even called in for a quick chat. They raised a fantastic total of £2,629.75.



Global Fire Mile

Thirty-one days to travel 24,901 miles! Jono Hutchinson from Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service has organised the Global Fire Mile throughout January, and as a brigade they raised an impressive £3,200.



Land Rover Run

In November, Lynn Twite from Kings Lynn Fire Station, together with a few others from Kings Lynn North Fire Station, held the third annual Land Rover Run in Norfolk and raised around £4,000 for our Charity. They are due to hold more events this year, so thank you all so much for your continued support.



Craig Smith

Well done to Craig Smith, who raised £2,038.40 by holding a series of fundraising events, including a back to school disco and completing the Three Peaks Challenge in 2019.



Hampshire & West Sussex FRS Event

Fourteen firefighters from Hampshire and West Sussex headed to the Himalayas in November for a fundraising challenge that pushed them to the limits. This trek was the brainchild of Cosham Watch Manager Craig Sadler, who has spent most of his career trying to better his own fundraising efforts for us. Congratulations to the team for raising a remarkable £17,008.



Zumbathon

Every year, Kelly Pacey takes part in a six-hour Zumbathon to raise money for independent charities, and this year raised a fantastic £650 for our Charity. She completed a challenging eight hours of solid Zumba, two of which were in fire kit. A pump and crew from March fire station even came along to provide support and joined in for a song!



FireFight Boxing

The first ever FireFight boxing event organised by a team of firefighters from West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service in December proved a great success.

The event raised a fantastic amount (the money was still being counted at the time we went to press), so thank you so much to everyone who took part and attended to support the fire services community.



Ullapool Fire Crew

This photo is of Ullapool Fire Crew, who won a hamper for achieving the highest income within the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the 2019 National Car Wash League. They raised an amazing £2,460.13 for our Charity.



Good luck...

The Longest Ride

A team of 20 men and women from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service are taking on the Lands End to John O'Groats cycle challenge on Sunday 20 September to raise awareness for mental health. They aim to raise £50,000 to support our mental health work, including our outdoor spaces at Harcombe House. We wish everyone involved the very best of luck!



Susan and Danny

In May, Susan Anderson and Danny Slay are taking on the London to Brighton Challenge and hoping to raise £600 for our Charity. Good luck guys.



Good luck to you!

We would just like to wish everyone taking part in an upcoming event a massive good luck. Thank you so much for your ongoing support, hard work and dedication. Whether you are planning a bike ride, walk, run or bake sale, we'd love to hear about it. Tag us on social media or email details to: shout@firefighterscharity.org.uk

Nursing times

Jubilee House Nurse, Helen Mattinson, shares what an average day is like for the team that provides round the clock care, kindness and compassion to beneficiaries with additional needs at our centre in Penrith, Cumbria. (All client names have been changed to ensure confidentiality)

0545:

That noise... the alarm! Just one touch of the snooze button and then it's up, washed, dressed, followed by breakfast and, most importantly, a cup of tea! Then it's a case of making the kids' packed lunches – sorting the changing bag for the little one while doing so – and performing ninja-like moves over the floorboards to avoid waking anyone up. Phew!

0710:

Out the door to the car with the rest of the house still asleep... achievement!

0730:

I'm lucky to live so close to Jubilee House, so after a 10-minute drive I arrive ready for my shift to start. The day shift starts before the night shift ends, so at the beginning of each change, we do a handover to make sure our beneficiaries get seamless care. The day nurses get information on what's happened overnight, if beneficiaries have specific needs, or if there's anything important we need to know for the coming shift. Non-nursing clients are also discussed, if there is a health condition

or concern that may require nursing assistance, such as with our diabetic clients.

Along with the clinical assistant we discuss the day's programme and how we can make it run as seamlessly as possible, so our clients have the most positive experience while with us. Beneficiaries under our care tend to let us know what time they would like waking up, with consideration to the daily timetable. We are extremely lucky to be able to provide a service where our clients' requests are prioritised. For example, if they wish to get up a little later, that's fine, we aren't in a hospital setting and we won't be waking anyone up with a blood pressure cuff or a probe in their ear.

0745:

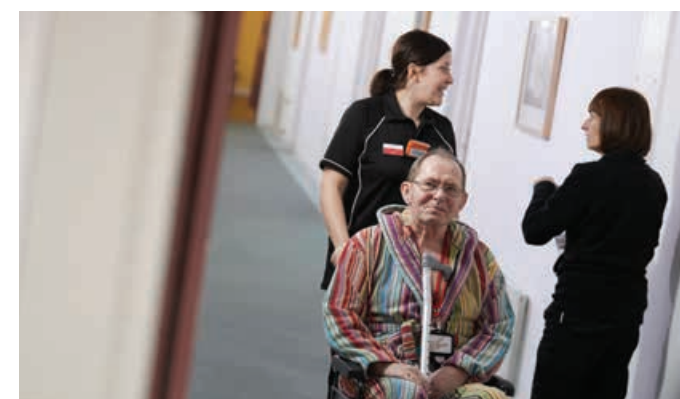
All systems go with the morning routines. When clients arrive at the centre, we complete a nursing assessment to get an overview of care needs, likes and dislikes, and these shape each person's time with us. For example, Frank has come for his first visit and naturally appears a little anxious. He hasn't been in a social situation since his stroke in July and his confidence has been knocked. Before his stroke,

he was fit, well and working full time, so you can imagine what an impact it has had on his life.

With Frank's consent we help him access his important daily medications and assist him in taking them as he is unable to administer these independently. As nurses it is our duty to ensure training is maintained so medications are safely administered by the prescribed route, whether that be orally, injection or via a PEG (tube into the stomach).

0830:

I attend the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting while the rest of the nursing team continue with beneficiaries personal care and nutritional needs. The physios, exercise therapists, psychological team and nursing team meet to discuss relevant information about each beneficiary and if we can offer any further support. For example, this may include a Welfare review to see if Frank could benefit from any funding or support upon returning home, or we may suggest he meet a psychologist to discuss emotions he's been feeling since his stroke.



0900:

Nursing clients have access to hydrotherapy, as well as non-nursing clients, so I head to the pool with Julie. She has a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis and requires assistance with all her needs. She doesn't have access to a hydro pool while at home, so really looks forward to being able to get into ours as the warm temperatures are soothing and great for strengthening exercises. We have both steps and hoist access, so we can help nursing clients access the pool in a relaxed, dignified manner while attending to their clinical needs.

1000:

After hydro, we help clients with personal care back in the



privacy of their room, just in time for a much-needed tea break before gym sessions commence. We assist those who may not be able to feed themselves or collect hot drinks, being on hand to ensure client safety is maintained.

1030:

Once refuelled, we assist clients to their gym sessions, helping them into or onto equipment where needed. We're available throughout their sessions so they feel supported and confident in taking part. We work closely with physios, supporting clients with one-to-one sessions where appropriate.

1200:

Maintaining nursing records

is vital within all nursing roles, and it's no different here; we take client record-keeping very seriously. From our in-depth nursing assessment upon admission, we can implement care plans specific to personal needs and requests, which include lunchtime medication administration as prescribed. So midday is the time for administering these.

1230: Lunch time for everyone. We help clients to the dining area and collect trays or assist with feeding where needed. Some nursing clients have an increased choking risk due to the nature of their condition, so we are present at all meal times. This also means we can respond to any acute health



issues that may arise. We work closely with the catering team to ensure our clients’ needs are met.

1300: I touch base with the MDT to share any new information and discuss clients’ best interests with the different expertise from around the centre. Afterwards, I head back to the nursing office where handover takes place to the late shift clinical assistant and nurse, before having my lunch break. But client needs take priority, so we’ll always answer all nurse call bells. We pride ourselves on always being there when needed.

1330: Imagine having not left your home for the last six months because you have a life-changing condition and your wife/husband/partner is juggling work and running a family home. Days can be long with a lot of time spent alone indoors, so we love taking clients out for a walk when we can (weather permitting) as it can be very liberating for them. So we grab our jackets and head out into the countryside. Communication is a huge part of our role so this gives us more time to speak to our clients, building a rapport and seeing their confidence grow.

1400: Time for a choice. Whether it be baking, dominos, pool, snooker, table tennis, chair-based stretches, an afternoon siesta or a timetabled gym session, we will ensure clients get to fill the week with what helps them.

In the afternoon, we’ll also do a lot of the background work for future clients. Believe it or not, people don’t just arrive here with everything in place! Once we’ve received an application, we’ll contact clients to discuss their needs and how we can best support them. Then, two weeks prior to their visit, we’ll be in contact again to check in, see how they are and discuss any medical changes that may have occurred and which may affect their care or safety needs. We just want to ensure everything is still going ahead with their visit, gathering information on any medication and discussing Charity policies with them. Client records are

kept from application to arrival, so everything we need is there, ready for it all to be in place upon their arrival. Plus we also ask our clients the all-important question; What do you want for dinner on your first day?

1530: It’s home time for those of us on the early shift and the start of duties for those on the late shift. As per the morning shift, things kick off for the late shift with a handover.

for years and Sandra’s husband has trust and confidence in us. Whether he returns home once she’s here or he chooses to stay with her, their visit gives them both a much-needed break.

1800: Meal time for everyone. Brian needs a hoist to help him into his chair, so we assist him. This way he can enjoy his meal in the dining room, socialising with others over his evening meal, which is something he rarely gets to do at home as he lives



1600: As trained nurses, we provide health and wellbeing information to all beneficiaries staying at the centre, not just our beneficiaries with nursing needs. So we host workshops on different topics including alcohol awareness, men’s health and women’s health. This gives people the chance to ask questions, whether that’s during the workshop or afterwards. When it comes to matters of your health, there’s definitely no such thing as a stupid question.

1745: Sandra needs her teatime medications before eating dinner, so we attend to these. Sandra lives at home with her husband who is her carer, as they have no family nearby. They’ve been under our care

alone, relying on carers to heat his meals up. Once again, we stay around to ensure client safety, so you’ll see us in the dining room throughout the meal.

1900: The nursing team takes the relaxation session. This is open to all clients, regardless of physical restrictions. People can grab a mat, chair or cushion, or stay in their wheelchair and just enjoy the atmosphere. Don’t worry, we don’t take it personally when people start snoring, it’s just nice to see you all so relaxed.

2000: We once again maintain notes to keep a record of care given before the night shift nurse comes on duty.

2030: The night shift nurse begins their duties. Our service wouldn’t be accessible to as many nursing clients if we couldn’t provide round-the-clock care.

2100: The late shift nurses are finished for the day, but they may stay on late to help with specific clients’ bedtime needs. For example, Brian needs safe transfer in the hoist to get into bed, which needs two staff. The night shift

so he knows he isn’t alone. We make a mean cup of tea in moments like this.

0400: We carry on with our administration and documentation is commenced for the coming weeks’ arrivals. We review each client’s application and transfer it onto our nursing handover, to have a quick reference framework for every client. Assessment packs and documentation are printed as required and electronic

amazing, inspirational people and their families, who are trying to deal with life-changing conditions. It’s a job that we are all passionate about and incredibly proud to do on behalf of our amazing clients and the fire and rescue services community as a whole.

If you think you could benefit from the support of the nursing team, get in touch. Call us today on **0800 389 8820** or via **www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/support**.



nurse administers any bedtime medication and on Wednesdays, if our clients want to take part in the quiz, we’ll make sure we’re around for that too.

Overnight the nurse is available and will perform night time checks on nursing clients who require observation. Nurse call pendants can be activated at any time and we will be there straight away to assist clients.

0200: We want everyone to have a good night’s rest, ready for activities the next day. Rest and sleep are a vital part of recovery, but it doesn’t come easy for a lot of people. Jim is 63 and suffers with PTSD, so doesn’t sleep well as he suffers from panic attacks. It may be the early hours, but we’ll sit with him and have a general chat to help him settle,

notes maintained, we perform equipment checks on a night shift to ensure hoists, electric scooters, medication fridges and other vital equipment is all operational for any given moment.

0730: The next day’s early shift arrives and it all begins again.

It is important to note that although our days are structured, we have to be flexible as you never know what might occur. A client may be feeling unwell, whether nursing or non-nursing, and need us to assess them.

We are in the privileged position of being able to provide bespoke individualised care to beneficiaries who need additional nursing support. We get to spend time with these

CQC ‘Outstanding’ Award
The Jubilee House nursing team has recently been rated as ‘outstanding’ following an inspection from the Care Quality Commission, a first for the team and for the Charity.

The Care Quality Commission is the independent regulator of health and social care in England. An inspector visited Jubilee House in June 2019 to assess the team, commenting in her report: “People who stayed here received extremely high-quality, personalised support from an exceptionally well-led service.”



Open Season

So you've decided to host an open day to raise funds for The Fire Fighters Charity and want to spread the word. What now? Here are a few tips to help you promote your event and ensure it becomes a highlight of your local community's calendar.

A helping hand

When it comes to raising funds for our Charity, we're here to help you. Our team of Community, Corporate and Events Fundraisers can give you guidance and suggest some ideas you might not have thought of. They are based all over the country, poised to jump into action to help you with your fundraising. You can find out who your local fundraiser is via our website; www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/findyourfundraiser.

Our Customer Care Team is also on hand to provide some expertise and know-how, as well as to help you get hold of any marketing materials you might need. For example, you can place an order for an Open Day Materials Pack, which includes plastic banners, lottery leaflets, cardboard collection boxes, balloons and leaflets about our Charity. Call the Customer Care team on **01256 366566** to find out more.

Social media

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter can provide some of the simplest and most effective ways to promote your event to your local community. Search out local groups, join them and check each group's housekeeping rules to see if you can post your event there. You can also create an event that will appear in Facebook's suggestions of things to do in the area, and ask your colleagues, friends and family to share it to their followers as well.

Keep people informed of progress in the run up to the event and share anything that you feel is relevant to the day. Got outside stallholders coming in? Ask them for photos of their products or details of any special offers they may be running and post details on your social pages. Are there going to be games happening on the day? Film a quick video showing one of your team trying it out, or post a challenge; Do you have the power to dunk a firefighter? Come along to our open day to find out.

Keep it timely

Make sure you're posting when people are likely to be online; commuter times, evenings and weekends are great times to post as lots of people will be online and active on their social pages. Wednesday morning at 11am, meanwhile, is probably not the best time to post important information.

Make it personal

Wherever you're talking about your event, talk about your reasons for supporting The Fire Fighters Charity. Has one of your crew been supported themselves? Were you inspired by someone in particular and want to do this in their honour? Sharing your reasons for fundraising may feel a little intimidating, but the more you share, the more chance you have of inspiring people to support you by attending your event.

You could also post stories of people we've supported with their mental health, physical health and social wellbeing. This will give your supporters an idea of how the money

they give will be spent and the difference it could make. You can find all of these via our website at www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/stories and you can sort them by area to find people from your region. Many of our stories include a downloadable PDF handout, which you could print off and use as handouts at your open day.

Volunteers

You've heard the saying 'many hands make light work'? Well, it's definitely true of open days. Enlist volunteers early and make sure everyone knows exactly what job they're going to be doing. Break tasks into 'before,' 'during' and 'after' the event. Consider who's going to be looking after promotion, applying for insurance or contacting stallholders, who's setting up on the day and who's the point of contact for the public during the event. And definitely don't forget to get volunteers to help clear away at the end, the last thing you want after a successful day's fundraising is to have one person tidying everything away.

Local press

Your local newspaper, magazines or online news channels are always looking for good stories to celebrate the people in your community. A quick Google search can usually reveal the contact details for the news desk to share your story, so drop them an email or give them a ring and tell them what you're doing and your reasons for it. You could also tweet them and tell them what you're up to, or tag them in whatever you get up to online. They might send a photographer along to cover the event, or even offer you some free advertising to help promote it?

Posters

We have blank poster templates on our website that you can print off and stick up on office or station noticeboards. Do

a bit of research in your local area, find out if supermarkets have somewhere to promote events in the area, or ask local businesses if they could put posters in their windows. And while you're in there, ask if they want to come along on the day or maybe donate a raffle prize? Visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/opendays to download your poster template today.

Tell us what you're up to!

As you're going to all this effort for us, the least we could do is help you to promote your event. We have regional groups on social media where you can post your event, and if you email marketing@firefighterscharity.org.uk, we can include you in our fundraising stories and real life features as well. You can also find us, follow us and contact us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.



Event Insurance

The Fire Fighters Charity may be able to provide public liability insurance cover up to £10m for your event.

To request insurance you need to complete a Fundraising Event Notification Form (which you can find at www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/event-insurance) and send it to us at least three weeks ahead of your event, via customercare@firefighterscharity.org.uk. You'll be asked to consider health and safety elements of your event and complete a risk assessment.

Please note our insurance covers the Charity's public and legal liability only and does not extend to other charities or causes who may benefit from money raised. It's important to note that any external activities or equipment used at events (e.g. vehicles, inflatables, marquees, funfair rides, external catering etc) must hold their own public liability cover. You need to provide us with evidence of this cover. We'll need this along with your FEN form.

If this all sounds a bit complicated, have a look at our FAQs on the website or our Customer Care Team will be able to help.



After the day

Make sure you pay in the money you've raised as soon as possible after your open day. You can do this using your station's paying-in book, or you can request a paying-in slip from our team by emailing customercare@firefighterscharity.org.uk or calling **01256 366 566**. Please also complete our monies return form so we are able to track your payment and thank you appropriately.

Running from tragedy

It has been 10 years since firefighters Jim Shears and Alan Bannon were killed in a fire in Shirley Towers, Southampton. For Jim Shears' widow, Carla, running and fundraising for the Charity that supported her family in the aftermath of the tragedy has become an important part of her healing.

Running has brought comfort to Carla Shears for the past decade. What started as a way of supporting a friend's fundraising became a way to try and navigate the unexpected loss of her firefighter husband, Jim.

On Tuesday 6 April 2010, Hampshire firefighters were called to a fire in Shirley Towers, a tower block in Southampton. James 'Jim' Shears, 35, and Alan Bannon, 38, were killed while trying to tackle the blaze. Their deaths would go on to shape national fire safety rules and regulations, making Shirley Towers a household name and forever changing the lives of their families.

For Carla, that time remains a blur.

"Everything was just crazy, and I don't really remember a huge amount of it," she recalls. "It wasn't until Alan's funeral that one of the other wives asked if I had been running recently and I said no, I hadn't thought about it at all. She suggested maybe I should try it again, to see if it would help."

Carla had completed her first half marathon with a friend two weeks before Jim died. Knowing how much she loved being outdoors in the fresh air and in need of an outlet for her grief, she decided to lace up her trainers and head outside once more. The impact was immediate and, she says, for the first time some of the pain of her loss lifted: "Along with my friends and family, running saved me and saved my sanity. It became my coping mechanism when everything around me felt like it was falling apart."

The Fire Fighters Charity offered support to both families and the summer after the fire, Carla took her two sons, Frankie and Ruben, to Harcombe House.

"The boys were four and five at the time their dad died," says Carla. "It's difficult to remember that first visit because everything was still such a whirlwind, but I do remember them being happy. And that helped a lot."

Harcombe House became a sanctuary for the family, offering peace and serenity over the years that followed.



The first anniversary of the fire fell on the Easter holidays and Carla, not wanting to be at home, was again offered a break at Harcombe House by the Charity's Welfare team. Since then, the family has returned to Devon nearly every year, booking themselves a holiday stay at Harcombe House each time.

"I just love it there. I feel so at peace," says Carla. "It's just perfect for getting away from it all. I always connect it with a place of tranquillity. Plus it's nice to be able to give something back to the Charity that showed such kindness to us, by fundraising for them every year and holidaying at Harcombe."

As well as her running, fundraising for the Charity has

become an important part of Carla's healing. The autumn after the fire, she organised for a large group of people – including several members of Jim's watch – to take part in the New Forest Half Marathon.

"You get a bit of a bee in your bonnet about wanting to do something and make it as big as possible," she explains. "So that first year there were 24 of us running for Team Jim, all raising funds for The Fire Fighters Charity. Three of his Red Watch did it in full kit complete with BA set. It was a great day and we raised a lot of money. So that was it, I knew it had to become an annual thing."

Each year, come rain or shine, Team Jim takes on the

same race, always with a few different faces and always with Jim's name on their shirts: "It's very emotional, seeing his name everywhere. They're so brilliant at the event, they announce us over the tannoy as we come over the finish line and people come up to us to ask about Jim. The first year it was too hard for me to speak, so friends had to answer for me, but now I can talk about it. I like talking about him."

Jim and Carla met while at University together in Reading in 1995. Sharing a hall of residence in the first year, they became a couple during their second year when Carla was 19 and Jim was 21. Despite doing a

biochemistry degree, Jim would tell anyone he met about his dream to become a firefighter.

"He just always wanted to do it, because he loved helping people," says Carla. "After uni, he got a job in a lab, but didn't like it and decided to pursue his dream. After a couple of failed attempts to get into Dorset he saw Hampshire was recruiting, so he swatted up so much. When they offered him a job he was over the moon and we were all so proud of him."

"Not many things gave me comfort in the early days, but knowing he died doing something he loved so much was a comfort. He died doing something he had always

wanted to do. He loved the lads and his whole fire family. But he never brought his work home with him. With us he was Jim the dad, who loved judo, spending time with his kids and being together as a family. He made the most of his shift pattern to be a really hands-on dad. He did as many of the school runs as me and knew all our sons' friends and their parents. He got involved with the school, going along as a parent helper on school trips and giving talks on fire safety. He doted on his brothers' children as well as our own."

In the couple of years after Jim's death, Carla found it especially difficult waiting for

the inquiry into the fire to shine some light on what happened: "When it was over, it was a real turning point for me. After the inquest was finished, as horrific as that night was, I could piece together what happened, so was able to process it and then move forwards with my life. And during that time, running saved me."

Carla likes to think Jim would be 'gobsmacked' at how much fundraising she has done in his name, raising tens of thousands of pounds at events over the last decade, including completing the London Marathon.

"I hope he is proud of me," she says. "I like to think he is."



Merchandise latest

Presentation Axes - a cut above

Our popular wooden presentation fire axe with polished steel head is perfect for ceremonial use or as a retirement gift to remind ex-firefighters of their time in the service.

We are pleased to announce that after many years of searching, we have secured a new supplier which we are hopeful will make long waiting lists a thing of the past. We have been working with this new supplier since July 2019 on a trial basis and are confident they can supply us with the quantity we have always wished for.

And the good news continues as we introduce our range of presentation axes pre-mounted onto an oak-veneered presentation board (for those of you who are not handy with a drill). We are slowly building up our supply of these and are working hard to ensure they are always available for you to purchase.

Presentation Axe £85

Axe mounting board £27.50

Mounted Axe on a board £150



To make your gift truly special, you can also purchase a personalised BA Tally or service medal ribbon to go alongside your presentation axe and mounting board. We have a range of quality enamel ribbons available, including the Triple Medal Ribbon which incorporates the Long Service, Queens Jubilee and Diamond Jubilee medal ribbons in one single bar. Visit our online shop to see our full collection. www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/shop

Personalised Brass BA Tally £30

Miniature Brass BA Tally £30

Triple Medal Ribbon £11

Individual Medal Ribbons £4 each

We are constantly looking for new products to add to our ever-increasing range of gifts. If you have a great idea you would like to share, email us at shop@firefighterscharity.org.uk



Reducing your single use plastics

We will be working hard this year to replace as much of the single use plastic packaging materials that we use as possible, with more eco-friendly and sustainable options. If you are looking for ways to reduce your single use of plastic cups and bottles, visit our online shop to see our collection:

Water Bottle £5.99

Travel Mug – Silver £5.95

Engraved Travel Mug – Black £6.95



William Wood Watches – Valiant Collection

Available to pre-order now with delivery in late Spring.

William Wood Watches pay homage to the fire service in honour of its creator, Johnny Garrett's grandfather. The company combines style with substance, creating beautiful timepieces for both fire service personnel and the general public.

Its latest designs – The Valiant Collection - are now available to pre-order on our online shop. With production having begun in January, watches will be delivered from May 2020, after a five-month build time. You will be kept up to date on progress with monthly updates, so you can follow your watch from production to arrival on your doorstep.

This collection contains five colour options with a choice of either Swiss ETA or Japanese Automatic movement options.

The Fire Fighters Charity will receive a donation from William Wood Watches for each watch that is sold from our shop.

William Wood Watches - Valiant Collection from £499.99



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Events Save the date

Whether you walk, run, bike or bake, there's bound to be a fundraising event for you coming up over the next few months. Here are a few ideas for starters.

Throughout the year Skydiving

If you're looking for the ultimate adrenaline rush, skydiving may be the challenge for you.

Skydiving throughout the year involves a free fall through the air (without the parachute deployed) for several thousand feet. You are harnessed to a professional parachute instructor at all times throughout the descent.

The training and the jump are completed in one day and your instructor will be in control of your landing. Dynamic, adventurous and exhilarating, skydiving gives you the freedom to make the skies your own, raising vital funds for us in the process.

Jumps can take place on a date and at a location convenient for you!

How to enter: Register online www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/skydiving

Entry costs and minimum fundraising:
£395 minimum sponsorship



Sunday 3 May 2020: Glasgow Sirens Ladies' Lunch

We are holding our first Glasgow Sirens Ladies' Lunch at The Grand Central Hotel. You will be welcomed with a Prosecco Reception followed by a delicious two course meal. Our confirmed key note speakers are Retired Commissioner for London Fire Brigade, Dany Cotton and Current Chief Fire Officer for West Sussex, Sabrina Cohen-Hatton. The event will be completed with some fantastic music from DJ Josie Smith. Hosted by the wonderful radio presenter, columnist, writer, TV contributor and public speaker, Anne Hughes.

Buy your ticket at
www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/glasgow-sirens

Ticket cost: £45 per person



Saturday 6 to Sunday 7 June 2020: Nightrider London

Nightrider is back in London for 2020, and you can be a part of this special cycle challenge. Taking place throughout the night, Nightrider is a charity ride which is all about having fun, seeing the sights and taking on a personal challenge.

You can choose from a 50km or 100km route around London. Explore the city's top sights, latest attractions, famous landmarks and discover some lesser well-known treasures. Whether you're cycling on your own, with your friends, family or work colleagues, we can promise you a different kind of Saturday night! This is not a timed ride and it's not a sportive, it is all about having a good time and cycling together. Enjoy the sights, take photos, support each other and help us to raise funds.

How to enter: Register your interest online at www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/nightrider2020

Entry costs
Register by 31 March 2020 for £35 Register any time after 1 April for £45

Minimum fundraising:
£200 per person



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Throughout the year Ultra Challenge Series

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How to enter: find full details, including how to register at: www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/ultra-challenge-series-2020

Entry costs and minimum fundraising:

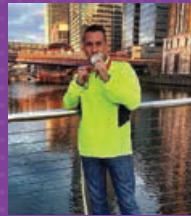
Full Challenge – £99 fee + £299 raised

Half Challenge – £64.50 fee + £199 raised

Quarter Challenge – £39.50 fee + £119 raised

Toast of London

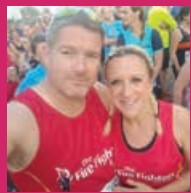
The largest mass participation event in the world, the London Marathon is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2020 and our fantastic team of runners will be taking to the streets of the Capital to challenge themselves and raise thousands for the UK fire services community. Here's who they are and how you can sponsor them.



Scott Jones,
Kent

I'm a serving Crew Manager with Kent FRS. While I've never had to use the Charity's services in my 16 years, I know people who have done. I completed the London Marathon in 2014 and 2015, so I'm really looking forward to running it again, this time with a Fire Fighters Charity vest on!

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/ScottJones10>



Dawn and Lee Colton,
Devon

I went to Harcombe House for support with my mental health and I can't stress enough how amazing the place was. It was a no brainer when we were offered places in the Marathon, being able to give something back to the people who brought me back from the brink.

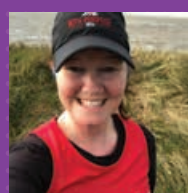
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/lee-colton>



Scott McGregor,
Kilmarnock

I joined Scottish FRS in April 2014 as a retained firefighter at Stewarton. I chose to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity because I know of people who have used the services and how well it affected them.

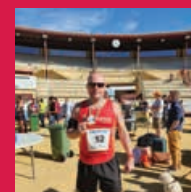
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/jamie-tudor-riley1>



Suzanne Connolly,
Hampshire

My fiancé, Steve, is a wholtime firefighter at Havant. We have both been supported by the Charity and running the London Marathon is one way to thank you. I'm just honoured to have been chosen to run on behalf of the Charity and to help them continue to do the essential work they do for the fire service family.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/runninglondonforthehelpers>



Phil Bant,
Staffordshire

I work as a Safe and Well Technician for the Central Prevent and Protect Dept in Staffordshire FRS. I chose the Charity to fundraise for because I want to support the tremendous work you do. I've done bucket collections dressed as Blaze Bear and sponsored spin classes dressed as Superman (who I'm going to be running the marathon as).

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/philipbant>



Matt Pendlebury,
Lancashire

I am a serving operational crew manager at Blackpool South Shore Station. Many of my colleagues have sought help from the Charity over the years for a variety of reasons, and they always speak so highly of the support they've received. Having spent years watching the marathon on TV at home, I've always said one day I would do it. Well here I am.

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/MattPendlebury>



Allan Kay,
Devon

I am a retained and wholtime firefighter with Devon and Somerset FRS. I have known quite a few people who have needed the Charity, some of whom might not be here today without its help. I'm feeling okay about the marathon itself, I trust in my training schedule and just hope I stay injury-free.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/allan-kay43>



Lee Poole,
West Midlands

I joined Wolverhampton fire station in Jan 2019 and was quickly introduced to the valuable work of the Charity, so I was inspired to fundraise. Training is tough, but going well. I've run several races in the past, but that doesn't make the task at hand any easier. This will by no means be the end of my fundraising for the Charity, who will get my complete support for the rest of my career and beyond.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/lee-poole5>



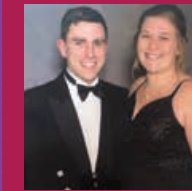
Ryan Jones,
Gloucestershire

I've been a retained firefighter since 2017, working at Wotton-under-Edge in Gloucestershire. I was inspired to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity after seeing the amazing support you gave one of our Watch Managers. I feel surprisingly alright about the Marathon itself, and I know it's not going to be so much a physical battle, but rather the mental battle of completing the distance.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/wottonfire>



James Martin,
Guernsey



Katie Grant,
Cambridgeshire

I've worked in the Cambridgeshire FRS combined emergency control room for two years, and my husband has been an on-call firefighter for Lincolnshire FRS for five. I wanted to play my part in making sure the Charity will always be there in the future, should I, my husband, or our family ever need its support.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/katie-grant12>



David Bond,
Essex

I'm a Watch Manager and on-call Crew Manager at Essex County FRS. A year ago, I was involved with supporting the family of a firefighter who sadly passed away from an undiagnosed heart condition, and saw the help offered by the Charity. I am really excited about the day, and I'm not worried about timings, I'm just keen to get round.

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/dave-bond84>



Briar Rose Milford,
Worcestershire

My husband is a firefighter and since meeting him I have seen and heard some of the amazing things The Fire Fighters Charity does. It intrigued me to see the great work they do, not just with firefighters, but the whole fire community.

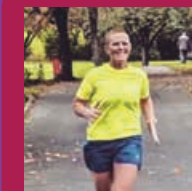
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/red-roses-london-marathon-2020>



Andrew Peachey,
Cambridgeshire

My wife and I will both be running the London Marathon in April, fundraising for The Fire Fighters Charity and Cancer Research UK. My father-in-law was a retained firefighter in our village for 41 years until his retirement in 2015.

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/RebeccaPeachey2>



Jacqui McDonald,
Fife

I'm a Health and Wellbeing Practitioner in Scotland. I am absolutely over the moon to be running the London Marathon for The Fire Fighters Charity. I spent time at Jubilee House and received amazing support with a musculoskeletal injury and day-to-day recovery from alcohol addiction. I am delighted to be given this chance to give a little back to a charity that helped me so much.

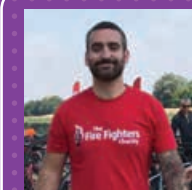
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/jacsmcd>



Rich Green and Matt Hooper,
Hampshire

Along with two other firefighters from White Watch in St Mary's Southampton, we will be running the Marathon inside a mini fire engine that we've constructed out of plastic piping and canvas. We thought if we were going to do to the Marathon, we might as well do it properly!

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/ontherunvfm2020>



Paul Weller,
West Sussex

I spent 10 years as a firefighter at Hayward's Heath but had to leave after sustaining an injury. The Charity saved my life in so many ways, so I wanted to do something to say thank you. Crossing that finish line will be a very proud moment.

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/PaulWeller3>



Myths and misnomers

Separating Charity fact from fiction

Our Customer Care, fundraising and welfare teams hear all kinds of things when they're out and about visiting fire and rescue services or taking enquiries from beneficiaries and supporters. Often having been picked up on the grapevine, many of them aren't always accurate. So we thought we'd set the record straight by answering some of the most common misnomers and Chinese whispers.

Q. Don't you have to be really ill or in desperate need to access the Charity's services? I doubt they'd help me with my dodgy knee/back etc.!

A. No. If you are experiencing a problem that is impacting on your mental health, physical health or social wellbeing – however big or small you deem that problem to be – contact us and we will work with you to help identify whether our services can meet your need. We can support you with a wide range of common health and wellbeing concerns. Just call the Support Line on **0800 389 8820** and we'd be happy to chat it through with you.

Q. I'm not a frontline firefighter, I work in a back office, so I doubt I'm entitled to access the services, am I?

A. Yes, of course you are. We support all fire and rescue service personnel, whether frontline, support or control, serving or retired. We also support your immediate dependants, so you, your spouse and your dependant children are all also beneficiaries. You can find all the information you need in regards to eligibility, including details on eligibility criteria, by visiting www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/eligibility

Q. I heard that Harcombe House has become a mental health centre, does that mean that you can only go there if you've got serious mental health issues?

A. No, that's not true. We have invested significantly in the infrastructure at Harcombe House to ensure that it can provide spaces and opportunities to support individuals, couples and families with a mental health need. That can cover a broad range of issues, from those dealing with bereavement, to those needing support to come to terms with life changing circumstances; those struggling to come to terms with psychological trauma or those whose mental health has been affected by their physical health or social wellbeing. The centre also continues to support people with a physical need too, and it's important to note that no one applies to Harcombe House directly. All applications for support are assessed in the same way and we will ensure that you always receive the right support for you, delivered in the right way to meet your specific needs.

Q. The Charity gets loads of money from fire and rescue services and the Government directly, so why does it need my monthly donation too?

A. Unfortunately this just isn't true. We don't receive any regular funding from national or local government and are almost wholly dependent on the support of our donors and fundraisers. Your monthly donation will therefore go a long way, as will any money you generate through fundraising for us, recycling your old clothes through our recycling banks or even holidaying with us at one of our centres. There are lots of ways that you can get involved and help us to raise the money we need to keep our doors open each year. Visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/getinvolved to find out more.

Q. I'm retired now and paid into the Charity all my career, so it's someone else's turn now isn't it?

A. We support fire and rescue service personnel throughout their working lives and thereafter, providing the same level of services whatever your age or serving status. Thousands of the beneficiaries who we support each year are retired colleagues and their dependants. So it is important to give what you can throughout your life to ensure that we will be there for you, your nearest and dearest and the whole fire



services community. Our data tells us that more and more beneficiaries are seeking support from the Charity as they get older, so continuing your donations once you retire is more important than ever. If you used to donate through your payroll, switching to Direct Debit instead is quick and easy. Just visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/donate to find out more.

Q. I heard that the Charity is only for people who have had an injury at work.

A. This is a common misconception, we exist to support our beneficiaries whatever their mental health, physical health or social wellbeing need. So, whether injured at work or away from it, whether in need of psychological support as a result of something that happened at work or outside of it, whether recovering from illness or bereavement, or in need of support for another reason, call us to discuss your needs. We will always try our very best to help you in whatever way we can, whether through our own broad range of health and wellbeing services or by redirecting you to partner organisations who may be better placed to support you. Call the Support Line on **0800 3898820** if you're at all unsure and would like to find out more.

Q. You have to be referred to the Charity by someone in order to access its services.

A. While many beneficiaries come to us because it has been mentioned to them by colleagues, Charity volunteers or Service Occupational Health, a referral is not necessary. If you feel you have a need then you can access our services yourself, at any time. Just call the Support Line on **0800 3898820** and our Assessment Practitioners will talk you through the process.

Q. I've been suffering with my injury for a long time, why hasn't the Charity helped me?

A. Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing you are in need of support unless you notify us. No information regarding your health or wellbeing is passed to us from your fire and rescue service, or vice versa. Anyone in need of support is therefore urged to contact us directly, via our Support Line on **0800 3898820**.

Q. I've heard that waiting times are too long, so there's not much point in applying.

A. We assess each beneficiary who comes to us on an entirely individual basis and determine the most suitable, personalised package of support for that person based on their individual need. No one therefore applies to access an area of support, or one of our centres, directly. We work in partnership with each beneficiary to understand their need and identify what

support we may be able to offer. This could, for instance, include a residential stay at one of our centres, support in local communities, advice and information, onward referral to partner organisations, online support or telephone-based support. Whatever the delivery method, our commitment to ensuring that we support each person who asks for help in the most appropriate and timely way remains constant.

Q. I feel I need some psychological support, but I don't want my fire and rescue service to know, so I won't go to The Fire Fighters Charity.

A. Please be assured that we are entirely independent from the fire and rescue services and ensure strict confidentiality for all our beneficiaries. No personal information will ever be given to your fire and rescue service. Whether you choose to share your personal situation with your employer is therefore entirely up to you.



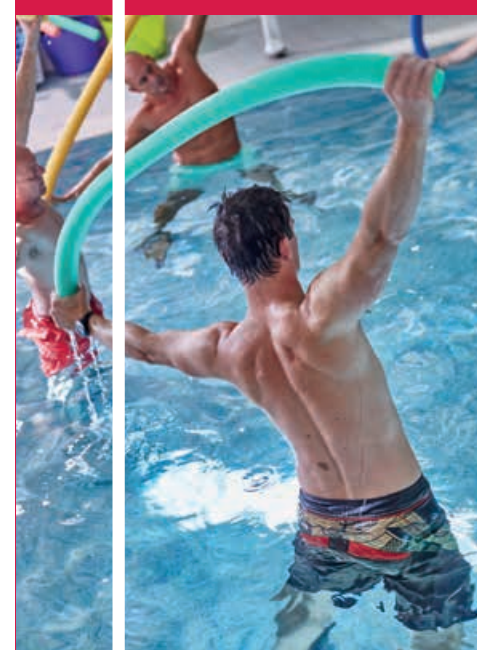
Q. I don't donate to the Charity so I am not eligible for services.

A. Our services are open and available to all eligible beneficiaries, whether they donate to the Charity or not. Of course we would like you to donate if you can as it is only through the generosity of our donors and supporters that we are able to operate at all. However, we understand that this is not always possible and our doors will remain open to you regardless.

Q. I'm fine, but my wife is in terrible pain, it's such a shame that she can't access the services.

A. She can! If you are a primary beneficiary, perhaps through your role as an employee of a fire and rescue service, your immediate dependants are also eligible to access the same services as you. In most cases this extends to your spouse and children, but can extend to any member of your immediate family who is dependent on you for support. Call the Support Line to find out more - **0800 3898820**.

Thank you for your regular donations



We make a life changing difference to thousands of people in the fire service community every year. This wouldn't be possible without the people who give regular monthly donations.

If you don't already, please consider setting up a regular monthly donation so we can continue to be there for those who are in need within in our fire services community.

Set up your monthly donation today at www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/regulargiving

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Royal Patron Her Majesty The Queen



Become a Company Member in 2020

We are seeking FRS individuals to support the Charity's governance.

Attend our AGM and cast your vote in best interests of the Charity's future.

The ideal Company Member has a genuine interest in the Charity and a commitment to undertaking the key duties of the role.

Closing date **25 May 2020**



To find out more visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/companymember or email companysecretary@firefighterscharity.org.uk

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Living Well Groups and you

Do you think your area could benefit from somewhere for retired members of the fire services community to regularly meet and socialise? If so, you may wish to consider volunteering to establish and run a Living Well Group, helping prevent loneliness among local retirees and helping others to learn about health and wellbeing.

We are actively seeking to expand our successful programme of Living Well Groups across the country, allowing more people to benefit from the relaxed and informal opportunities to both socialise and learn. Key to this expansion, however, is the recruitment of proactive volunteers to run the groups and develop programmes of activities to draw in local members of the fire services community.

"Helping people to keep in touch with the fire community after retiring is so important to help combat loneliness and social isolation," says Communities Development Lead, Clare Hannaford. "Our Living Well Volunteers are the glue that keeps the retired fire and rescue community together."

Volunteers receive full training before they begin, support on how to keep things running smoothly and advice around safeguarding and boundaries. Thereafter, all we ask is that our volunteers commit one day a month to run the regular sessions.

"Volunteers play the role of host, greeting people, making them feel included, planning content where necessary and, most importantly, making cups of tea!" says Clare. "As well as helping people

benefit from the Charity's support, there are a lot of benefits for the volunteers themselves; studies prove that people who volunteer generally feel happier and healthier, knowing they are giving something back."

If you're interested in becoming a Living Well Group volunteer or would like more information, contact Clare at CHannaford@firefighterscharity.org.uk or give her a ring on **01626 853639**.



Meet Paul: Visitor Service Volunteer

We know that many of our beneficiaries can feel anxious about attending one of our centres for a few days. That's why one of the first faces they're greeted with is one of our Visitor Services Volunteers.

These amazing people give up a couple of hours of their time each week to meet and greet each new intake at our centres in Cumbria, West Sussex and Devon, taking them through induction, giving them a tour of centres and generally setting their nerves at ease.

Retired West Sussex firefighter Paul 'Pongo' Watson is one such volunteer and has been volunteering at Marine Court each week for nearly a year: "I really enjoy it, because I'm a people person," he says. "I was supported by the Charity during my career to help me get back on the run after operations and understand what it's like to come through a centre. I never even considered volunteering as a way of giving something back, but now I have

time to give, I'm happy to do my bit.

"For me the best bit is when you have someone who you can sense is a bit nervous, and you help them come out of their shell. We put groups at ease and help them to bond before activities

start. It's good to know the time we spend welcoming people before their programme starts means no time is taken away from the physios, exercise therapists and psychological therapists, so people can get the most from their time with the Charity."



SILVER JUBILEE

With our Jubilee House centre in Cumbria marking its 25th anniversary in April, Director of Beneficiary Services, Sharon Bailey, looks back on a quarter of a century of life enhancing support.



In April 1995 there was a flurry of activity in a small village in Cumbria on the edge of the Lake District. The then-Fire Services National Benevolent Fund had just finished building its first purpose-built centre, Jubilee House. The opening of the centre marked the start of a new era for our Charity as we introduced rehabilitation services for the first time. And it was there for its opening.

Working as a nurse at the centre may have been a steep learning curve, but being part of this multi-professional team was so interesting. I loved the variety of work, not just in supporting the physical health needs of our beneficiaries, but also in understanding the wider fire and rescue service family's unique identity and needs.

Looking back 25 years to the arrival of our first beneficiaries at Jubilee House, our approach felt innovative and fresh, with a contemporary attitude towards patient health. Back then, our programme had a physical focus, with people coming to us after the NHS input and at that time we sought medical approval before accepting anyone onto the programme.

Upon arrival, people were assessed by a nurse and physiotherapist before being allocated to one of three groups, depending on their clinical condition. We had a structured timetable that rolled over two weeks, combining physical activity with educational lectures and relaxation sessions.

Over the years, our rehabilitation services evolved in response

to the changing needs of our beneficiaries. Perhaps one of the biggest developments has been in our approach, moving from a seemingly paternalistic one to being more empowering and supportive. Today we encourage beneficiaries to take responsibility for their own health, supporting them and their families to define their own goals and identify solutions to meet their needs.

One of the most significant developments for the Charity has been introducing services to support those experiencing poor mental health. Back in 1995 the signs were there; many beneficiaries presenting with poor physical health also cited poor mental health and it was clear the two were inextricably linked, so the move towards more integrated services followed. Starting with the introduction of a structured stress management programme in 1998, small incremental steps were taken to address this emerging challenge. Formal psychological services were implemented in 2013.

With the amazing support of our volunteers and donors over the last 25 years, Charity development stretches further

than the rolling hills of Cumbria. We have been able to develop our original convalescence centres in West Sussex and Devon to offer more to beneficiaries and extend our services outside the walls of our centres.

Living Well Groups and Welfare Services offer beneficiaries more support out in their communities, as does access to digital support solutions such as online mental health forum, Big White Wall, and our Salaso app that allows beneficiaries to continue their personalised exercises when they get home. Technology continues to shape how we support our beneficiaries, a far cry from the days of one shared computer with dial-up internet connection at Jubilee House in 1995.

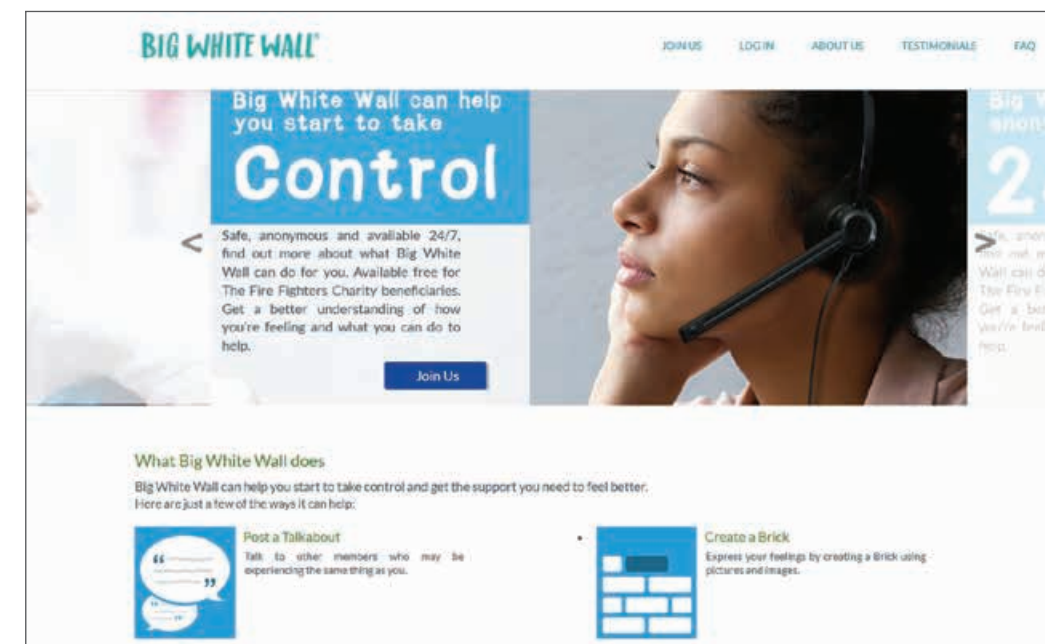
What hasn't changed at Jubilee House, or indeed anywhere in the Charity, is our commitment to keeping the beneficiary at the heart of everything we do. Back in 1995, I remember feeling so privileged to be working with this amazing group of people and have the opportunity to make a positive difference and improve their quality of life. Now, 25 years later, as the Director of Beneficiary Services, I still feel the same.



BIG WHITE WALL



Did you know that as a beneficiary of The Fire Fighters Charity, you're also eligible for support from Big White Wall, an online mental health service that provides a safe space to anonymously discuss whatever's on your mind? Here's what you need to know.



Admitting that you need support with your mental wellbeing can be the toughest of obstacles to overcome, which is why we want to make it as easy as possible for anyone to access the support they need, when they need it and in a manner that works for them. Our partnership with Big White Wall has therefore allowed us to complement our own mental health support services with an anonymous 24/7 online support community.

Big White Wall is the only digital mental health service to be registered with the Care Quality Commission and offers a safe,

judgement-free space to talk about the things that impact your mental wellbeing. For those uncertain about whether or not they are ready to pick up the phone to us and enquire about support, Big White Wall removes this face-to-face or voice-to-voice barrier by offering an online peer support network through which you can speak with others. It also offers a range of resources for guided learning aimed at providing you with a toolkit of coping mechanisms.

Whether impacted by social isolation and stigma, or simply restricted by geography, work schedules or caring commitments, many people

struggling with mental health issues are unable or reluctant to access face-to-face services. The anonymity provided by Big White Wall therefore helps its users to overcome these obstacles and find the kind of strength that may eventually see them reaching out to us for further support if necessary.

As a beneficiary, you can access Big White Wall online whenever, wherever and however you would like. You can engage with a wider network of people, you can share thoughts and feelings, ask questions, take self-assessments and engage in a range of self-guided support at any time of the day or night.

In addition to the community, you have the safety and accessibility of their Wall Guides, trained clinicians who are there to make sure everyone remains safe and supported. Wall Guides monitor the environment at all times to ensure people are guided in the right direction with appropriate support.

To register, visit www.bigwhitewall.com/joinnow/ffc

There is also the option for live one-to-one therapy sessions with Big White Wall's counsellors over a video call. This is something we can refer you for, so if it's something you think you could benefit from, please get in touch. Either give us a ring on **0800 389 8820** or visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/support.

WHEN TO GET IN TOUCH

Think you're in need of a helping hand with your physical or mental health? Physiotherapist Thea Boyd and Lead Practitioner Chris Gould explain when you should get in touch for support.



If you've been injured, are awaiting or recovering from surgery, have recently been ill, have received a diagnosis with ongoing health implications or have experienced anything else that is affecting your health, knowing what to do and when to ask for help can be daunting. What follows is therefore a brief guide to help you assess when the time is right to reach out for support.

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY

Life is unpredictable and can throw up things that test and challenge us, from minor sprains to life-changing diagnoses. Thinking about how to move forward can be difficult, but with many situations early intervention and exercise can be key components on the road to recovery.

So when should you call us? Well, it's never too early (or indeed, too late) to ask for our help. Our advice would always

be to call us and to start the conversation. We can assess your need and work with you to identify the best way to support you, always ensuring that the support you receive is right for you and delivered in a way that is suited to you. This may initially involve a telephone call with a clinical expert or a digital consultation and could lead to a residential stay at one of our centres, support in your community, or a combination of different delivery methods.

Exercise and health

Exercise has been proven to reduce the risk of major illness such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer by up to 50%. Studies have also shown that it can even reduce the risk of an early death by 30% and provide often unquantifiable benefits to our self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and stress levels.

EQUAL TREATMENT FOR ALL

All too often we hear people say that they had delayed getting in touch because they didn't think their issue was serious enough. This is a myth. We support everyone in the same way, whatever your injury, issue or concern.

Of course we also know that some people feel a sense of guilt for using our services when they perceive others to have a greater need. We hear things like; "I don't want to take a slot away from someone else," or "I'm not badly injured enough, let someone else have my place." But essentially, our aim is to provide support for you at the best time to aid your recovery, whatever that means for you. This varies from condition to condition and from person to person, so let us make that call for you. And don't worry about taking support away from others, we will never turn our back on anyone needing our support.

QUESTION TIME

If you're thinking about calling us, it can be handy to ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my condition or situation impacting my quality of life?
- Have I stopped doing things I enjoy doing because of my condition/situation?
- Are things getting worse?
- Is my condition/situation affecting my sense of happiness and wellbeing?
- Is it causing me stress, anxiety or other worries?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, get in touch with us.

We frequently hear beneficiaries expressing regret at waiting so long to contact us. Some people say they wish they'd used our services with issues they'd previously experienced. For example, waiting until after their second knee surgery before contacting us. We understand people can only contact us when they feel ready to, but by starting

the conversation early, we may be able to prevent things from getting worse in the future.

Contacting us early allows us to plan ahead with you, especially if you've got a surgery booked in. If a residential stay is needed we can advise you when might be the best time to come to us. We'll also keep in touch to discuss your progress and any issues, making sure you receive the right service at the right time.

NEXT STEPS

So what happens when you make that first contact? Well, you can read more about the people you'll talk to on the phone – our Assessment Practitioners – on page seven. They'll help to establish what your needs are and how we can best meet them, discussing your overall physical and mental health, as well as your social circumstances. This allows us to form a whole-person picture of your needs and what's going on in your life, again to ensure that we can provide the right support to you in the short and long term.

For example, if you call us because you are recovering from a knee injury, don't be surprised if we also ask you about how your injury has impacted your life at work and at home. As well as support with your physical recovery we may also be able to support you with any anxiety you might have in regards to your return to work, or help you with applying for benefits to which you might be entitled.

Eligibility

Not sure if you're eligible? Don't worry, we'll talk that through with you as well. We're here for all serving and former fire personnel (not just operational firefighters) with at least five years' service, or two if made redundant. There is no qualifying period for people who were medically discharged. We can also support your spouses and dependant adult children.



During your chat with us, we'll gather all the information our staff need to carefully plan your needs. This will help us to ensure that you can take your recovery at your own pace or be challenged functionally if, for example, you're looking to return to work. For that reason, certain pieces of information are very useful (but not vital) to have to hand when speaking to us. These include:

- If you've had or are having surgery, make sure you tell us the type and dates.
- If you've had cardiac surgery or a heart attack, are you currently undergoing any cardiac rehab?
- Are you following any surgical protocols?
- If you have high blood pressure, do you know your readings?



- If you are having or have undergone treatment for cancer, what kind have you had?
- Do you have any scans or medical investigations planned?
- Have you noticed a change in your mental state since your diagnosis?
- Have you spoken to anyone about your psychological health?
- Has anything changed since you first applied, do you need to update us?

ACCESSING OUR SERVICES

As we've said already, the support we provide to you will be tailored to your needs and can come in many different forms; a residential stay at one of our centres, telephone or online support, support in your community, support through a partner organisation, or a combination of options.

If you do need to come to one of our centres, many people worry that the experience will be like some sort of military bootcamp where you'll be pushed beyond your ability. However, this couldn't be further from the truth. Activity is individually tailored to your needs, with the pace set at a comfortable level with room for adaptation and progression. Our centres aren't only filled

Go online

For people who are unable to access our centres, we can provide access to an online digital rehab platform, which you can access from a smart phone, tablet or computer. This provides a video call where you can speak face-to-face with a therapist who may carry out an assessment. We're also on hand to offer advice over the phone as well.

with young, fit firefighters; we provide services at all stages throughout your career and retirement. We also support beneficiaries with nursing needs, so we cater for all levels of ability.

You can find stories online or on our social media channels of the people we've supported, so why not have a read and see if there's someone whose story echoes your own? Or chat to colleagues or friends who have used our services. It might surprise you just what we can help with.

Hopefully you'll never have need of us and will enjoy an injury-free career and long, healthy retirement. But if something happens and you need help, our message is this: don't hesitate, pick up the phone or go online and start your road to recovery, with us by your side.

SWEET DREAMS

Harcombe House Psychological Therapist, Anneliese Underwood, shares some tips for improving your sleep hygiene to help you get a good night's sleep.



Sleep is the time for us to unwind, both in body and in mind. It allows us to process the day and gives our muscles the chance to rest and repair. Previously-held beliefs that sleep is a non-active time for our mind and body are untrue; our mind is as active while in REM (rapid-eye movement) sleep as it is when we are awake. Which is why it's so important we get healthy sleep.

Many of us will struggle with sleep at some point in our lives. Some experience a few nights of broken sleep during a particularly stressful period, while others may have extended periods of not sleeping in the manner they are used to. I say 'the manner they are used to' deliberately, because when it comes to healthy sleep, it's different for everyone. There is a widely-held concept that we need eight hours sleep, but like

everything, sleep is unique to the individual.

There are a number of things that can affect your sleep including irregular routines, upsetting our circadian rhythms (our 24-hour biological clock), use of technology, caffeinated drinks, exercise or just having a particularly overstimulated mind or body. Alcohol, despite its ability to send you to sleep quickly, can also reduce the amount of REM sleep we experience, often leaving us feeling groggy and unrefreshed the next morning.

Whether you need to refresh your bedtime routine or start practising better sleep hygiene altogether, here are some tips to help.

EXPLORE AND DISCOVER

Sleep difficulties often develop after a stressful event, bereavement, relationship difficulty, work stress or life event. Explore what thoughts

come to you when you think about sleep or lay awake at night. Often around sleep, we experience an internal battle of thoughts and feelings.

RELAX, DON'T DO IT

Some people believe that if you're struggling to sleep, you should get out of bed and walk around. This may work for short-term sleep issues, but I invite you to stay in bed and try to acknowledge your thoughts without wrestling with them or judging them. Otherwise your body may get used to needing to get up during the night.

MINDFULNESS

Welcome the sheep rather than chasing them. This comes back to sitting with whatever comes up in your body and learning to stay in bed, accepting it's okay that you can't sleep. You don't need to fight it, you can just lie there and rest, concentrating on your breathing.

CONTINUE AS YOU WERE BEFORE

Many people stop their hobbies or going out when their sleep is affected, worrying they'll be too tired or that it'll make them sleep even worse. But if you can get back to the old you who slept well and did what you enjoyed, this will improve your mood, which in turn will help you to sleep. It will also reduce your frustrations around how lack of sleep is affecting you, because you'll be distracted doing things you enjoy.

GROUND YOURSELF

If your sleep is broken by nightmares, grounding yourself in the place you are is a good way to calm down. Take notice of the objects and colours around the room. What can you see? What can you hear? What can you touch? You're not in the place where the nightmare happened, you are safe in bed.

ACCEPTANCE

Finally, accept that you might need to put in some work to improve your sleep. I know it can be frustrating, but I promise, it will be worth it.

Recommended reading

BOOKS:

The Sleep Book: *How to Sleep Well Every Night* Guy Meadows

WEBSITES:

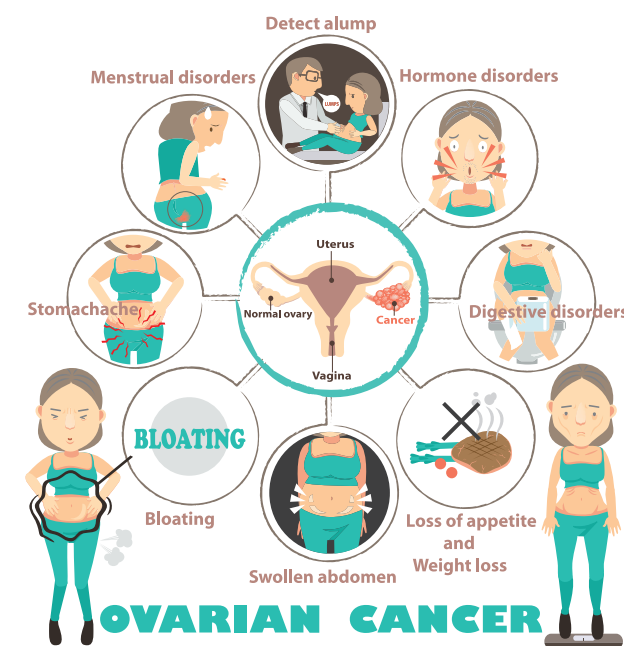
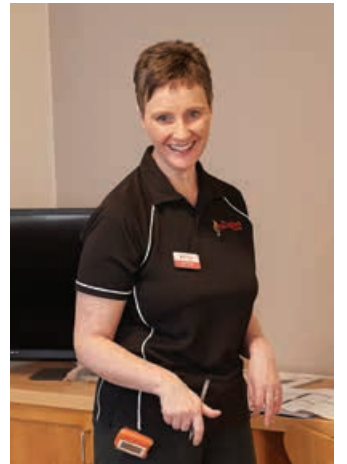
www.thesleepschool.org.uk
www.sleepcouncil.org.uk
www.nhs.uk/oneyou/sleep
www.sleepfoundation.org

APPS:

Sleep station
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OVARIAN CANCER: KNOW THE SIGNS

Nursing Services Lead, Kath Savage, explains why women need to know the signs of ovarian cancer.



Ovarian cancer is one of the most common types of cancer in women, but as there is no screening offered it is vitally important women are aware of the symptoms. Early diagnosis gives the best chance of survival.

The cancer occurs when cells in the ovaries grow and multiply uncontrollably, producing a tumour. While it is not clear why this happens, some factors may put you at an increased risk, including:

- **Increasing age:** most cases occur after the menopause, and around eight in 10 cases involve women over 50. But there are some rare types that can happen in younger women.
- **Family history:** If you have a history of ovarian cancer

in your family, whether it's a sister, mother, aunt or grandmother, you're more likely to develop it.

- **Endometriosis:** research has shown women with endometriosis may be more likely to develop ovarian cancer.
- **Lifestyle factors:** being overweight or obese can also increase your chances of developing ovarian cancer, as can smoking.

WHAT ARE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms can be difficult to recognise early on as they are often the same as less serious conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) or pre-menstrual syndrome (PMS). The most common symptoms are as follows:

- Feeling bloated

- A swollen tummy
- Discomfort in your tummy or pelvic area
- Feeling full quickly when eating, or loss of appetite
- Needing to pass urine more often or more urgently than usual

Other symptoms can include persistent indigestion or feeling sick, pain during sex, a change in your bowel habits, back pain, vaginal bleeding (particularly after the menopause), feeling tired all the time or unintentional weight loss.

SHOULD I SEE MY GP?

If you've had any of these symptoms for more than 12 times a month and they're not normal for you, or you have any other symptoms that won't go away, yes you should contact your GP. Especially if you're over 50 and have a family history of ovarian or breast cancer.

WHAT WILL MY GP DO?

Your GP will ask you about your symptoms and general health, feel your abdomen to check for lumps and swelling, do an internal examination, discuss your family history and take a blood test

The blood test will test for CA125, which is produced by some ovarian cancer cells. A high level may be a sign of ovarian cancer, but it can also be caused by other conditions such as endometriosis, fibroids and even pregnancy. If it is raised you will be referred for an ultrasound scan. If any

abnormalities are found after this you will be referred on to a specialist for further tests.

HOW WILL IT BE TREATED?

Surgery is the main treatment, with the aim being to remove all or as much of the cancer as possible. It usually involves removing both ovaries and fallopian tubes and the womb. Surgery may also be done in combination with chemotherapy.

RECOVERY

Surgery to treat ovarian cancer is major, and can take up to three months to recover. You will be supported by a healthcare team, you may need to take time off work, may not be able to drive for around a month and asked to avoid heavy lifting for at least three months.

If both your ovaries have been removed and you have not been through the menopause, you will experience it after treatment. Your GP may suggest taking HRT to control any menopausal symptoms, until you reach the natural age for the menopause.

Dealing with cancer can be difficult for you and your family both physically and emotionally. Talking to someone can help. If you'd like to talk to us about it, give us a ring on **0800 389 8820**.

Useful websites:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/ovarian-cancer/>

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/ovarian-cancer>

Shout+

Retire, renew, refresh, review and rewind

FLASH BACK

A photographic flashback to a moment in time, supplied by the Shout+ community. This issues' contributions come from two retired London Fire Brigade firefighters, Andy Poole and David Hunt.



Wood you believe it?!

In 1992, London Fire Brigade firefighter Andy Poole came up with an imaginative way to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity with help from his Green Watch Crew. Here, in his own words, he explains how an idea and a trip to Homebase resulted in a fundraising total of £200,000.

"In 1992, as a serving firefighter of Beckenham Fire Station and Area Secretary for the then Fire Services National Benevolent Fund, I thought we needed an edge when collecting. As our station had lost one of its fire engines due to cutbacks, I decided to create a collection box that looked like a fire engine and transport it around London. With help from the Green Watch I drew some plans up, and as usual with Fire Brigade stealth we put this idea to our local Homebase manager, and he gave us all the wood we needed for the build to take place. Badges, lettering, strobe lights and paint were donated by

workshops. We were even given a caravan to transport the little fire engine about.

"London Fire Brigade's Flag Days had been going on for a few years and were set up so that fire stations across Central and Greater London could hold annual collections for the Charity. The fire station which raised the most amount for the Charity was awarded a Flag Day certificate. We thought this was the perfect opportunity to showcase our little fire engine.

"In the 24 years that the Flag Days in London lasted, our fire engine was used by many stations to draw in the crowds and raised over £200,000 for the Charity.

"The photo shows a Senior Officer who presented a Flag Day Certificate to the Homebase Manager and Green Watch who were, from left to right: -Paul Weatherley, Johnny Button, Mick Sayer, Colin Hitchins, Russel Williams, Gary Jones, Derek Bryant, Mark Ford, and me."

Bikini boys

This image was sent to us by David Hunt showing him with three other members of Woodside Fire Station during Civil Defence Training on a 'Bikini Unit' at Woolwich Dockyard in 1967.

David explains what is happening in this photograph: "The rubber rafts were used to draw water from any open water supply and a portable pump was used for both pumping or propulsion by use of a jet at the back of the craft."



From left to right: Pat Millea, David Hunt (hand on tiller), Bob Kneller and Keith Wonham

Gift of a lifetime

By making the incredible decision to remember us in your will, you'll be leaving a legacy that will last a lifetime for future beneficiaries. Whether it's a percentage of your estate or a fixed sum, leaving a gift in your will is a

wonderful way to recognise the role that the fire services community has played in your life. Find more information on our website, where you can also order a free, no obligation will-making guide. Visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/wills



NARF CORNER – The latest from the National Association of Retired Firefighters.



Ian Ferguson, Editor of NARF News, shares some personal insights into retiring, with tips on how to fully embrace the opportunities that retirement brings.

I've been retired now for almost 12 years, having served for over 34 years in the fire service. I've seen lots of former colleagues leave the service and I've seen how they've dealt with retirement. Some viewed it with dread, thinking that life was over and there was nothing left to look forward to and others viewed it as a new chapter in their lives and they embraced it and enjoyed it.

I guess it all boils down to what type of mentality you have, whether you're a half full or half empty type. It's all about being positive. My view is that positive actions never came from negative thoughts, if you think positive, you'll act positive and positive things will happen. Like everything in life, if you view it with a positive mindset, it's a fair bet that there'll be a positive outcome. There's good to be drawn from every situation.

It's important that when you retire you have a reason to get up in the morning. I'm never

bored and the days just aren't long enough for me. When I retired, I took to it like a duck to water and viewed it as a new beginning, not the end. In fact, looking back, I don't know how I fitted my job in the Fire Brigade in! It's important to have as many interests as possible. I'm fortunate to live on the edge of a nature reserve, so I am a volunteer warden in there and I walk round the reserve every day, getting up at 0530. I also enjoy music and play the saxophone, I edit the NARF News magazine and run my local branch of NARF. It actually got to the point where I had so much to do that I had to cut back on some things, just so that now and again, I could get a bit of free time to relax and unwind. So I resigned as a Magistrate, School Governor and National Cycle Network ranger. But even doing that, I am still as busy as ever. I have a part time job delivering prescriptions to people a couple of days a week. It's not just for the money that I do that (although the little extra

pay does help), but a big plus for me is that it gets me out, meeting people and doing a bit of good in my home town.

There's always something to do in the house or garden (my wife sees to that!), but even without that, if you're looking for something positive to do to put something back, there are so many charities out there that need volunteers. There is bound to be something out there for you to get involved with and to fulfil your interests, it's just a question of looking round for something that pushes your buttons.

So, don't view retirement as a negative, everyone has something to give. I knew one older guy who said to me; "Don't let the chair get you. Once that happens you'll seize up, both mentally and physically." I've never forgotten those words and I am determined to keep as active as I can for as long as I can and I am not going down without a fight! I fully intend to grow old disgracefully!

Living Well Group Latest

Our Living Well Groups are free to attend and welcome all retired beneficiaries and spouses/partners. It's a great opportunity to share experiences of life in the fire service and catch up with old friends, or make new ones.

We must say a big thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers who help out at every event. Clare Hannaford, our Communities Development Lead, explains; "We can't run our groups in the community without our volunteers. We have an increasing band of amazing, dedicated people who turn up every month to host our groups. It's a privilege to work with them and I'm grateful for all that they do."

Our confirmed events throughout 2020 are in Stowmarket, Worcester, Manchester, Aberdare, Mitcham, Exeter, Taunton, Amphil, Lanark and Merseyside.

To enquire about dates for the locations above, or to volunteer for future Living Well Groups, email Clare at channaford@firefighterscharity.org.uk



Life partners

When life takes an unexpected turn, our Welfare Services team is here to help. Working in communities across the UK, it helps individuals, couples and families to find solutions to life's hardships, stresses and strains.

There isn't a single person on the planet who hasn't found themselves thrown at some point by the unpredictability of life. Sudden illness, injury, bereavement or financial issues, for example, can impact us all – often at the most inconvenient and disruptive of times. The impact of these life changing circumstances can also often leave us feeling stressed and isolated, unsure where to turn or how to cope.

It's at these times that The Fire Fighters Charity can help, providing support to help in your physical and psychological recovery, but also providing additional support to help get your life back on track. Our Welfare Services team exists to help you pick up the pieces, as our Welfare Services Lead, Carrie Pearce, explains:

"Unforeseen things happen to everybody at some point in their life and can be just as disruptive as a physical injury.

So it's our role to support beneficiaries as they navigate their way through them. We support, advise and signpost, trying to empower people to be as independent as possible while they adapt to their change of circumstance."

This can include signposting to advice, providing information on statutory entitlements, taking action to alleviate financial hardships, aiding independent living, offering support in your home following ill health or helping you through a bereavement.

"Everyone deserves a basic standard of living and we bring this support out to people's communities," says Carrie. "No two people are the same, therefore no two packages of support are the same, nor are the lengths of time we'll take to work with a beneficiary. The variety of what we do is immense and the skills and knowledge of the team is incredibly in depth."



The Welfare Services team treat every case on an individual basis and rely on a network of community volunteers around the country to assist with home visits. As soon as a referral is made to the team, it will be picked up by a case worker who will get in touch with the beneficiary to decide the best course of action.

"Our case management ensures people get the interventions that best meet their specific needs," says Carrie. "People come to us with

multiple needs; for example a debt situation could mean someone faces becoming homeless. In the short-term we would make sure they have somewhere to sleep and food to eat. In the long-term we might help financially with a security deposit on a property and vouchers to buy some household essentials, while consulting a debt agency for advice on preventing it happening again. There may be mental or physical health issues that have led to the debt situation or caused a



relationship breakdown, for example, so we also work closely with our psychological and physical teams for their input."

As well as liaising with internal specialists, the team also works closely with statutory services, occupational health teams, physios, occupational therapists, social workers and GPs; "When it comes to the people we work with to try and find the right solution for each beneficiary, the list is endless. Every case is treated differently and rather than put people into boxes we take a holistic approach, looking at the whole picture, working with the whole family or support network to get the best possible outcome."

Recent cases have included providing Sainsbury's vouchers for people struggling to put food on the table; organising for specialist equipment to help families with complex health conditions; installing stair lifts and wet rooms and even sourcing martial arts classes to help someone improve their social network after the death of their partner.

"We deal with the invisible problems that may sound small but have a huge impact on people's wellbeing," says Carrie. "Their stories aren't big dramatic ones on a grand scale; these are ordinary people dealing with the ordinary problems that all of us experience."

Arthur and Susan Stubbington are one such couple who have benefited from the help of the Welfare Services team. Married



for over 50 years, the couple live in Southampton where Arthur served as a firefighter from 1962 until his retirement.

Susan cares for Arthur, who has dementia and sometimes gets confused about certain things. When she tripped on her back step and broke her wrist, the prospect of leaving Arthur to visit one of our centres for the rehabilitation she needed was an impossible one. During a home visit to organise care in the community and a local physio, Carrie



quickly realised there was more the Charity could do to support the couple.

"While she was here, she realised we were having real difficulties getting Arthur up and down the stairs," says Susan. "The Charity offered to put a stair lift in, which has been a blessing. He had a two-week stay in hospital and, if we hadn't had the stairlift, we'd have had to put a bed downstairs, because he was unable to get up the stairs without it. I think the Charity

is amazing; they don't just look after those in the brigade today, they look after oldies like us! I never thought that would be the case. There's not a big enough thank you I can give to convey our thanks to Carrie and the team."

If you think you could benefit from the help of the Welfare Services team, or from The Fire Fighters Charity generally, get in touch today on **0800 3898820** or by visiting **firefighterscharity.org.uk/support**.





Hi again everyone, how you doing? I love this time of year, the days are getting longer, it's a bit warmer and the next issue of *Shout!* means that I get another chance to share some of my favourite puzzles, facts and jokes with you. You can share yours with me too, just ask an adult to email them to me at blaze@firefighterscharity.org.uk and I'll share as many as I can in the next issue. Have fun!

Blaze Bear



Wordsearch and Rescue

I've hidden 10 fun sporting activities inside this grid, all are brilliant ways to stay fit and have lots of fun this summer. Can you find them all?

ATHLETICS	HOCKEY	TENNIS
BADMINTON	NETBALL	WALKING
CRICKET	RUGBY	
FOOTBALL	SWIMMING	

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

Ten To Spot

Trying on firefighting gear is great fun, as this young chap found out at Shadwell fire station last year. But can you spot the 10 differences between the two images?



Stuck in a muddle

Anagrams are words that have been muddled up. Can you unscramble these anagrams to find the five hidden firefighting words?

SHOE

THEGRIFFIRE

LEHEMT

MLAFE

OSMKE

Blaze's Banter

These jokes are brilliant, I tried them out on the people in the *Shout!* office and they loved them! What's your favourite joke? Email it to me at Blaze@firefighterscharity.org.uk and I'll put it in the next issue.

What do you call a cow on a trampoline?

A milk shake

What do you call a dog magician?

A labracadabrador

Why didn't the orange win the race?

It ran out of juice

Why are ghosts bad liars?

Because you can see right through them

Fact or fiction: The work of a firefighter

I've dug up 10 cracking facts about some of the incredible things that firefighters do as part of their job, but not all these are actually true. Can you tell which are true and which are false?

1. Firefighters give people advice about planning escape routes from their homes, schools and workplaces, in case of a fire.
2. Firefighters encourage people to test their smoke alarms regularly
3. Firefighters only eat food that can be cooked in a fire
4. Firefighters respond to road, rail and air traffic accidents as well as fires
5. Firefighters help people affected by floods
6. Firefighters all drive red cars
7. Firefighters need to be physically fit
8. Firefighters helmets are actually made of marzipan
9. Firefighters regularly attend schools to talk to children about fire safety
10. Firefighters donate money and fundraise to help other firefighters when they need support from The Fire Fighters Charity.

Blaze's Spring into Summer Challenge

Summer's on its way, so now is the perfect time of year to get out and about and find new ways to get active. My challenge to you is therefore to see if you can find – and take part in – 10 different sporty activities over the next few months. You could do all the things you normally do - such as swimming, if you're a swimmer, or a spot of football if you're a footballer – but why not also try things you've never done before?

Could you go walking in the mountains with mum and dad, or try your hand at a spot of tennis or badminton? How about swapping your scooter for some roller blades, or your bike for a pogo stick?

There are loads of things you could do to ensure you stay active, fit and healthy, and you could always insist that your grown-ups take part too!

Win your own Blaze Bear

Thanks for all the pics you've sent in over the last few months, I've really enjoyed seeing them and am hugely impressed with how good your drawing skills are. Much better than mine! We're pulling together an online gallery of all the amazing pictures and photos you send us, so keep them coming. You can take a photo or scan your pictures and ask an adult to help you email them to me at Blaze@firefighterscharity.org.uk. I'll pick a winner for the next issue and, if chosen, you'll win your own Blaze Bear. Good luck gang.



Answers: Stuck in a muddle: Hose, firefighter, helmet, smoke, flame, fire. Fact or fiction: The true facts were 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10

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& PARTNERS



Win a Waitrose & Partners gift voucher worth £40

Waitrose & Partners is kindly offering *Shout!* readers an opportunity to win a £40 gift card to be used at any John Lewis or Waitrose store nationwide.

To win this great prize, simply send your answer to the question below, together with your name, address and contact phone number to: shout@firefighterscharity.org.uk

Question: In January we celebrated a record-breaking year for our Bag it and Bank it Recycling campaign, but how much did we raise in total?

- A) £56,295
- B) £68,145
- C) £70,322

The winner will be picked at random from all correct entries received on or before 30 September 2020 and will be notified via email or telephone.

The gift card can be redeemed at any John Lewis or Waitrose store across the UK. Employees of The Fire Fighters Charity are ineligible to enter this competition.

Your information: The information you provide will be used by the Charity to fulfil your request. Your details may be used to keep you informed about the Charity – please call 01256 366 566 if you do not wish us to contact you. Our privacy policy can be viewed in full at www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/privacy

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CODE SHOUT 100

you


the garden

— **9.7** *and* *between* the *columns*.

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