



ROYAL AIR FORCE CENTRAL FUND INFO PACK



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ABOUT THE RAF CENTRAL FUND

The RAF Central Fund is dedicated to providing support to serving RAF personnel by developing their full potential through sport and physical activities. From our origins in 1919, through to the present day, we remain steadfast in our duty to support those who serve in the RAF.

VISION

For serving RAF personnel to develop through sport and physical activities.

MISSION

To enable serving RAF personnel to access sporting opportunities and physical activities.

IMPACT STATEMENT

The RAF Central Fund is an independent charity that supports serving personnel through grant funding to enable them to take part in sports and physical activities at all levels. We want everyone in the RAF regardless of their role, rank, physical ability or competing level to have access to sports facilities, equipment, and training and through our support we help to safeguard their health and wellbeing.

OUR HISTORY

The heritage of our charity can be traced back to 1919, just one year after the formation of the Royal Air Force, when disbanded mess funds were brought together to support the serving community. These mess funds have been invested over the years and continue to enable us to carry out our charitable work through grant funding.

When the Central Fund celebrated its Centenary in 2019, our mission was updated and we streamlined our support to focus on sport and physical activities, with the knowledge that the broader welfare support we had funded previously could be provided by the other RAF Charities.

The RAF Sports Lottery has for many years been the principal generator of charitable income outside of our Fund's investments. Even prior to the Central Fund's updated mission, the Lottery has been a vital funding stream for sport and physical activities across the RAF. In its first iteration the weekly draw was run internally and players paid for their tickets through JPA but in 2016 the Sports Lottery was outsourced to an external charity lottery provider, Sterling Lotteries, enabling players to pay by Direct Debit and allowing former serving to continue to play after they have left the RAF.



CHARITABLE SUPPORT

SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS

Sport in the military makes a significant contribution to the delivery of operational capability and is therefore recognised as a core activity in all the UK Armed Forces. Whilst this status allows for some level of public funding, this is often limited and many sports including some of the RAF Sports Association disciplines are not eligible as they do not meet the criteria laid out in the Sport in the Armed Forces Directive (JSP660). This is where the RAF Central Fund is able to help by providing vital funding to the RAF's Sports Associations through grants based on each association's operating costs and levels of membership. Funding priorities are also given towards New Member Engagement with a view to encouraging as many serving personnel as possible to get involved with RAF Sport.

STATION/UNIT LEVEL FUNDING

The RAF Central Fund Enrichment Grant Programme supports personnel on a larger scale, traditionally awarding bids to stations and units to benefit the maximum number of personnel.

The objectives of the programme are to;

- Increase the number of serving personnel participating in sport and physical activities;
- Increase the provision of sport and physical activity opportunities on station/units;
- Provide an opportunity for RAF serving personnel to detach from operational demands;
- Provide positive experiences to support an increased sense of wellbeing;
- Provide an increased sense of inclusivity within the RAF serving community;
- Ensure RAF serving personnel feel valued.

The grant awards range from £50 - £50,000 and vary in size from support to a small station club to provision of a large facility on unit. Applications are considered by a Committee that meets at least twice a year and consists of serving representatives from all the Groups, Community Support and the Warrant Officer of the Royal Air Force.



INDIVIDUAL SPORTS GRANTS

This programme provides financial support to serving personnel to assist with their participation in a chosen sport or physical activity. Although most commonly used to support those who participate in sports recognised by the Armed Forces Sports Board, the grant programme is available to serving personnel participating in any sport, as part of the RAF or in their personal time.

Our funding assists personnel with the cost of sporting activities such as kit, specialist equipment or competition and event fees. Funding must only be requested for such items or activities that are deemed to be essential for participation in the applicants chosen sport or physical activity. Supplementary funding is available based on the number of lottery tickets held by the applicant and cannot be awarded retrospectively.

MECHANICS ENDOWMENT FUND

The Mechanics Endowment Fund (MEF) is a restricted fund available exclusively for the benefit of personnel undergoing Phase 1 or Phase 2 training within the RAF. The Fund is used for the provision of facilities and amenities for their education and recreation in order to support their physical and mental wellbeing.

Moneys were originally endowed within the Fund to provide welfare for mechanics undergoing specialist training within the RAF. The object of MEF was widened in 2006 to support all personnel undergoing Phase 1 and Phase 2 training within the RAF, with a priority given to those training as mechanics and technicians.

Grants are assessed to meet the aims of the Fund and can be for a one-off project or activity or to meet the ongoing costs of regular activities. Activities recurring on an annual basis require an annual submission for funding.



DEPLOYED OPERATIONS WELFARE FUND

The RAF Deployed Operations Welfare Fund (DOWF) is available to provide a quick and flexible response to meet the needs of those on operations and exercises in the UK and overseas. The Fund designates an annual allocation to SO1 A1 Ops to be expended on sport and physical activity items or activities which cannot be supported from other funds.

EXPEDITIONARY WELFARE FUND

The RAF Expeditionary Welfare Fund (EWF) is a funding source designed for small scale projects in theatre. All funding applications should maximise the welfare benefit to RAF personnel through the encouragement, support and facilitation of sport in the RAF, thereby promoting military efficiency, esprit de corps, teamwork and mental and physical stamina. Acting on behalf of the Fund, A1 Ops allocate the annual EWF budget to EAW Commanders for onward spend in theatre.

OTHER INITIATIVES

As well as supporting personnel through our traditional grant funding programmes, we also team up with corporate providers of fitness equipment, technology, online workout platforms and kit to provide discounted and subsidised solutions to our beneficiaries. Recent lockdown campaigns with Myzone and Les Mills on Demand have supported and motivated thousands of serving personnel to workout at home when access to Stations gyms has been restricted and RAF Sport has been put on hold.



SUPPORT CASE STUDIES

SUPPORTING ESPORTS



Esports facility at RAF Halton

The RAF Central Fund awarded the RAF Video Gaming and Esports Association (RAFVEA) a significant grant in order to set up station clubs across the Air Force with appropriate kit. The community it has created has proved invaluable in combating isolation as well as encouraging members to participate in other sports and physical activities. Since its creation, there have been numerous cross over events held between the RAFVEA and Sports Associations such as the collaboration with Cycling to deliver Esports competitions during lockdown.

Additional funding saw the provision of a virtual reality dodgeball style game called HADO. This mobile kit is designed to travel around Stations, maximising the number of serving personnel benefitting from the world’s first ever physical esports using augmented reality.



HADO kit in action at RAF Odiham

FALKLANDS CHALLENGE T-SHIRTS

To reward and motivate British Forces and Atlantic Islands personnel taking on the Falklands Challenge, a gym based event designed to combat isolation and encourage exercise, the RAF Central Fund awarded t-shirts to those completing the event. The challenge itself saw participants use a treadmill, or spinning bike to cover 574 kilometres by land as well as swimming or using a rowing machine to cover 62 kilometres by water. This motivational challenge proved especially important during the winter months when spending elongated periods outside to exercise can be difficult.



Challenge t-shirts supplied to BFSAI participants of the Falklands Challenge

RAF BOULMER SADDLE CLUB

The saddle club at RAF Boulmer has a strong membership base and can be credited with getting a fair number of serving personnel into the sport of equitation through its regular taster sessions and 'have a go' events. The saddle club successfully applied for an enrichment grant for triple jumps which can be used for all levels, from those just learning to ride to those show jumping at RAF representative level.



Triple jumps at RAF Boulmer

MUDGUARD FACILITY AT RAF HONINGTON



Phase 2 trainees at the opening of RAF Honington's Mudguard Facility

RAF Honington's Mudguard Facility was supported by the RAF Central Fund through the Mechanics Endowment Fund. This welfare facility is an alcohol-free, safe facility enjoyed by Phase 2 trainees undergoing training. The bespoke area allows them to decompress during the evenings and at weekends.

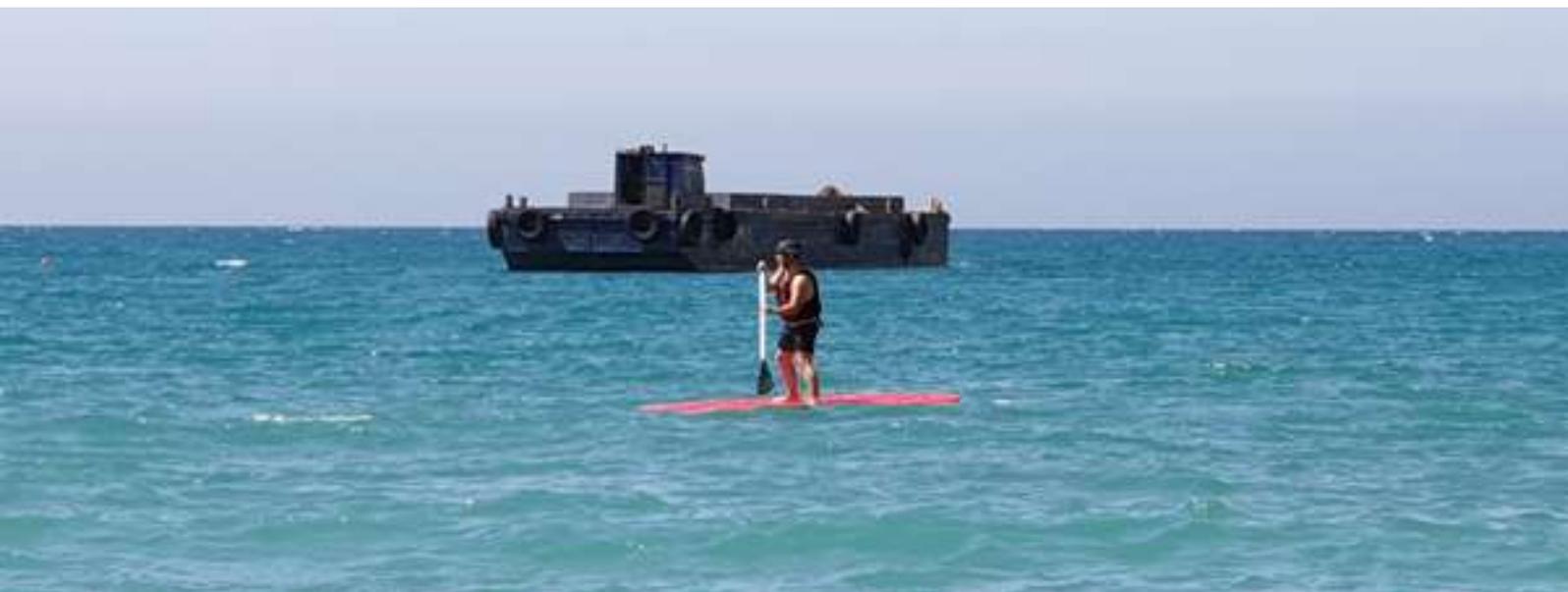
COSFORD KART CLUB'S MECHANICS TRAINEE SCHOLARSHIP

RAF Cosford Kart Club provides a Mechanics Trainee scholarship which is supported through our Mechanics Endowment Fund. The Phase 2 trainees, pictured here alongside Group Captain Bryant, have graduated from the course which teaches them how to maintain and build the karts. As a result of this programme there has been an influx of personnel who are now equipped with the skills to increase the longevity of karts and support their Station kart clubs.



SUPPORTING THOSE ON DEPLOYMENT

Opportunities for serving personnel to decompress whilst on deployment are greatly valued and this is where the RAF Central Fund's Deployed Operations Welfare Fund can help. One such opportunity presented itself when 903 EAW Cyprus Typhoon Detachment requested support to run a watersports and stand up paddle boarding day which was well received by all taking part.



OUR PROPERTIES

The RAF Central Fund is the custodian of three properties all of which are owned and operated by the Fund. Whilst the properties differ in their offerings, they are all united by the fact that they provide sport and outdoor pursuits facilities.

VINE LANE CRICKET GROUND

The Fund's county-level standard cricket ground and pavilion is home to the RAF Cricket Association and is situated in Uxbridge, Middlesex.



DANESFIELD WATERSPORTS CENTRE

The Fund's watersports centre is home to RAF Rowing and Canoeing as well as serving as a Force Development facility in partnership with 22 Group and the Robson Academy. Danesfield is located in Medmenham on the bank of the River Thames in Buckinghamshire.



FESHIEBRIDGE LODGES

Recently redeveloped by the RAF Central Fund, Feshiebridge Lodges offer beautifully designed accommodation to be enjoyed by RAF personnel, their families, friends and anyone else who wishes to unwind and explore the spectacular Cairngorms National Park. The accommodation consists of four 3-bedroom lodges, a studio apartment and a 1 bedroom apartment. A 33% discount is available for all serving personnel wishing to make a booking.



FUNDRAISING

SPORTS LOTTERY

The RAF Sports Lottery is the Central Fund's principal fundraising tool, generating vital funds not only for the Sports Associations but anyone who is currently serving in the RAF and wishes to get involved in sport of a physical activity at any level. The Lottery is run for us by an external charity lottery provider, Sterling Lotteries and is licensed and regulated by the Gambling Commission.

The Sports Lottery is open to all serving RAF personnel including those undergoing Phase 1 training and reservists as well as former serving. Tickets cost £1 each and are paid for monthly by Direct Debit with a maximum holding of 6 tickets per player. Registration is a simple digital process via the RAF Central Fund website and once in the game, players have a chance of winning the weekly jackpot of £10,000 or another of the 20 cash prizes given out each week. So not only can they show their support for a charity that supports the RAF they also have a great chance of winning a cash prize.



FUNDRAISING CHALLENGES

As a registered charity focused on sport and physical activity, we also encourage our supporters to fundraise for us by taking on a personal or team challenge. We provide help with entrance fees, charity places in national challenges, advice on how to fundraise and donation platforms such as Just Giving.

AMAZON SMILE

With more and more people shopping online the RAF Central Fund has registered with Amazon Smile, an initiative that sees our charity receive donations through purchases made on their AmazonSmile site or by turning on AmazonSmile in the Amazon Shopping app. We ask anyone wishing to support our charity to remember to make their Amazon purchases through www.smile.amazon.co.uk.

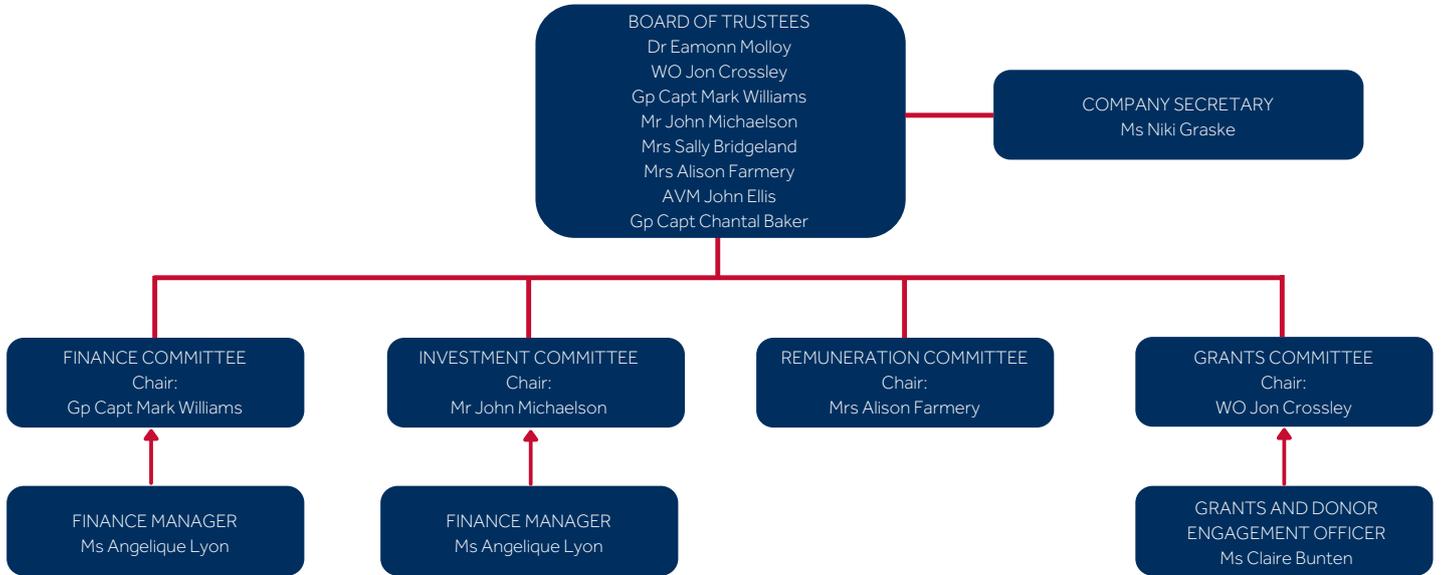
SPECIALIST SPORTS

Recognising the importance of physical activity to those serving in the Royal Air Force and with an opportunity to support the charity that is the lifeline for RAF Sport, Specialist Sports has come on board as the RAF Central Fund's preferred supplier of footwear, clothing and equipment.

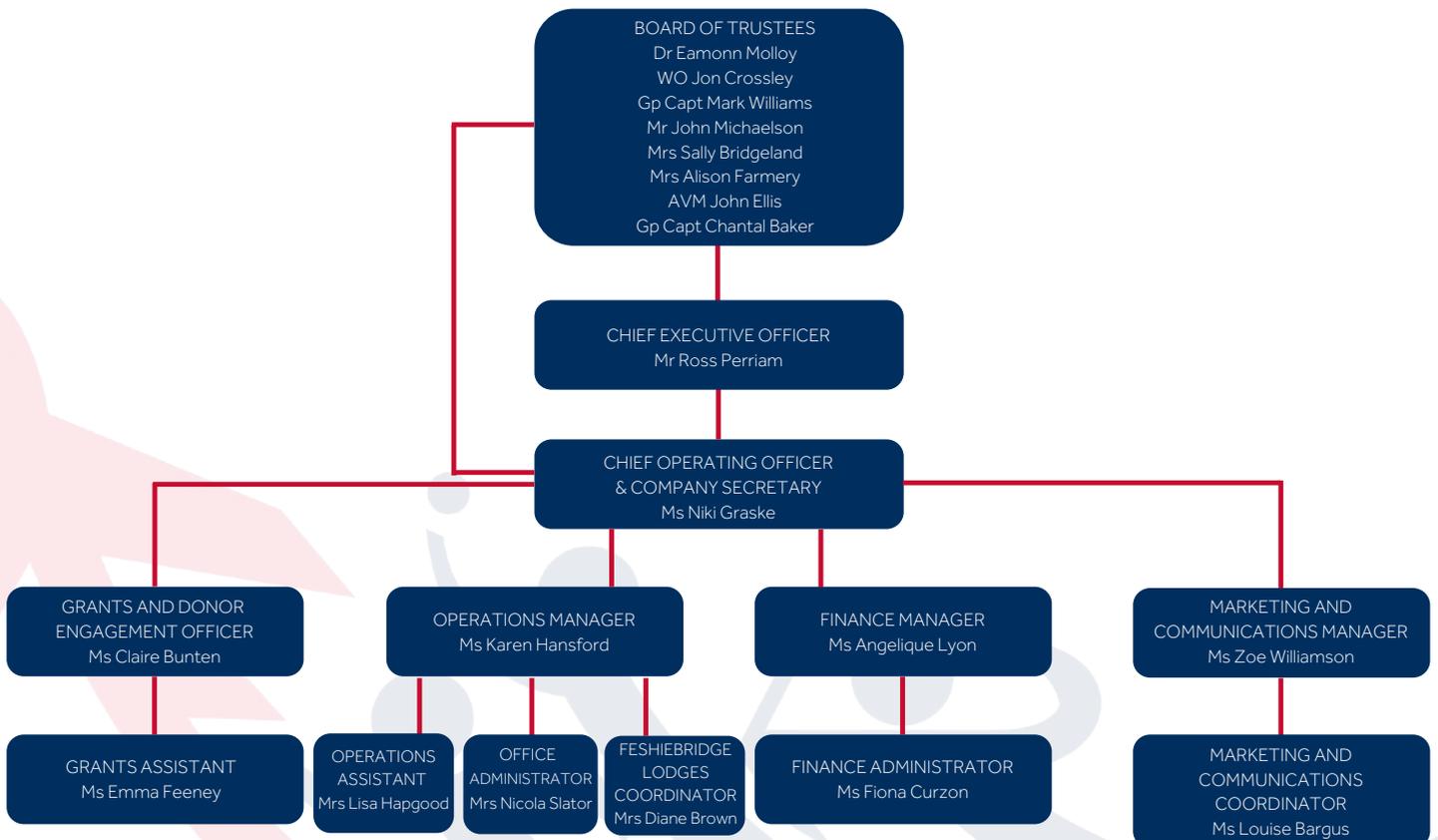
By teaming up with one of the country's best suppliers of adidas products, the Fund is able to offer serving personnel applying for individual support a large range of footwear, clothing and equipment from more than 10 adidas performance sports categories. Every purchase made through Specialist Sports' online store (<https://sponsored.specialistsports.com/raf>) will see the sports distributor make a charitable donation to the RAF Central Fund so that we can further our mission to support sport and physical activities across the RAF.



CHARITY STRUCTURE



TEAM STRUCTURE





RAF Central Fund Danesfield
New Lock Lane
Henley Road
Medmenham
SL7 2EY
01494 569068
www.rafcf.org.uk



RAFCentralFund

The RAF Sports Lottery operates as a society lottery within the Royal Air Force Central Fund and is licensed and regulated by the Gambling Commission (www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk).
The Royal Air Force Central Fund is a company registered in England and Wales 8552984. Charity registered in England and Wales 1052960. Charity registered in Scotland SC044299.

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