

Royal Air Forces Association Hartlepool Branch

The Charity that supports
the RAF Family



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

March 2026

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Branch AGM was held on Tuesday 10 February, at Olde Durhams Social Club in Hartlepool. It was attended by 17 members who received the reports of the Branch activities in the previous year and plans for the future of the Branch.



Our long standing welfare officer and treasurer, David Stacey, stood down from all his committee roles at this meeting and handed over to those roles to replacements, Ian Straughan and Janice Wilson-Pinchin respectively, who have been undertaking training and shadowing in recent months. Other members of the committee were re-elected and there were no volunteers to take on Branch duties. The expected address by the RAFA area representative did not take place as no one arrived. Branch membership was confirmed at 255 including 113 currently serving. Vice Chairman, Paul Rodway, was nominated as Branch representative for this year's area and national conference events.

WRAF BRANCH AGM

On Saturday 28 February 2026 the WRAF Branch of RAFA held it's AGM at The Golden Lion Hotel in Northallerton. Making the journey 'south' to join the 60+ attendees were four of our stalwarts, Maggie, Pauline, Joan and Janice. Taking place over three nights, the event was a fantastic opportunity to catch up and connect with friends and colleagues and finished with a Gala Dinner. No visit to Northallerton would be complete without a trip to Bettys Cafe Tea Rooms (other cafés are available). The WRAF Branch is already planning next year's AGM which will take place in Lincoln on 27 February 2027 and a great time is guaranteed!!



The Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA) is a membership organisation of serving and former members of the RAF, their families and dependents and those supporting the aims of the Association. The Branch would welcome more ex RAF personnel and people who would be interested in supporting the Association in attending social events or assisting with collections in various locations. The Branch now covers an area from Seaham in the North to Whitby in the south excluding Stockton on Tees.

BRANCH STALWART STANDS DOWN

A gentleman who has been a Branch member for longer than even he cares to remember has handed over his last responsibilities to the next generation. David Stacey joined Hartlepool Branch after a successful RAF career, rising to Warrant Officer. David has seen many changes, from the town's busy RAFA Club to the almost closure of the Branch and has served in every committee position over the years. David's caring and outgoing nature brought him to the post of Welfare Officer, which he has held for many years, often in conjunction with another post. Over his tenure he has overseen the relief of many RAF Veterans from distress, and with help continued throughout the pandemic to ensure that single veterans, especially those who lived alone, were not without some human contact and help when needed.



At the Branch AGM, David completed the handover of his welfare and treasurer duties to the new officers. He is not leaving the Branch, and will remain as a guiding light and mentor to us all. Thank you David. You have set a very high standard for all your successors.

80th Anniversary Celebration

You are warmly invited to join us for an evening of dining, entertainment and celebration



To mark the **80th Anniversary of the RAFA Hartlepool Branch**, founded on **29 October 1946**.

We look forward to celebrating this special milestone with you.

Dress Code

Gentlemen: Lounge suits; Regimental blazers or Mess Dress,
Ladies: Cocktail dress. Medals optional

Friday 30th October 2026, 1900-2300, at Hartlepool Yacht Club, TS24 OSP

**Further details on ticketing, meal choices and the programme for the event will be published in the June newsletter.*

Please register your interest to attend by email to; treasurer@hartlepoolrafa.com or 07864857186

BRANCH PHONE CHANGE

The Branch mobile phone, which is available to all members as a direct and welfare contact has changed. The new number with immediate effect is; 07751 032567. Please update your contact list. Thank you.

VETERANS SPORTS FUND

On the 15 December the Branch presented £1000 donation to the Hartlepool Utd FC Veterans Sports Fund. The donation will help fund the sporting and social activities enjoyed by our members and families.

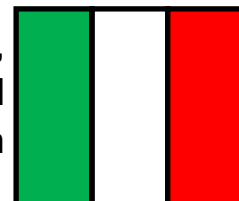


A Wings Appeal collection was held at Morrisons, Hartlepool on Valentines Day, 14 February. The total raised was £482.37p. Thanks to Morrisons and all who assisted with the collection and who donated to our appeal. Our next collection is on

Saturday 11 April at ASDA superstore, Peterlee. Come and support us if you can.

FOUR SEASONS LUNCH

The quarterly 'Four Seasons' lunch was held at Sambuca on Church Road, Hartlepool on 21 February. Nine branch members enjoyed Italian food and good banter. The next lunch is on 16 May at 1:30 pm. Please book with Hazel to ensure a place.



In Memoriam

The Branch marks with sadness the passing of these Members.
We will remember them.

Olwen Wells, LACW 2816537 d. 16 Feb 2026 aged 92

Admin clerk served 1952—1958

John Caldicott, 256589, d. 12 Feb 2026 aged 80



LOOKING FORWARD

There are two memorial events in the next quarter, which are regularly attended by Branch members; ANZAC day, 25 April and RCAF memorial, 13 June. The Branch has been invited to partake in the latter event at Teesside Airport. Details to be confirmed at a future Branch meeting.

ANZAC Day is marked by a ceremony at Chevington Cemetery, Broomhill, Northumberland. Details be confirmed at a future Branch meeting.

Wings Appeal. Our next collection is on Saturday 11 April at ASDA superstore, Peterlee. Come and support us if you can.

SOCIAL EVENTS

The Branch has comprehensive range of social activities, to which all members are invited. Here are some items to look forward to in 2026.

Breakfast Club - a morning to catch up with friends and enjoy a leisurely breakfast at Brewers Fayre, Old West Quay, Hartlepool from 9:00 am on the first Saturday of each month. Pay on the day. Our reserved tables are now wheelchair accessible. At December's Breakfast Club we had 30 people including members and families. Come along and join us, even if you cannot make the Branch meetings, you are welcome.

4 Seasons Lunch - Pizza and Pasta in a relaxed and convivial atmosphere at Sambuca, Church Street, Hartlepool. Saturdays at 1:30 pm on 16 May, 15 August and 21 November. Pay on the day. From £9.95 for 2 courses.

Garden Party - Saturday 25 July 2026, at 2:00 pm, 14 Oxford Street, Hartlepool. Theme TBD. Any ideas for a theme to Hazel please.

Christmas Lunch - Saturday 12 December 2026 at 1:30pm. Details will be available in October. Yes, we book early to avoid disappointment.

Branch 80th Anniversary. Hartlepool Branch was formed in 1946. Our 80th Anniversary Dinner will be held at Hartlepool Yacht Club on 30 October 2026. Further details on page 2 and more to follow.

Branch Meetings - Meetings are held at Olde Durhams Social Club, St. Aidans Street, Hartlepool on the second Tuesday of each month. The committee meets at 6:30 pm with the membership enjoying a quiz or other activities with drinks and nibbles from 7:00pm. Free street parking at rear.

Branch Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month from 7.00 pm

We meet at
Ye Olde Durham's Social Club
St. Aidans Street
Hartlepool TS25 1SN
Free street parking at rear

Contact Details

Phone: 07751 032567
or website
www.hartlepoolrafa.com