

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS



ESTABLISHED 1968
GOLDEN JUBILEE
YEAR
2018

MEMBER OF PUBLIC SERVICE PENSIONERS COUNCIL
AGE CONCERN FORUM
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF AGEING
NATIONAL PENSIONERS CONVENTION

Registered under the Data Protection Act 1998.

www.wmnarf.co.uk

JOHN LITTLETON CHAIRPERSON
WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH
ERDINGTON FIRE STATION
ORPHANAGE ROAD
ERDINGTON
BIRMINGHAM
B24 9HR

TEL: 0121 380 6059

E-MAIL :
retired.firefighters@wmfs.net

April 2019

Welcome to our Spring/Summer newsletter.

Chairman's Comments.

As another NARF year is well underway we have unfortunately lost the services of one of the founder members of the West Midlands Branch, who has decided to retire from NARF duties in Brian Wakefield.

It would be amiss in me if I did not say a few words on what Brian has brought to the association. Brian, in his time, has been National President, was the Association representative on the Public Services Council, National Pensioner Council, as well as being on the National General Purpose Committee and the Editorial Committee of the NARF News. At District level he was on No.4 District Committee as well as undertaking several roles on the West Midlands NARF Committee and the Birmingham Borough NARF Committee. He also attended the Erdington Office once a week to answer post and sort any problems or queries and played an integral part in organising the West Midlands NARF recruiting schemes.

On behalf of NARF I would like to thank Brian for all the hard work and effort he has put in over, just short of, 30 years.

I am sure all that know him will wish him well in his retirement from NARF and hope that he can now put his feet up.

John Littleton.

GDPR Regulations.

You may be aware that In May last year new regulations came into force regarding those organisations who hold databases for any reason.

The object of these new regulations is to protect the privacy of those people who's details we hold.

NARF are committed to protecting your privacy & keeping you informed of how your information is used.

Should any member wish us to remove their details from the database, as within their rights, we will do so but this will mean that newsletters, Christmas cards & magazines will stop being delivered and that we will not have any contact details for you.

Any member wishing to be removed from our database will need to contact the National & Branch Office of NARF at Erdington Fire Station, the details of which are at the top of this letter.

Details of our procedures regarding GDPR are held in a folder within the office as per the regulations.

NARF have included changes to procedures to address these regulations such as transparency, explaining your rights and other information to enable fair processing of your information. These were detailed in the last newsletter and are available from the office.

Prize Draw 2019.

It's the time of year again to promote our Annual Pensioners Prize Draw. Monies raised from this draw goes towards a Christmas gift for widows of ex-members. This shows that NARF have not forgotten them and that they are still part of 'the family'. Please find enclosed a book of draw tickets and the details of how to take part are on the last page of this newsletter.

Pensions/Payrolls

Members who are also members of the Sports & Social Death Levy Scheme may have noticed in their April wage slip that £4 has been taken instead of the usual £2. Paul Glynne (Pensions) confirms that this is because the payment was missed last month and so they have caught up this month. Paul apologies for the error.

Pensioners should shortly be receiving their 'Proof Of Living' forms from the Brigade. Please return these as soon as possible to ensure the continuation of pension payments. Those computer literate can reply by computer if preferred.

Station Updates.

The new Coventry Community Fire Station is now up and running. Crews and appliances moved into the new building before Christmas and crews are very happy with their facilities.

Work on the new build and refurbishment of Aston Fire Station continues.

Owing to the proximity of the proposed HS2 train line crossing the rear of the Headquarters Building in Nechells the Duel Fire Control Room has now been moved into the Headquarters building from the Safeside one. The control now features open plan facilities and both Staffordshire & West Midlands Control Room Staff seem satisfied with it.

Bows & Bell's Charity Dinner.

This year's event will be held at the Ramada Hotel, Penns Lane, Sutton Coldfield B76 1LH on Saturday 12th October 2019. The event commemorates Graham Bow MBE's connection with the Firefighters Charity & over the last four years has raised £25,000 for the Charity. Tickets have been kept to £40 each for a three course meal and a reception drink. Live music is provided. Tickets can be obtained from Lynn Bow on 0121 329 2825.

Firefighters Charity

As NARF works closely with the Firefighters Charity we have been asked by them to put this article in our newsletter to remind pensioners that they are still eligible for their services :-

John Lennon said 'life is what happens to you when you are busy making other plans'. If there's anyone who knows a thing or two about the unpredictability of life, it's the Fire Fighters Charity's Welfare Services team.

'Unforeseen things happen to everybody at some point in their 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' says Welfare Service Lead Carrie Donohue. 'We support, advise and signpost, trying to empower people to be as independent as possible while they adapt to their change of circumstances'.

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 incredible in it's depth'.

Despite only having five members of staff in the team, Welfare Services treat every single 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.

'All of our case management ensures people get the interventions that best meet their specific needs' say 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, and in the long term 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 GP's: '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 network to get the best possible outcome’.

Among cases the team have supported are ones where we have provided Sainsbury’s vouchers for people struggling to put food on the table, organizing for specialist equipment to help family members with complex health conditions, installing stair lifts and wet rooms, and even sourcing martial arts classes to help someone increase their social network after the death of their partner.

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

One couple who benefited from the help of the Welfare Services team is Arthur and Susan Stubbington. 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 at home so she could visit one of our centres for rehabilitation was an impossible one. During a home visit to organise care in the community and a local physio, Carrie quickly realized there was more the Charity could do to support the couple.

‘While she was here, she realized we were having difficulties getting Arthur up and down the stairs’, says Susan. ‘The Charity offered to put a stairlift in, which has been well I can’t tell you what a blessing it has been. 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 be able to convey our thanks to Carrie and the team’.

If you think you could benefit from the help of the Welfare Service Team, or from the Fire Fighters Charity generally, get in touch today on 0800 3898820.

What’s On

City Of Birmingham Chair Ian Forrester 0121 451 2086
Secretary Tom Hartley 0121 486 1987

Reunion & AGM 17th May ’19 Longbridge Social Club, Bristol Rd Sth. B31 2QU. 2pm.
Committee Meetings to be held at Erdington Office at 1100 hrs on 17/7/19, 11/9/19
& 6/11/19

City Of Coventry & Solihull Chair Ken Winters 20476 474086
Secretary Fred Tunstall 02476 222935

Committee Meetings 1/8/2019 & 7/11/2019

City Of Wolverhampton & Walsall

Chair John Littleton 01902 620649
 Secretary Gordon Sambrook

Committee Meetings held Jubilee Centre, Fallings Park Fire Station, Bushbury Road, Wolv.
 in June & October at 1930 hrs.

Dudley & Sandwell

Chair Jack Kernohan 0121 520 0408
 Secretary Steve Gray 0121 559 8124

Then Committee Meetings 11/6/19 Haden Cross, 15/10/19 Dudley & 4/2/20 Stourbridge
 all at 1930 hrs

Golf Day

The Firefighters Charity are organizing a Golf Day at Sutton Coldfield Golf Club. The event will take place on 18th July 2019 and is a 18 hole four ball competition with a two course evening meal, raffle, auction and prizes. Teams cost £220 (£55 each). Anyone interested should contact Debbie Rushbrook on drushbrook@firefighterscharity.org.uk

Fred Olsen Cruise Offer

Our Chair, John Littleton, recently attended a presentation by Fred Olsen Cruise Lines and is pleased to announce several offers that have been made to NARF members. This includes a 10% members discount for first 'sailors' with them. Family members may also be eligible for discount too !

Deaths

Unfortunately, we have to report the following deaths of ex-members and widows since our last newsletter.

Gentlemen

Julian Smith	BFAS / WMFS	LF BAS HQ
William Glynn	Lancs FB, BFAS, WMFS	FF HQ
Graham Burrett	WMFS	FF C8 Billesley
John Dolman	Walsall FB / WMFS	SubO E1 Walsall
Horace Randle	Smethwick & W.Brom, Essex, W.Brom FB's / WMFS	Lfm D Div HQ
Ronald Partridge	Smethwick & W. Brom FB, Warley FB, WMFS	FF D1 Oldbury
Brian McLuckie	Dudley FB / WMFS	Lfm D2 Brierley Hill
Dennis Bemand	N.F.S, BFAS, WMFS	SubO Handsworth
John Sharp	BFAS / WMFS	T/StnO C8 Billesley
Royston Tomlinson	Wolverhampton FB / WMFS	SubO E5 Wolv
Gordon Parr	BFAS / WMFS	SubO A3 Sutton
Terrence Harrison	Staffs FB / WMFS	FF E4 Aldridge
John Knight	Coventry FB / WMFS	SubO Bickenhill
Colin Whittington	WMFS	StnO Ladywood
Michael Harley	Dudley FB / WMFS	SubO Brierley Hill

Funeral Offer.

NARF have received an offer for 20% off funerals for serving, retired or family members of the WMFS from William Mitchell Funerals. Apparently, their family has a connection with the Fire Service. Funeral plans are also available. Their office is in the Aldridge area. Contact Alf or Donna on 01922 288599 for details. (Offer Code is WMF/19).

Website

Following some technical difficulties, our Website Manager John Littleton, has had to take down the site and carry out some updates. We apologise for any inconvenience caused. Following his hard work the website is now up and running again but the Website Address has changed to :-

www.wmnarf.co.uk

Change of Address

Please remember to inform both NARF and the Pensions Department at Headquarters if you change address or e-mail address. To inform Pensions just ring 0121 380 6933 or e-mail :-

pensions@wmfs.net

Prize Draw

Please find enclosed one book of draw tickets. Tickets are £1 so a book is £5.

Single tickets can be purchased. Please do your best to either sell them or buy some yourself but there is **NO** obligation to buy the tickets if you do not wish to.

1st Prize £500

2nd Prize £200

3rd Prize £100

4th Prize £50

10 Prizes Of £25

Please make cheques payable to 'WMFS Pensioners Association'

Put name & address or telephone number on the stub (small part) & return them to us in the envelope provided along with your remittance. Remember to put a stamp on the envelope and keep the main part of the ticket (large part) for your records.

Should you require any more tickets please contact the Draw Promoter Ian Forrester on 07930189337 or e-mail valandian@hotmail.co.uk

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT & GOOD LUCK !

This newsletter has been collated by Ian Forrester Chair of Birmingham Borough & West Midlands Committee member.

