



THE ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION LIMITED

WELFARE POLICY

1 Introduction

- 1.1 One of the important purposes for the existence of the Royal Sussex Regimental Association Limited (RSX RAL) is Welfare. We will take such action as is within the power of the Association to provide relief for those in need, distress, or hardship. As a member of the Association, you are entitled to receive prompt support for any legitimate request for assistance.
- 1.2 We work closely with a significant number of other charities that can provide a variety of services to veterans and their families. Many charities specifically look after the veteran community, but we can also approach relevant non-Service charities on your behalf. The assistance offered by our Association also extends to officers and other ranks who served in the Royal Sussex Regiment, who by choice or geographic location, are not a member of one of our Branches.
- 1.3 Self-harm amongst the veteran community continues to be a concern. The Association will endeavour to improve communication and relationships with other charities who can deliver specialist support. The Association believes that investment in reunion and other socialising activities delivers benefits in terms of support and help to those who are vulnerable.

2 Aim

- 2.1 Our aim is to provide fast, direct support to Royal Sussex Regiment veterans and Association members for the prevention or relief of poverty, the advancement of health, the relief of those in need by reason of age, ill health, disability, financial hardship, or disadvantage.

3 Eligibility

- 3.1 Our members have joined us from diverse backgrounds. Most have previous military service, but others have joined us because of family connections or an affinity to the Royal Sussex Regiment. For the purposes of benevolence, the Association members will fall into three categories:
 - 3.1.1 Royal Sussex Regiment veterans and their spouses or widows.
 - 3.1.2 Member (ex-service) and served in other Corps or Regiments including the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.
 - 3.1.3 Member (non-military) with no previous military service.



THE ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION LIMITED

3.2 All members who served in the Royal Sussex Regiment (Regular & Reserve) are automatically entitled to receive welfare support from the Association and Benevolent Fund once cases have been approved for action. The Benevolent Fund is administered by the Trustees of the PWRR Benevolent Fund and as a member of a forebear regiment, you are entitled to assistance from this fund. Other members of the Association will also be entitled to welfare support but their pathway to benevolence will generally take a different course.

4 The Scope of Benevolence & Welfare

4.1 The First Level. The Association will aim to help all members who require welfare support or benevolence. However, where financial assistance is required, the route for assistance will diverge as the Trustees of the relevant charitable funds will have to apply a strict criterion as to who they can assist. For example, regimental charities can only assist those who served under their cap badge. National charities such as SSAFA and RBL can only assist those who served in one of the branches of the armed forces. Where does this leave our members who have not served in the armed forces? In many cases they will have been a member of a trade or professional body or a staff association such as a Union. Many of these organisations can help with providing benevolence. The Association Welfare Director can make representations to these organisations on behalf of our members.

4.1.1 Usually, Branch Welfare Officers will be the point of contact for welfare matters appertaining to their Branch members. All members of the Association will be eligible to seek advice on issues that are adversely impacting upon their lives. Often, members may just need emotional support following a bereavement for example or when suffering from a serious illness. Ever since the original Association was formed, Branch members have pulled together and supported their colleagues through difficult times, and this will undoubtedly continue.

4.1.2 The extent to which we can provide welfare assistance and benevolence will vary because of experience, resources, and eligibility (benevolence cases). But, if we are not able to help or advise directly, we will try to find someone who can. Unfortunately, we are not able to provide advice on legal matters or debt management (where help with debt management is needed, we are able to signpost those organisations that provide free assistance).

4.1.3 As a matter of routine before Christmas each year, Branches may wish to assemble a list of Association members or their widows who are known to be in need, distress, or hardship and would welcome some additional help at Christmas. The type of support, whether monetary or for example, in the form of Christmas fare, will be at the discretion of Branches and will be paid for from



THE ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Branch funds. The Christmas Support Scheme is designed specifically to help those who are in financial difficulties and to make their needs less pressing during the festive season.

- 4.2 The Second Level. These will generally be the more serious cases and most instances will be referred to SSAFA. The type of cases falling within this category will be :
- 4.2.1 Grants for disability adaptation, mobility equipment, priority debts, food vouchers, clothing, and household necessities.
 - 4.2.2 Monthly annuities to the very old or sick.
 - 4.2.3 In cases involving financial assistance, it must be demonstrated that there is genuine hardship brought about through circumstances and not by the individual's own design. Most of the military charities are not able to assist with medical or dental treatment costs. Neither can they assist with legal fees.
 - 4.2.4 There may be other cases, which for example, could include mental health support, respite care and care top-up fees. This list is not complete and if advice is required, please contact the Association Welfare Director.
- 4.3 Confidentially & Privacy. Matters of health, welfare and benevolence appertaining to a member will in most cases fall within what is defined as sensitive personal data or special category data under General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR). Breaching GDPR is a criminal offence. This means that the information must be kept secure and not shared without the consent of the member. Branch Welfare Officers and committee members will need to be very careful as to how they process this information. Examples are :
- 4.3.1 A branch member, is taken into hospital. Their condition and health are discussed at Branch meetings. Information relating to health is sensitive personal data and we will need the member's permission to share it.
 - 4.3.2 A branch member's widow is receiving a food parcel funded by the Branch. We will need the widow's permission to share this information. It can be anonymised and shared by not naming the recipient of the benevolence.
 - 4.3.3 A branch member needs help with the funding of a wheelchair and approaches the Branch Welfare Officer, but he does not have the capacity of experience to deal with the member's case. The Branch Welfare officer will need the member's consent to pass on his personal information to the Association or other charities.
 - 4.3.4 If the branch Welfare Officer is unsure whether the information he or she is dealing with falls within GDPR, he or she should contact the Association Welfare Officer, or the Association Data Protection Officer, for advice. Consent forms to cover the examples outlined above are available.



THE ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION LIMITED

5 Process for seeking help and advice

- 5.1 The Royal Sussex Regimental Association is here to offer support to our members. We can often be the first point of call for a veteran who needs emotional support and missing comradeship. Just knowing that you belong to the regimental family should not be underestimated.
- 5.2 If you have a problem, please do not suffer in silence. Experience tells us that many old soldiers are too proud to ask for help. We have a close working relationship with SSAFA and they are the door that leads to the many military charities. They can offer lots of different types of support and can help with anything that is considered to be a need, such as funeral grants, priority debt, mobility support and the provision of domestic goods to name but a few. All requests for support will be considered and the only judgement that is made is the amount of need of the individual, we do not consider how someone got into the situation.
- 5.3 For those members who do not have a military background, financial support for your need from a military charity will not be possible as veterans would have donated a day's pay for each year of their service into service charities. The service charities will also be restricted by their Charter as to whom they can assist. That is not to say that we cannot help you in your hour of need. Emotional support comes free, and we will also do our best to identify other charities or benevolence funds that may be able to help you.

6 How to get help

- 6.1 You can discuss your problem with your Branch Welfare Officer or contact the Association Welfare Director by email : contact@theroyalsussexregt.org.uk or call 01444 451434 where the Association Welfare Director can offer signposting and guidance to all members in matters relating to Welfare and Benevolence. You can of course seek help immediately from SSAFA by calling their Forces Line : 0800 260 6767 or via their webpage www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/forcesline
- 6.2 Royal Sussex Regiment veterans should not contact the PWRR Benevolent Fund direct to ask for assistance, as invariably, they will be referred to SSAFA. The same advice stands for members who served in another branch or service of the armed forces who require assistance. The military charities and benevolence funds are not equipped to deal with casework and use SSAFA to assist in this area.
- 6.3 SSAFA has a network of local branches, which means that help and advice is always close at hand. When contacting SSAFA they will put you in touch with one of their



THE ROYAL SUSSEX REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION LIMITED

experienced advisors. Where further assistance is required, a caseworker will be appointed who will visit you in your home or at a suitable location.

7 Your Privacy

- 7.1 Your privacy is of the utmost importance to us. Whether you need financial assistance or emotional support following illness or bereavement, we will only share your personal information with your written consent.

8 Status

- 8.1 The status of this policy document, RSX DCP006-01 is APPROVED by the Board as of the 5 June 2023.