



From the Secretary – Maj (Retd) PA Raison



# THE PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

Patron: His Majesty King Charles III KG, KT, PC, GCB, AK, QSO, ADC

## NEWSLETTER December 2022

Please see below the monthly news from RHQ PARA. If you have anything you would like to promote in this, please send submissions by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month to the Secretary at [secretary@prahq.com](mailto:secretary@prahq.com)

### Topics:

- A. PRAFC Christmas Hampers 2022 – Last Call
- B. Remembrance Day 2022
- C. Energy Bill Support Scheme
- D. Veterans Survey'
- E. Cpl Mark Wright GC
- F. Veterans UK Online Services - AFCS
- G. Regimental Charity Donation
- H. Welfare Process
- I. Blue Light Card
- J. Changes to Branch Officials
- K. Fundraising Regulator Charity Registration

### Events

- L. Diary Dates

#### A. PRAFC Christmas Hampers 2022 – Last Call

The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity (Support our Paras) will be providing Christmas Hampers again this year, to be distributed to proven ex-Airborne soldiers or widows/partners in need. They do not have to be members of the Parachute Regimental Association. Our intent is that these hampers assist those alone or in need at Christmas time; they are not to thank people for work done or services rendered.

The attached proforma is to be filled in completely, regardless of method of delivery, and returned by FRIDAY 02 DECEMBER 2022. It is essential that the address is legible, checked for accuracy and accompanied by a postcode. It should then be returned to Julia Weymouth by email at [admin@prahq.com](mailto:admin@prahq.com) or by post to RHQ PARA.

This year, we are asking for your support to continue sending these wonderful gifts. Any donation, no matter how big or small, towards these hampers will be most gratefully received. Simply visit <https://justgiving.com/campaign/hamperappeal22> to give what you can.

#### B. Remembrance Day 2022

It was very disappointing that the coverage for this year's Remembrance Day parade at the Cenotaph did not include The Parachute Regimental Association contingent. Considering that it was the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of The Parachute Regiment and the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Falklands Conflict, we had hoped to at least get a mention. All those who marched will have been sent an email asking for feedback on the parade, so

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 214015

#### RHQ Disclaimer.

The Office of the Secretary of The Parachute Regimental Association is required to publish a disclaimer concerning any article or idea passed to branches by way of this letter. This letter provides a conduit between the branches to allow ideas, articles and topics to be viewed and discussed by the branches. Although these ideas, articles and topics appear in this newsletter it does not necessarily reflect the view of this office.

please take the time to complete that if you can. I have complained to the BBC on behalf of the members on parade but should you wish to complain you can do so here: [BBC Complaints](#)

There were just over 100 on parade this year and it was good to see some new faces and a large number of Falklands Veterans led by Maj General Jonathan Shaw. My thanks to Colin Edwards for the photographs.



A great turnout from the Association



Generals Page, Shaw and Freer



A small part of 2 Para on parade



REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 214015

**RHQ Disclaimer.**

The Office of the Secretary of The Parachute Regimental Association is required to publish a disclaimer concerning any article or idea passed to branches by way of this letter. This letter provides a conduit between the branches to allow ideas, articles and topics to be viewed and discussed by the branches. Although these ideas, articles and topics appear in this newsletter it does not necessarily reflect the view of this office.

### **C. Energy Bill Support Scheme**

The Energy Bills Support Scheme provides a £400 non-repayable discount to eligible households to help with their energy bills over winter 2022 to 2023.

The discount is automatic. If you get a message asking for your bank details, this could be a scam.

#### **Eligibility**

All households with a domestic electricity connection in England, Scotland and Wales are eligible for the discount. You'll still get the discount if:

- you change your payment method
- you change your tariff
- you switch electricity supplier
- you move to a new address
- your supplier goes bust
- you're in arrears on your electricity bill payments

#### **How you'll get the discount**

You do not need to apply for the discount, and there's no need to contact your energy supplier.

The discount will be applied to your monthly household electricity bill for 6 months starting in October 2022. You'll get:

- £66 in October and November
- £67 in December, January, February and March

You'll get the discount monthly, even if you pay for your energy quarterly or use a payment card.

Traditional prepayment meter users will get equivalent vouchers that you will need to redeem.

Your electricity supplier should provide more guidance on the scheme before it starts.

If you have not received your first instalment by the end of October 2022, you need to contact your supplier.

For more information, please click on the link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-the-energy-bills-support-scheme-discount>

### **D. Veterans' Survey**

The government has launched its first Veterans Survey for veterans and their families. This is the first-ever exercise to collect feedback from the veteran community across the UK, coordinated by the Office for Veterans' Affairs and the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Responses to the survey will help the government better understand the experiences, needs and wellbeing of the veteran community.

The Survey takes approximately 20 mins to complete: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/veteranssurvey>

Deadline Wednesday 1st February 2023.

More details are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-veterans-get-their-say>

### **E. Cpl Mark Wright GC**

A memorial bench in remembrance to Cpl Mark Wright GC was unveiled at Prestonfield Primary School in Edinburgh with his parents in attendance. Civic dignitaries, soldiers from 4 PARA, family and friends of Cpl

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 214015

#### **RHQ Disclaimer.**

The Office of the Secretary of The Parachute Regimental Association is required to publish a disclaimer concerning any article or idea passed to branches by way of this letter. This letter provides a conduit between the branches to allow ideas, articles and topics to be viewed and discussed by the branches. Although these ideas, articles and topics appear in this newsletter it does not necessarily reflect the view of this office.

Wright, Pegasus V, the Parachute Regiment's pony mascot and the Pony Major, LCpl Richards attended the ceremony.

A group of Scottish Freemasons established the Mark Wright Memorial Degree team and toured Scottish masonic lodges performing degree ceremonies with the purpose of raising money for military veteran charities. The group became the starting point for a new Lodge, Kajaki No 1848, which was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Scotland and consecrated in 2018. Its first Right Worshipful Master was Bob Wright, the father of Mark Wright.

Corporal Mark Wright was awarded the George Cross for his bravery on 6th September 2006, in Afghanistan, when he entered a minefield in an extraordinary attempt to save the lives of critically-injured soldiers. Sadly, he lost his life during the incident.



#### **F. Veterans UK Online Services - AFCS**

A new online Armed Forces compensation service has gone live . Veterans UK, part of Defence Business Services (DBS), has launched a new online claim service to help people to access injury and illness compensation more easily. Veterans UK is responsible for administering compensation and pensions schemes for both serving personnel, veterans and their families. The new service is part of our commitment to modernising the services we provide to the Defence community and is the first step in the digitalisation of DBS's Compensation Schemes.

Before launching the service, the Veterans Modernisation Team had to successfully complete a Cabinet Office Beta Assessment and provide evidence to show they had met a 14-point service standard.  
How will the new online service help customers?

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 214015

#### **RHQ Disclaimer.**

The Office of the Secretary of The Parachute Regimental Association is required to publish a disclaimer concerning any article or idea passed to branches by way of this letter. This letter provides a conduit between the branches to allow ideas, articles and topics to be viewed and discussed by the branches. Although these ideas, articles and topics appear in this newsletter it does not necessarily reflect the view of this office.

- Although the paper claim form can still be used if customers prefer, the online service has been developed entirely using a 'user needs' approach, identifying what users want and need and providing a digital solution. It has the following added benefits for customers:
- The online form takes less time to complete in comparison to the paper form
- The online form is more intuitive, meaning it only asks questions relevant to the individuals claim and is based on previous questions
- Individuals can submit multiple claims on one application
- There is an option to save progress and take a break
- It allows individuals easily upload supporting documents relevant to their claim

The online form can be accessed via any internet device, including phones: For more information click on this link: [AFCS Online](#)

### **G. Regimental Charity Donations**

The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity (Support Our Paras) have a number of fundraising events planned. There have been a number of great fundraising events organised by individuals and groups to support our charity, which is outstanding. Your continued support to the Regimental Charities is vital to the direct support of Airborne Veterans and their families, now and in the future.

Anyone looking to raise money for Support Our Paras should get in touch as soon as possible to see how the team can help you. Check out the website at: <https://supportourparas.org/>

### **H. Welfare Process**

It is very important that Branches use the regimental welfare Team for any cases that are reported to them. We have had several cases recently that have escalated into quite complex cases and members of the Branch have been unnecessarily burdened by the work this has produced. The Welfare Team are trained to deal with these cases and will be able to identify the most suitable course of action for an individual in need.

For serving personnel, please contact your Unit Welfare Officer (UWO) in the first instance for any welfare support.

For veterans, please contact the Support our Paras (the official charity of The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces) Welfare Team for any queries.

Laura McPhilemy, Head of Welfare. Email: [HoW@supportourparas.org](mailto:HoW@supportourparas.org) Tel: 07702 190685 or

Lisa Stapleton, Welfare Manager. Email: [wm@supportourparas.org](mailto:wm@supportourparas.org) Tel: 07340 347136

We are based within RHQ PARA in Merville Barracks, Colchester.

Support our Paras can assist any past or present member of The Parachute Regiment or wider Airborne Forces and their dependants.

If you require financial assistance please contact either SSAFA 0800 260 6767 or use this link to find your nearest Branch: <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/find-local-branch> or the RBL 0808 802 8080 [info@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:info@britishlegion.org.uk) in the first instance. You will be allocated a caseworker who will complete a Form A request for assistance with you. This will then be sent to the Support our Paras Welfare Team for consideration. Successful grants are issued swiftly back to the caseworker for onward payment. Urgent grants can be made on the day if required. This process is both confidential and transparent, providing an audit trail.

### **I. Blue Light Card**

Blue Light are offering a discount service for the emergency services, which includes HM Armed Forces Veterans, NHS and the social care sector, providing members with thousands of amazing discounts online and on the high street.

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 214015

#### **RHQ Disclaimer.**

The Office of the Secretary of The Parachute Regimental Association is required to publish a disclaimer concerning any article or idea passed to branches by way of this letter. This letter provides a conduit between the branches to allow ideas, articles and topics to be viewed and discussed by the branches. Although these ideas, articles and topics appear in this newsletter it does not necessarily reflect the view of this office.

For just £4.99, members of the Blue Light community can register for 2-years access to more than 15,000 discounts from large national retailers to local businesses across categories such as holidays, cars, days out, fashion, gifts, insurance, phones, and many more.

This includes Asda, who are currently giving card holders 10% discount on everything (Clothing, food etc) so there's a good chance for people to be able to save some money, especially with Christmas coming up. The link for the website to register is: [www.bluelightcard.co.uk](http://www.bluelightcard.co.uk)

#### **J. Changes to Branch Officials**

All Branches are kindly reminded that any changes to their officials should be reported to RHQ Para. The details of the Secretary or nominated point of contact for the branch are displayed on the website to assist potential new members to get in touch and join the Branch. This information must be kept up to date. Please email Julia on: [admin@prahq.com](mailto:admin@prahq.com)

#### **K. Fundraising Regulator Charity Registration**

We have been informed by the Lothian Branch that there may be a requirement to register with the Fundraising Regulator, prior to collections being permitted in Railway Stations and other areas. This is a condition set out by the location so please check the requirement when arranging your collections.

Charities that fundraise in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland can apply to register with the Fundraising Regulator. Please note the different sites depending on your location:

- <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/>
- <https://www.goodfundraising.scot/fundraising-guarantee>

Registering with us means you can show people that you are committed to fundraising in a way that is legal, open, honest and respectful in line with the Code of Fundraising Practice.

All registered organisations can display the Fundraising Badge on their fundraising materials – the logo that says 'registered with Fundraising Regulator' – and are listed in our public directory. Find out more reasons to register with the Fundraising Regulator.

#### **L. Diary Dates**

Event information is available on the website so please take a look:

<https://theparachuteregimentalassociation.com/events/>

If you have any dates for 2023, please let me know at the earliest opportunity so that they can be added to the diary. Information for events can be sent to be included on the website forecast of events. Full details of events such as date, time, outline of event, cost etc. must be provided and updated accordingly.

10-12 Mar 23	2 Para Reunion	Blackpool
16-19 Mar 23	1 Para Reunion	Blackpool
24-26 Mar 23	3 Para Reunion	Blackpool
8 Jul 23	Regimental Commemoration Day	NMA

**Details of all these events and others are available on the Web Page at**  
[www.theparachuteregimentalassociation.com](http://www.theparachuteregimentalassociation.com)

*Paul Raison*

Attachments:

1. PRAFC Christmas Hamper Letter
2. Christmas Hamper Application Form

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 214015

#### **RHQ Disclaimer.**

The Office of the Secretary of The Parachute Regimental Association is required to publish a disclaimer concerning any article or idea passed to branches by way of this letter. This letter provides a conduit between the branches to allow ideas, articles and topics to be viewed and discussed by the branches. Although these ideas, articles and topics appear in this newsletter it does not necessarily reflect the view of this office.