

ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION



THE SAPPER CHARITY

(Registered under the Charities Act 1992 and a charity registered in Scotland)

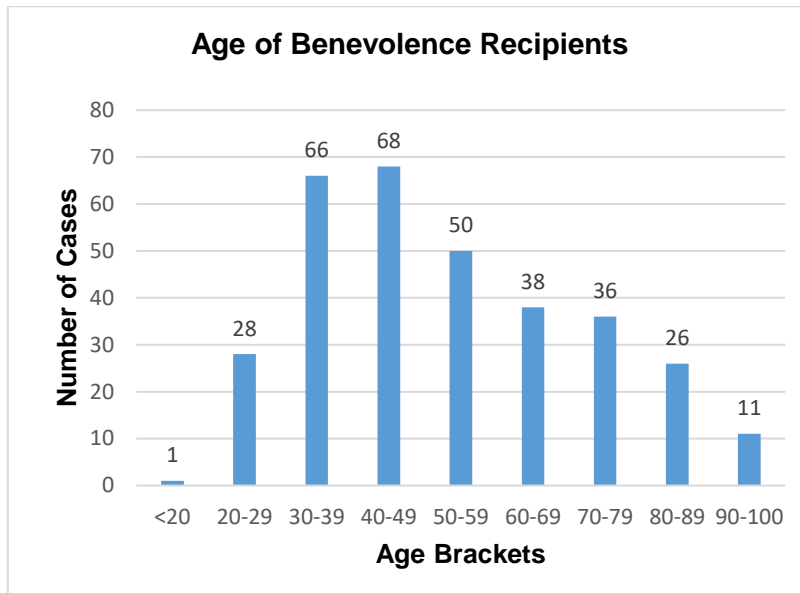
All communications to be addressed to:

The CEO
RE Association
Brompton Barracks
Chatham
Kent ME4 4UG
☎ 01634 847005
🌐 www.reahq.org.uk
✉ info@reahq.org.uk

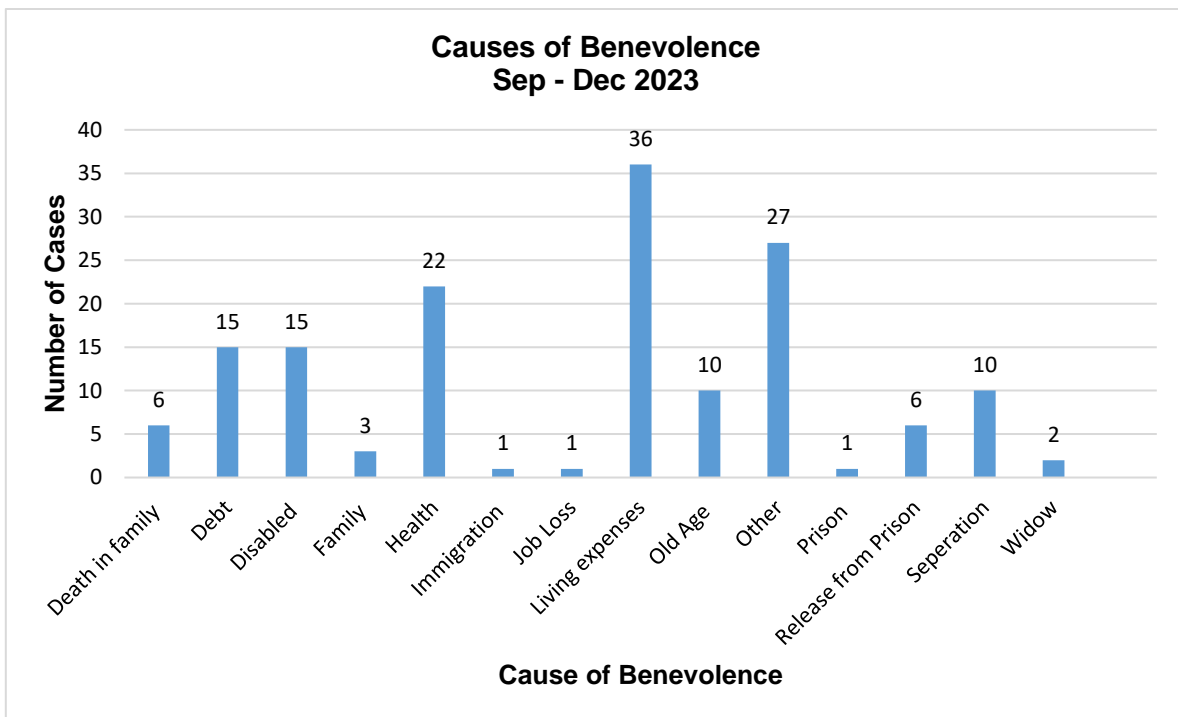
ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL BENEVOLENCE REPORT JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2023. Dated 9th JANUARY 2024

Serial	Data	2023	2022	2021
1	Number of cases assessed	550	527	449
2	Number of cases declined	226	169	135
3	Number of cases assisted	324	358	314
4	Number of weekly grants in care homes (£##):	£13,724 (Yearly)	11,570.60 (Yearly)	22,036.30 (Yearly)
5	Number of weekly grants at home (£##):	£95,810 (Yearly)	93,209.40 (Yearly)	96,263.70 (Yearly)
6	Special Christmas Grants	£3,005.00	£3,195.00	£3,330.00
7	Amount granted per month from cases referred by SSAFA, ABF and UWO.	£244,487.48	£211,445	£228,643.90

1. **Overall Assistance.** Compared to 2022 the number of cases assessed in 2023 increased, however the number of cases approved declined. Overall, the expenditure on benevolence (excluding the special purpose funds i.e. The Kitchener and Gabriel Funds) increased. From the 01 Feb 2024 data collected will be collected to understand why cases are refused. This will allow the REA to identify trends and, if required, adjust the parameters and criteria for the granting of benevolence.



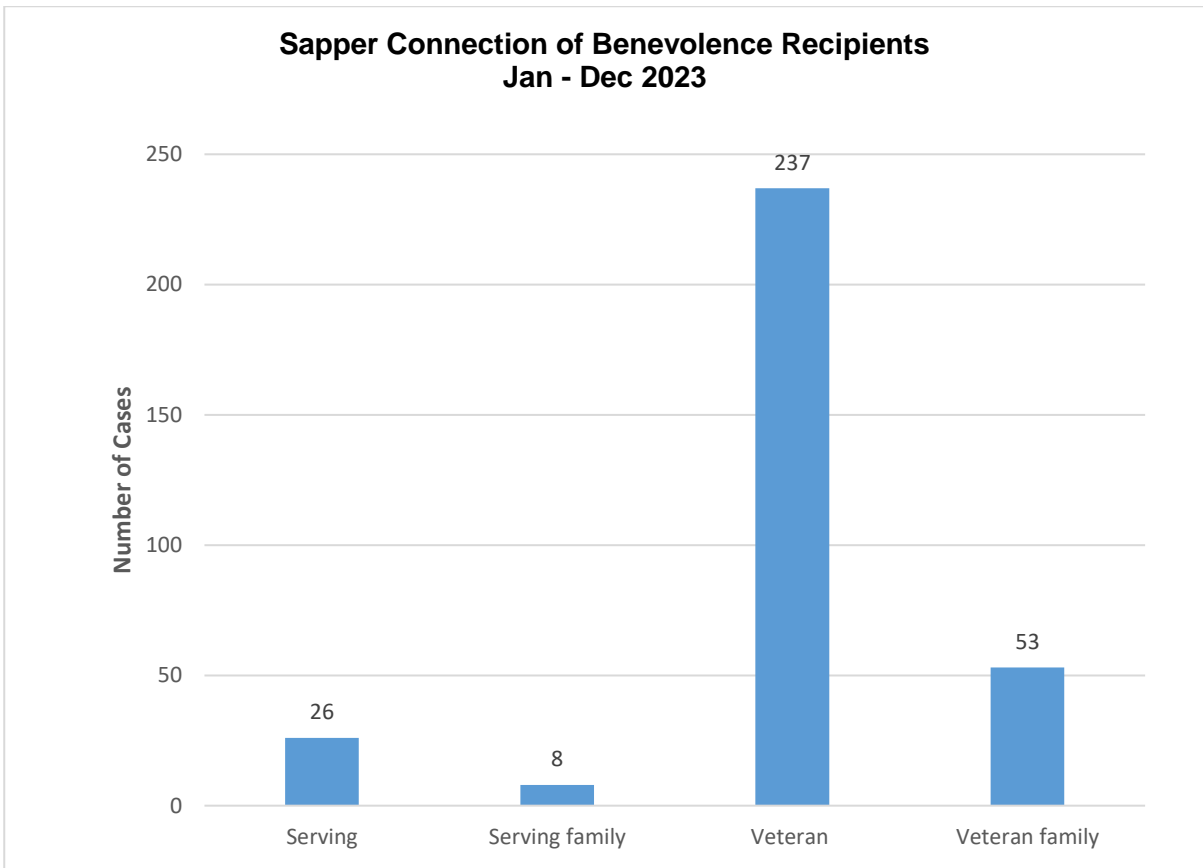
2. **Age.** Throughout 2023, the age bracket of 40-49 years old accounted for the greatest portion of benevolence grants, closely followed by the 30-39 age bracket. This reflects national trends of a similar age bracket who have been affected most of all by an increase in cost of living.¹



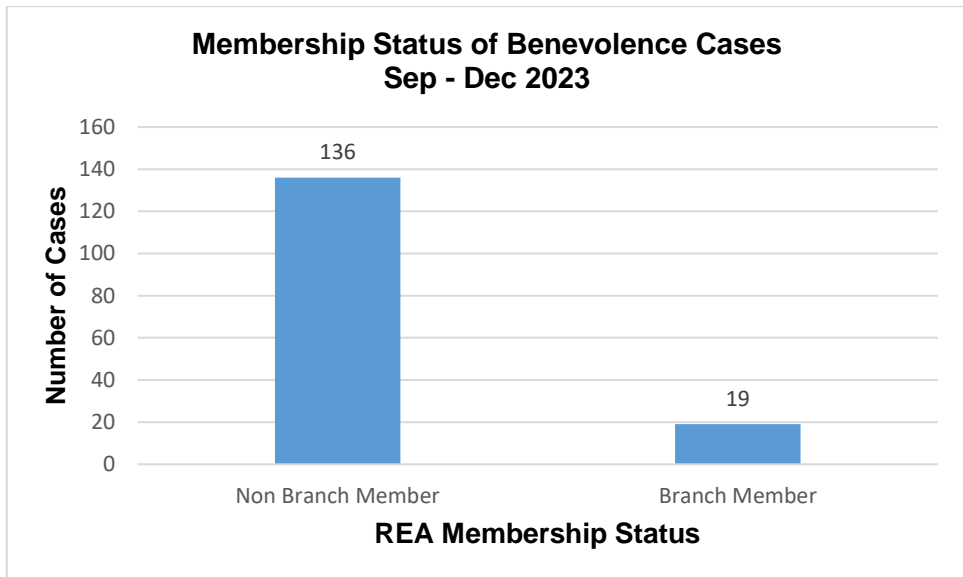
3. **Causes of Benevolence.** Whilst subjective, the main cause of Benevolence is living expenses. This covers a broad range of factors but is often instigated by an unforeseen incident/circumstances i.e. job loss, divorce, relationship breakdown etc. Debt continues to be a cause of Benevolence requests. However, the REA only assists with primary debt including utility

¹

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/expenditure/articles/impactofincreasedcostoflivingonadultsacrossgreatbritain/september2022tojanuary2023>



5. Veteran Sappers make up the greatest number of benevolence recipients, followed by veteran family members. Veteran family members include widows, widowers, separated and divorced partners.³ Compassionate support for Commonwealth soldiers forms a large part of the serving soldier statistics. This is because under current MOD policy Commonwealth soldiers are not entitled to MOD funded flights home in the event of a compassionate case.



6. **Branch Membership.** In Sep 2023 the range of data collected increased to include branch membership status (Y/N) of those requesting benevolence. Although only a small sample the overwhelming majority of those requesting benevolence are not REA Branch members. Whilst it

³ Eligible until remarriage.

would be unwise to draw a direct correlation between Branch membership and benevolence need(s) it is a factor that will continue to be monitored.

7. **Kitchener Fund.** The Kitchener Fund currently has 11 dependants who have been assisted throughout the year to a total of £73,356.

8. **Gabriel Fund.** The Gabriel Fund assisted with the retraining of one individual at a cost of £25,000.

9. **Case Studies.** Every individual who receives benevolence is requested to share their benevolence story on REA communications channels.⁴ This will be used to reinforce the Sapper Charity Brand.

10. **Impact of Armed Forces Pensions Scheme 1975.** The earliest recipients of the 1975 Armed Forces pension scheme will start to claim an index linked pension in 2024. All regular service personnel who served for the qualifying time from 1975 – 2005 will be in receipt of an index linked pension. The amount will vary however; this may reduce low-level benevolence cases.

11. **Summary.** Whilst the number of cases assessed has increased, the number of applications that have been declined also increased, resulting in an overall reduction in the number of grants distributed. The amount of funds granted increased, this is likely due to cost of living inflation. Overall, data will continue to be collected, analysed and publicised. The publication of data will be used in collaboration with the Sapper Charity brand, to demonstrate the charitable function of the Royal Engineers Association.

N Gunnell
Operations Director

⁴ Via the RE RHQ Comms Hub