

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

See Distribution

29 Nov 2024

MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION, HELD AT RAVELIN BUILDING AND ON BOARDABLE ON TUESDAY 27th NOV 2024

Present

Mr K Kirk
Mr N Gunnell
Mr M Facchini
Mr P Luscombe
Mr R Tootle
Mr P Taylor
Mr R Lowe
Mr J Brown

CEO REA – Chair
Operations Director - Secretary
Committee Member
North Midlands Group
Scotland and NI Representative
National Representative
Unknown
Central Southern Group Representative

Apologies

Mr M Heffer

Trustee

Belated Apologies

Mr M Payne

Central Southern Group Representative

Nil Attendance

WO1 Tolley
WO1 Milligan
Mr M Dorkings
Mr I Sidebottom
Mr S Scott
Mr A Brown
WO1 S Eardley
Mr J Allerhead
Mr R Bardsley

South Midlands Group Representative
3 RSME Regt
National Representative
Corps Treasurer
Eastern Group Representative
Deputy Group Director Southern Group
Corps RSM
South East Representative
Committee Member

1. The CEO opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

ITEM 1 - TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2. The Committee accepted that the minutes of the [previous meeting](#) were a true record of the proceedings. The CEO signed the minutes.

Proposed: Mr R Tootle

Seconded: Mr K Kirk

ITEM 2 - MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

3. The CEO will word a proposal for inclusion in the rules and present it to the Committee.

Update: Changes to the rules will be presented to the Committee next year. KK

4. The CEO to present the findings of an investigation into inappropriate behaviour at the latest meeting. **Update: The swift action of the Deputy Group Director (Alan Scholey) has resulted in processes being put in place to prevent a reoccurrence.**

ITEM 3 – RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

5. Nil comments.

ITEM 4 – BENEVOLENCE REPORT

6. Nil comments.

ITEM 5 – CORPS UPDATE – Corps Colonel or Corps SM (Not present)

7. No Corps update was provided.

ITEM 6 – FINANCIAL REPORT– Mr Ian Sidebottom (Not present)

8. No financial report was presented. However, the CEO provided the following overview:

a. The REA continues to diversify its portfolio with the purchase of a second house in the Ebbsfleet area to rent out.

b. Benevolence spending to fractionally under budget.

c. The CUBS grants are close to being maxed out.

9. Branch annual financial summaries are due to be submitted to REA HQ via online submission by the 31st Jan 2025.

ITEM 7 – BADGE OF MERIT

10. The number of applications received for the Badge of Merit was lower than previous years. **MF** noted that the guidance within the rules is vague. Despite this 4 people were deemed to have met the criteria for a Badge of Merit and will be informed in due course. **Action: NG to review the Badge of Merit Guidance.**

ITEM 8 – SAPPER SUNDAY

8. Sapper Sunday costs the REA approximately £1,800. A discussion was held regarding a charge to attend Sapper Sunday. A vote was held to decide on what course of action to take.¹

a. **Option 1:** Nil cost continued to fund the event 100% from the REA. **Votes = 1.**

b. **Option 2:** Charge £10 which will contribute to the costs of the event and include a tour of the Hospital. **Votes = 8.**

¹ **NG** abstained from the vote.

ITEM 9 – CORPS MEMORIAL WEEKEND

9. The following feedback was provided:
- a. Delay the Standard Bearers competition by 60 minutes after the AGM.
 - b. Maintain the use of round tables.
10. A discussion was held on the pricing of Corps Memorial Weekend Ticket Prices. A vote was held to decide the maximum ticket price for Corps Memorial Weekend and whether to offer an “early bird” discount:
- a. £35 No early bird discount – All in favour.
 - b. £30 then increase to £35 from 1st April 2024 – nil votes.

ITEM 10 – SUBSIDIES FOR FUTURE REA EVENTS

11. **NG** highlighted the Plymouth Branch winter ball which was priced at £45 per person with no assistance from the HQ. This is in comparison to Chilwell which required a subsidy of approx. £4,000 with a ticket price of £28. Attendance to both events was approximately 150 guests. The committee was requested to consider that future events should be less reliant on HQ REA subsidies.

ITEM 11 – AOB

11. Phil Taylor provided an update on the proposed merger of the Airborne Engineers Association and the REA Airborne Branch.

Date of Next Meeting: Friday 4th April 2024

12. The next Management Committee meeting will be held at 1 RSME, Brompton Barracks with no option to dial in. The meeting will be combined with the Recruitment Committee meeting as there is only one agenda point difference between the committees. Following the meeting a strategy workshop will take place. Details of how to book accommodation and claim subsistence will be released.

N R Gunnell
Operations Director

Minutes Approved

Date

Chair

Annex A - Dashboard
Annex B – HQ REA Benevolence Report

REA Dashboard – Nov 2024

Benevolence

Cases received	Nov 2023	Nov 2024
	40	49
Declined	24	10
Approved	14	35
Total assistance	£17,929.75	£36,051.33

Funds

The Sapper Charity Childrens Fund

- No of families: 11
- Amount granted: £6780
- Running total 2024: £73950
- New applications: 0

The Ballard Fund

- New applications: 0
- No of grants given: 0
- Amount granted: £0

The Gabriel Fund

- New applications: 0
- No of grants given: 0
- Amount granted: 0.00
- Running total 2024: £2773.97

McCabe Fund

- New applications: 6
- Applications approved: 3
- Applications rejected: 3
- No of grants given: 1
- Amount granted: £1,000
- Running total 2024: £80,363.59

Finance

Income £118,142.10*

Expenditure £176,281.67*

Current investment valuation £10,747,475.61**

*incl. main, deposit & Sapper Charity Children's Fund
 **incl. main, Sapper Charity Children's Fund & McCabe

Governance



Membership

New members	Nov 2023 36	Nov 2024 30
New branches	HQ branch has been renamed Ubique	
Average age of new members	Average age: 41 Youngest: 19 Oldest: 65	

30 Life, All Arms, Friends & Family

Fundraising

Amount raised (Sep 23 - present) **£43446**

Number of events/ individuals

REA Dashboard – Nov 2024

Member Services

Notifications of death via SCRM	11
Notifications of death via other means	04
Coffin drapes out	04
Requests for representation at cremations / funerals	04
Medical discharge notifications via APC	06
Obituaries - Sapper magazine	09

Outreach Activity Nov

Branch Visits	1
Unit Visits	4

Social Media

Website	Users 2.4k ↑ Views 7k ↑
Facebook	Engagement Percentage Rate: 5.21% ↑ Follower Increase: 150 ↑ Post Impressions: 476k ↑ Page and Profile Impressions: 450k ↑
Instagram	Followers: 505 ↓ Content Interactions: 260 ↑ Accounts engaged: 147 ↑ Accounts Reached: 573 ↓
X (formerly Twitter)	Followers: 1,110 ↑ Engagement: 1.5k ↑
Sappercom	New Members: 206 Total: 1,299

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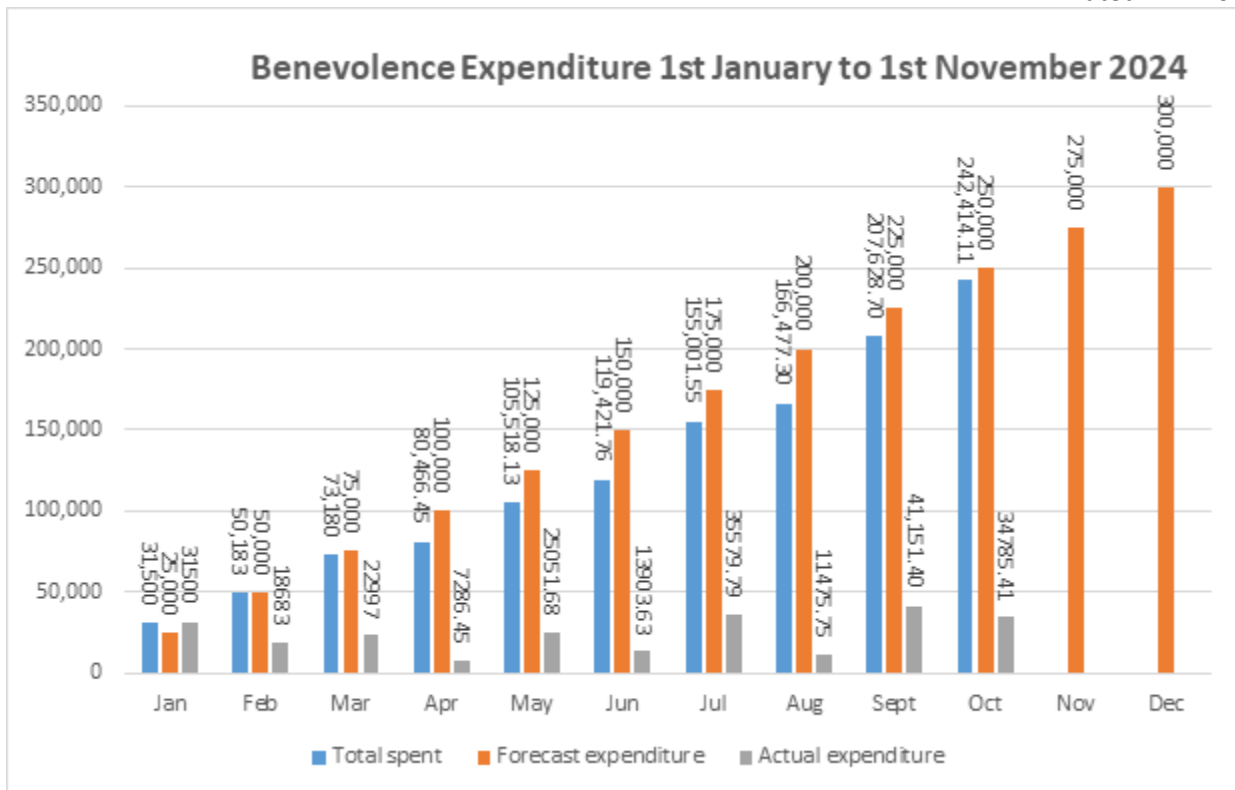
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ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION BENEVOLENCE REPORT 1st JANUARY TO 1st NOVEMBER 2024.

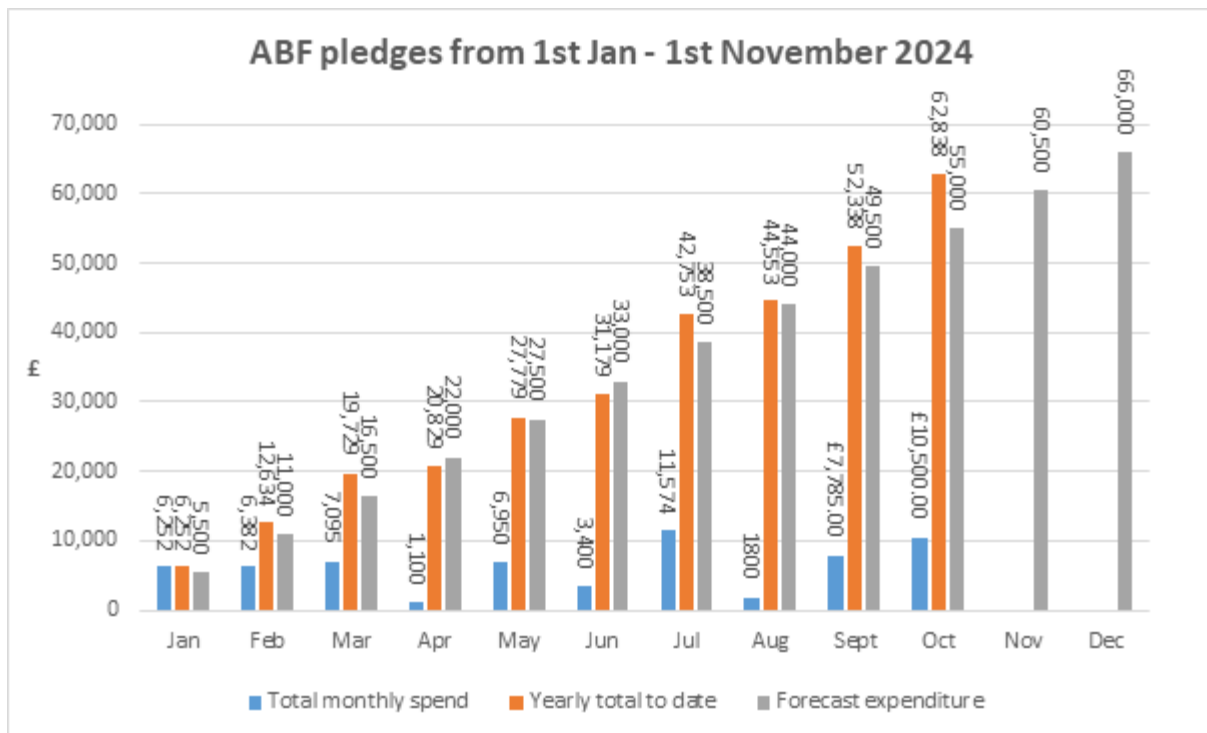
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- Summary.** Compared to the same period in 2023 there has been an increase of 4.14% in the number of cases assessed (See table below) and a slight reduction in the number of cases declined. Age demographics remain consistent with 30-39 and 40-49 age categories requesting the most assistance (see para 4). Spending remains within the allocated budget (See para. 2).

Serial	Data	2024	2023	2022
1	Number of cases assessed	460	441	426
2	Number of cases assisted	364	334	351
3	Number of cases declined	96	107	75
4	Out Of Committee cases	7	-	-
6	Number of weekly grants in care homes (£##):	£4,368	£2,496	£2,762.50
7	Number of weekly grants at home (£##):	£21,450	£23,595	£25,350
8	Special Christmas Grants	£4,360	£3,005.00	£3,195
9	Cases referred by SSAFA and UWO which were assisted.	228	-	-
10	Cases referred by RBL and other charities which were assisted.	232	-	-
11	Cases referred to ABF	124	-	-
12	ABF grant total to date	62,838	-	-
13	Total granted (£)	242,414.11	210,005.07	197,705.50

- Expenditure.** September saw the greatest expenditure on benevolence in 2024. This is likely due to the Summer break.



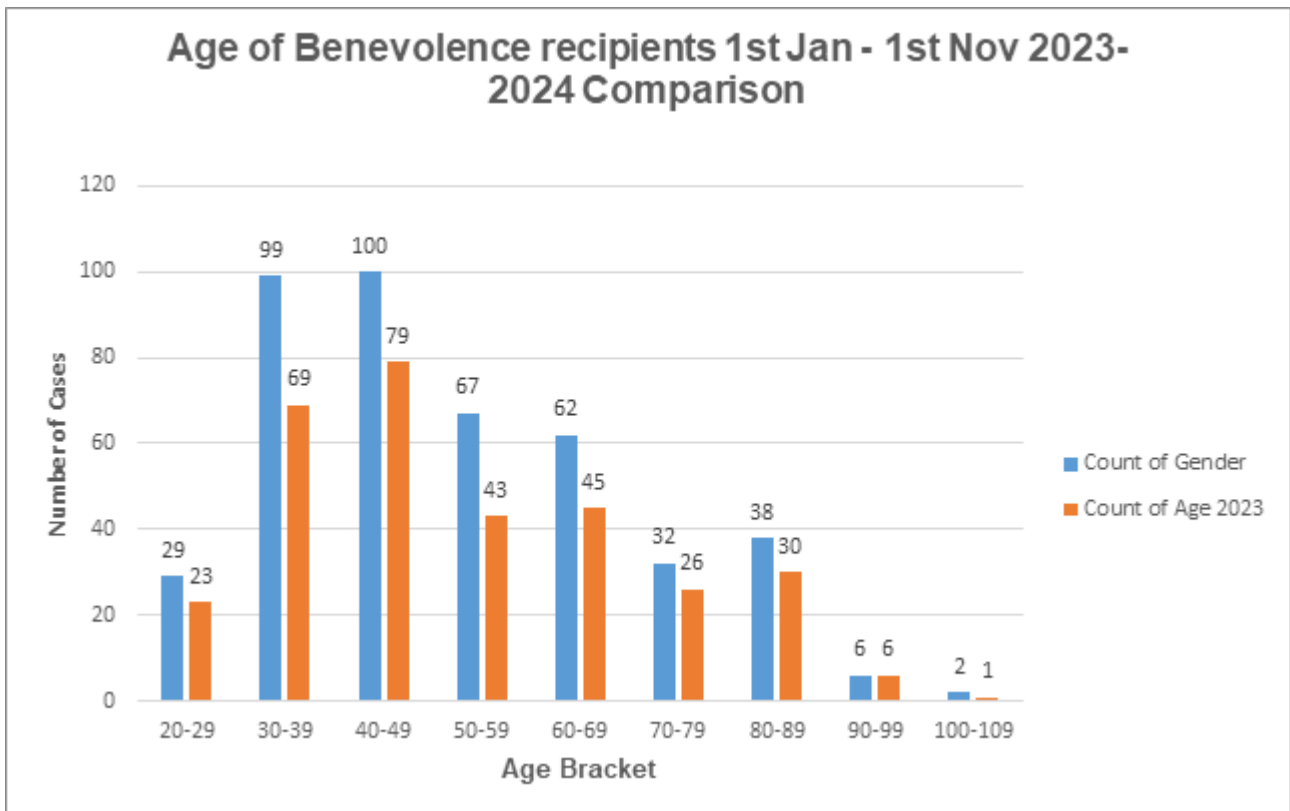
3. **Army Benevolent Fund Contribution.** It is now known that the £66,000 that the REA allocated to the ABF is not spent on the benevolence of Sappers. The amount is distributed to other Service Charities which may or may not benefit Sappers. It has also been established that the ABF grants financial assistance to Sapper Family members who have been declined for assistance by the REA. ¹



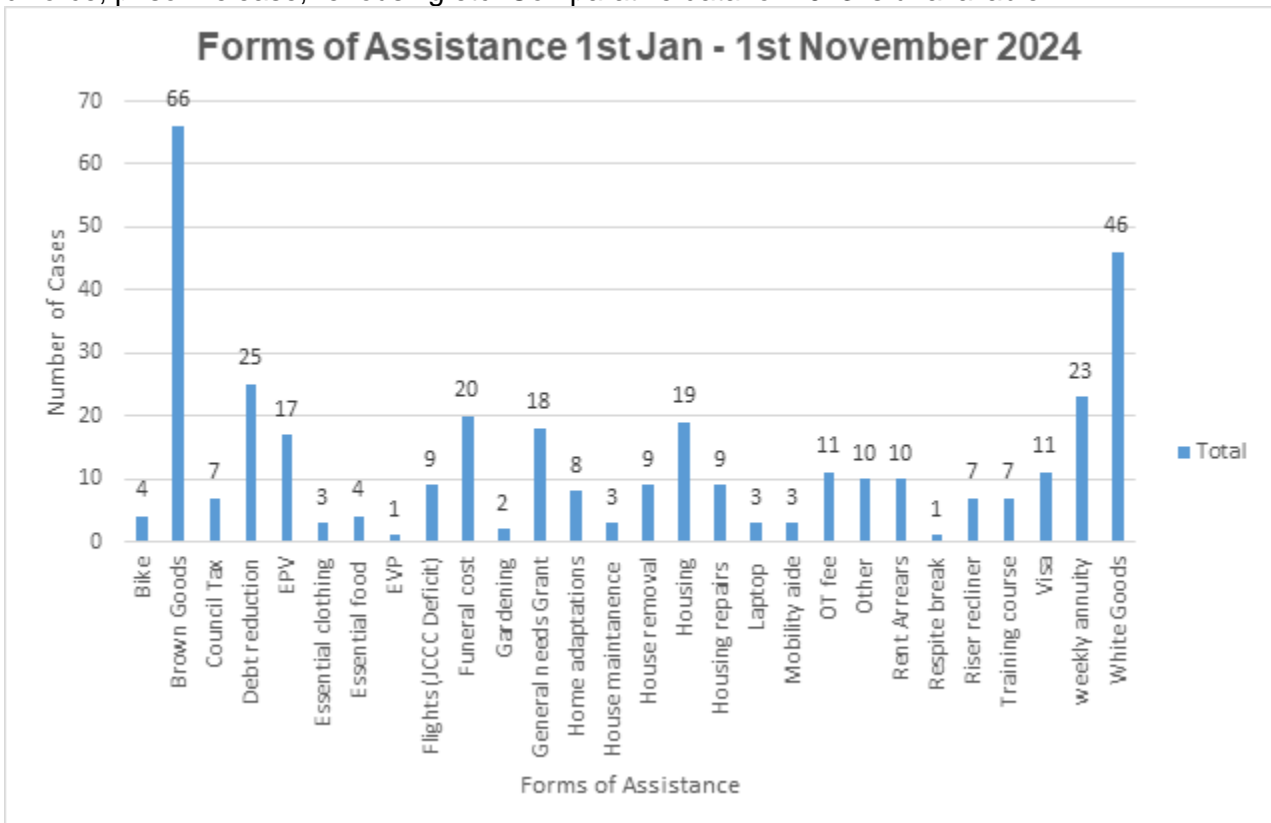
4. **Age.** Overall demographic trends remain consistent with 2023 however the overall increase in cases results in the trends being more pronounced.

2024

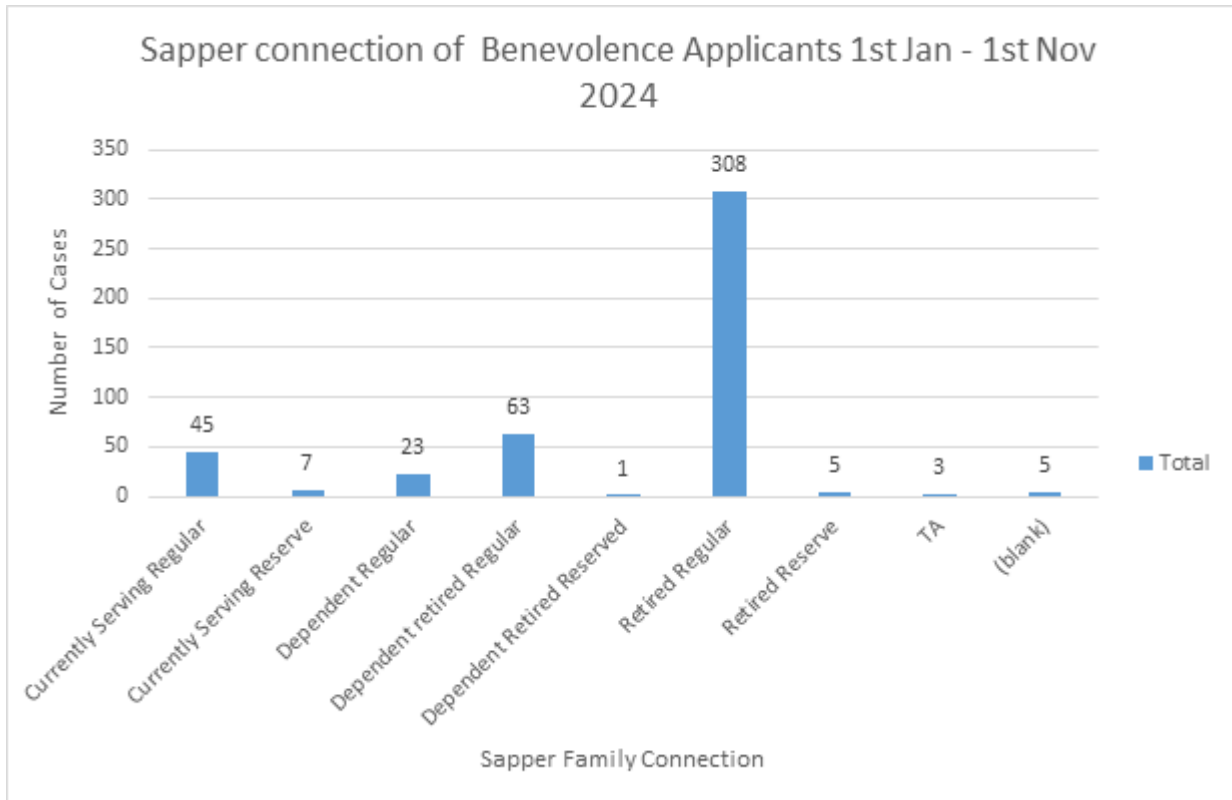
2023



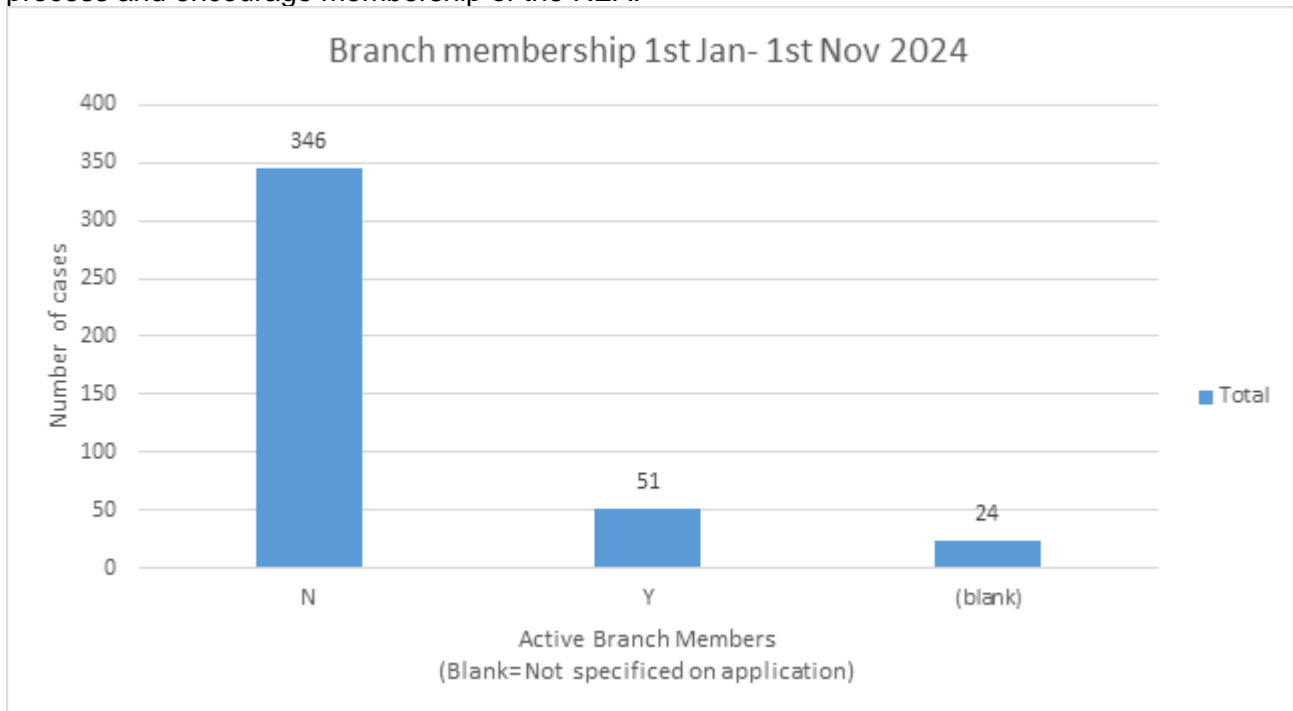
5. **Form(s) of Assistance.** The most common request for benevolence remains domestic goods (brown and white goods). This is usually due to the recipient having to start afresh due to; separation, divorce, prison release, rehousing etc. Comparative data for 2023 is unavailable.



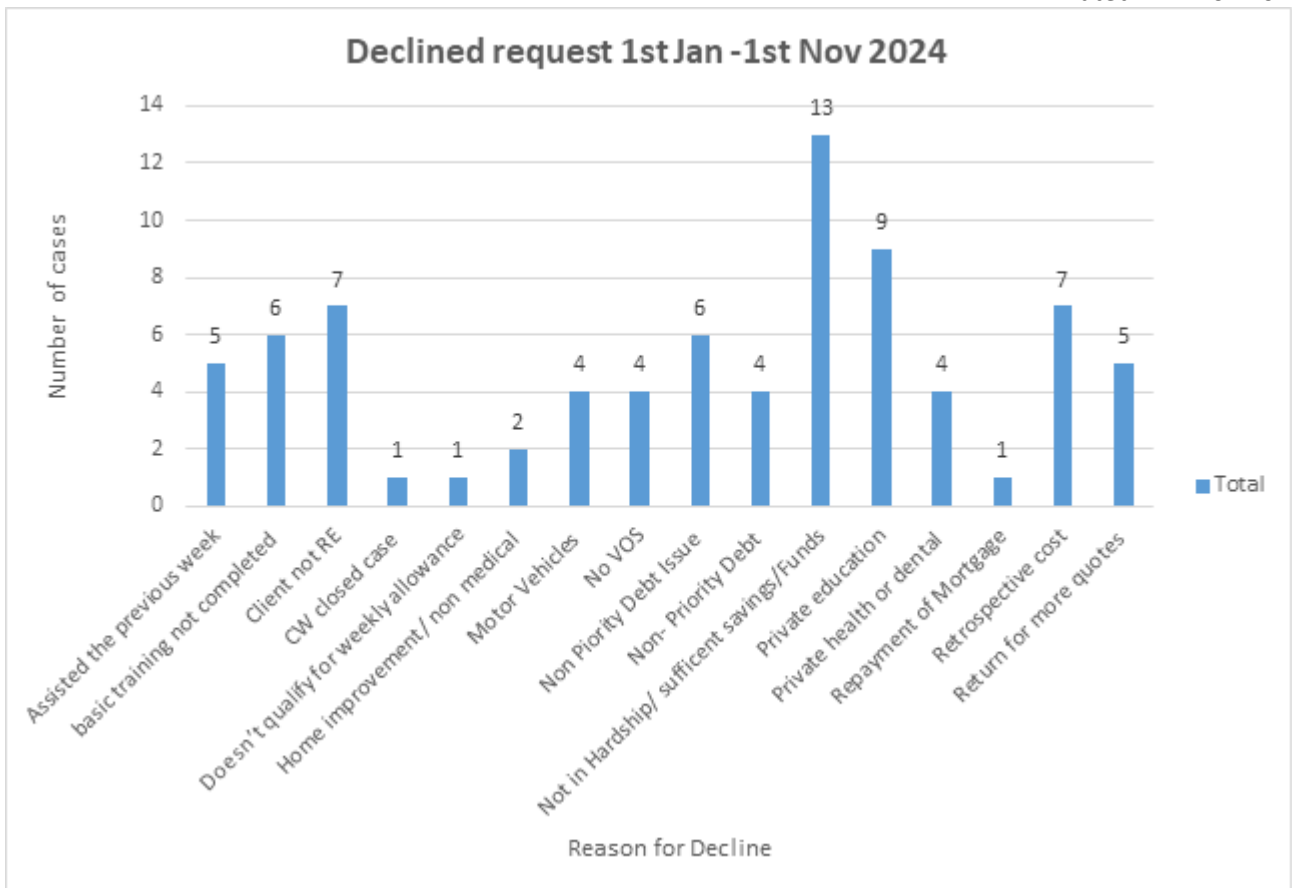
6. **Recipient Sapper Family Connection.** Retired regulars and their dependents remain the largest and second largest cohort of benevolence recipients. Comparative data for 2023 is unavailable.²



7. **Branch Membership.** The vast majority of benevolence recipients are not active members of the REA. However, it is envisaged that the introduction of a new type of Branch “The Ubique Sappers” and a newly designed membership card will result in a greater understanding of the benevolence process and encourage membership of the REA.



8. **Reasons for Case Declines.** There is no significant change in trends for cases being declined.



9. **The Sapper Charity Children’s Fund.** The Sapper Charity’s Children Fund (formerly the Kitchener Fund) is currently supporting 11 families and 15 children.
10. **Gabriel Fund.** The Gabriel Fund has assisted a former Sapper to retrain and remain in the diving industry despite being diagnosed with a terminal illness.
11. **Increase in Out of Committee Spending.** An increasing number of cases are having to be dealt with out of committee. It is likely that this is due to increased costs resulting in requests exceeding the threshold of spending of the CEO and the Operations Director. The number of out of committee decisions and the associated data from 2024 will be analysed and presented with recommendations in Q1 of 2024.
12. **Summary.** There have been no significant new trends or patterns with benevolence spending remaining within budget. The most significant benevolence related issue has been the realisation that the ABF will support Sappers regardless of an annual grant.

N Gunnell
Operations Director