

ASHORE & AFLOAT

Spring 2023


Aggies



Faithfully Alongside the Naval Family



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Pictured: HMS Protector preparing to enter King Edward Point, South Georgia, in December 2022 to conduct survey work and to allow the ships company some time for relaxation during the Christmas period.

HMS Protector is the Royal Navy's only Ice Breaking Patrol Ship and is currently deployed in the Antarctic region promoting British Interests in the area and enforcing the Antarctic Treaty by working with partners including the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), United Kingdom Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT) and the governments of the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands.

Aggie's Chair of Trustees, Capt Paddy Allen, has recently been onboard and reported back on the beauty of God's creation.

Dame Agnes Weston's Royal Charity for the Naval Service

Generally known as Aggie's
Company No. 11114651 • Charity No. 1176596

Contact Us

Aggie Weston's
Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue,
Portsmouth PO2 8RN

T 023 9265 0505 E office@aggies.org.uk

www.aggies.org.uk

 Aggie_Westons  aggiewestons

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Cover Photo

Aggie's Pastoral Workers Emma Barfoot on camp with the Royal Marine Band

Reflection

Words from Chris New, Aggie's CEO

As this edition of Ashore and Afloat reaches you the Christian family world-wide will be preparing for Easter, a time when we remember that Jesus' death on the cross did not mark the end of the story, but the beginning.

The work begun by Dame Agnes Weston continues to evolve and grow, you will read of many new beginnings in this edition: New members of staff; refurbished facilities; new activities designed to create the right opportunity for new relationships and new conversations. Aggie was an innovator, and this charity seeks to maintain that approach in order to drive continuous improvement both in how we operate, and how we serve our beneficiaries. Last year we were delighted to receive a Silver Award from the Employers Recognition Scheme – recognition of our efforts both to be a good employer of veterans, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and spouses of serving personnel, and to be an organisation which delivers benefit to the whole naval community. This year we want to build on what we have learned from that process and become even better.

Jesus' mission was to serve, not to be served, even though he was a king. Easter Day marked his victory over death, not his defeat by it, even though he died a criminals death on a cross. As you read this edition of Ashore and Afloat we send you our best wishes for a blessed Easter.

Aggie's is collaborating with other organisations working in the community, co-chairing a new Community Partnership Working Group which aims to deliver a better coordinated range of activities and events for naval families living in the vicinity of naval establishments. In February we took part in a mental health conference at HMS Eaglet, the Royal Navy base in Liverpool. As a result, we will, over the coming months, be collaborating with other naval charities to examine how we can better support naval families living in Liverpool and the north west of England and, in the longer term, in other parts of the country dispersed from naval bases.



Aggie's is the proud recipient of the Armed forces Covenant Employer Recognition scheme silver award. To find out more visit Defence Employer Recognition Scheme – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-employer-recognition-scheme>

Around & About

HMNB Devonport update from Kate Thorn

It is all systems GO GO GO at HMNB Devonport... With the successful re-launch of the Haven in early October the team are delivering a regular timetable of events for serving personnel and their families in the refurbished Haven. Beneficiaries can now enjoy; Ladies Nights (which can be a mocktail night, craft or pamper sessions and Christmas decoration making), a monthly movie night (with the team showing everything from Maverick to Downton Abbey), Family Storytime and a stories and sensory play session in the Bumps and Babies room which is part of a collaboration with Naval Maternity Officer Miriam Charlton, MBE.

In addition to the regular timetable Aggie's Pastoral Workers Kate Thorn and Si Reckless are getting out and about across the Naval Base raising morale with Smoothie 'pop-ups' and the always popular Bacon Pop-ups.

Aggie's Butties events are still thriving and growing with different departments and ships being reached every week. The regular Aggie's Butties event in the Haven sees an average of 120 personnel attending most weeks and the last Wednesday of the month is now called 'Walk in Wednesday' Charities and organisations such as the NFF, RNFPS and RNRMC are invited along to give personnel the opportunity to chat to them in a relaxed environment with a bacon butty and cuppa in hand!



HMS Collingwood words from Pastoral Worker Emma Boorn

It has been a remarkably busy time over the winter at HMS Collingwood. Aggie's regular events, including Aggie's Butties on a Tuesday are always a favourite with many personnel getting away from work at stand easy to enjoy a coffee and butty in the chaplaincy coffee bar. It has been wonderful to see personnel mixing, with phase 2 trainees being able to chat to and ask questions of more senior ranks who have been to sea.

The team helped with "Operation Care Package" over Christmas. This project is run by a wonderful group of people who support RN sailors who have nowhere other than base to go over the Christmas period. Rev Jon Backhouse was able to deliver the 'care packages' to lift the spirits of the sailors on base and let them know someone is thinking of them.

We have continued to open Wednesday and Thursday evenings, providing a space to enjoy games such as Darts, Pool, Table football, Xbox and play station alongside a cuppa or some nutty. Our pastoral worker Pete has had the privilege of walking alongside some of the regulars that come along each week, building connections and offering support to those struggling with adjusting to military life and being away from home, while offering some friendly competition on the pool table!

A PTI from the SARC hosted an event in support of Black History month with spokespeople talking about their experience in the RN and how it has impacted their lives. Aggie's pastoral workers attended the event, networking with other charities and members of the Commonwealth Network to show that, no matter what background, race, or culture, everyone is welcome to come and use the Chaplaincy coffee bar and chat to our pastoral workers Pete and Emma.

Alpha course has been successfully running with 15 sailors coming along to find out more about Christian life and why people have faith. They asked some big questions whilst sharing a lovely home cooked meal, watching a DVD and discussing the points raised. It's been a wonderful experience to facilitate this course, coming alongside our sailors as they explore more about the Christian faith with some fantastic conversations.

Emma has met with sailors that are struggling with budgeting and getting to grips with their finances. She continues to offer her skills from her previous roles as a debt advisor to anyone that is keen to seek support in this area. Emma can also deliver budgeting workshops in a group setting to help them either prepare for going to sea or just to manage their money to make the most of it.

We look forward to the warmer weather, being able to serve our butties in the tranquil garden with a pond and benches behind the chaplaincy coffee bar and running some new events in the evenings.





HMS NELSON

Tracey Harvey, one of the Aggie's pastoral workers in HMS Nelson, has been supporting the Bumps, Babies, Mums and Dads group led by WO1 Rosie Dodd, (manager for the Parent Support & Information Team (PSIT)). Each week Rosie arranges speakers, internal and external, to visit the group and give a presentation on what they have to offer and the support available to serving mums and dads who are pregnant or on parenting leave. This can range from education, changes in clothing policy for maternity wear, childcare advice and guidance, paediatric first aide, swimming group, Seafarers Advice and Information Line, Naval Families Federation, RNRMC Charity, and the Naval Children's Charity to name a few.

The PSIT is available for all serving parents in the RN or RFA but also supports local Army and RAF personnel. Through supporting the group, making drinks for the attendees (who get to drink a hot drink!) and looking after the children Tracey creates opportunities to have pastoral conversations with the beneficiaries. Zoom access to the meeting is also facilitated by Aggie's for those families who may not be able to attend the group in person but would like to remain in contact with other serving personnel and their friends.

Elsewhere the Nelson team have provided regular pastoral support to the Royal Marines School of Music, home comings, families days and affiliates days, sometimes going to sea for the day. They regularly visit ships alongside to do Storybook Waves recordings, deliver briefs to Divisional Officers, or to talk with individuals needing pastoral support. The team are also frequent visitors to the People Support Group where they support both those coming under the care of the group and the Divisional Officers with responsibility for managing those who are downgraded or between assignments.



In November Emma visited the new troop of Royal Marine Band Service Trainees whilst they were on exercise. New musicians complete a 14 week long course at Commando Training Centre prior to embarking upon their Phase 2 Musical training in Portsmouth. It was a fantastic opportunity to meet the trainees and importantly link together the pastoral care available to them at CTC and our team in Portsmouth.

Not long after returning from Christmas leave, Emma and Paul were invited to hold a pop up chaplaincy bacon morning on HMS Defender. The morning provided a fantastic chance for all departments to mingle and enjoy a roll. It is always a privilege to be asked to hold an event like this as it confirms the relationship which exists between ships and the pastoral care provision which is available to them both alongside and at sea.



HMS Raleigh

Aggie's Pastoral Worker Mark Kerridge helped with the RNRMC Charity World Gaming Day at HMS Raleigh in December. The RNRMC provided TVs and gaming consoles for the recruits to enable them to participate in the fundraising event.

Aggie's and RNRMC were looking for ways to alleviate isolation and tackle loneliness that many of the recruits can feel when they join Raleigh. The event was a perfect excuse for recruits to leave their mess decks and meet other personnel that are based at the Training school.

The RN E Sports team were on hand to help load the games onto consoles and demonstrate how to play many of the games, it soon became clear to all involved that there is a huge opportunity to expand the event and challenge other RN bases as well as the other Tri-Service E Sport associations.

As is Aggie's tradition, Mark was available to chat to and listen to recruits who needed some support and was on hand with many treats that the recruits took full advantage of.

Raleigh's CO joined the games, commenting that world gaming day was a great way to continue building teamwork.

HMS SULTAN

Aggie's Pastoral Workers Becky and Steve have been helping at as many seasonal events as they can at HMS Sultan. From providing soup and hot dogs at Bonfire night, the Sultan Christmas Panto and a special Christmas edition of the Storybook Waves book Club, the team have been popping up all over the base with food, fun and plenty of time to chat to personnel.



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Focus on: Aggie's Community Waves – Plymouth & Portsmouth

Natasha Humphery ~ Coordinator Aggie's Community Waves Plymouth

It has been a very busy time for the Aggie's Community Waves team in Plymouth since the last edition of A&A. The team kick started this period with a huge **Halloween Party** during half term, partnering with the RN Family and People Support team at the Crownhill RN Family centre. Helped by Aggie's Pastoral Workers Kate and Si from the HMS Drake team, Aggie's and RN FPS hosted over one hundred RN/RM family members at the event.

There were lots of long deployments and ship movements in November and December which meant the team were busy with pastoral conversations, helping families deal with the emotions of long deployments, ship movements and preparations for Christmas.

The Aggie's Community Waves team was invited to contribute to **HMS Portland's Families Day** at sea. Along with finding their sea legs while cruising around Plymouth Sound, out to the Breakwater and anchoring off Cawsand Bay, the Community Waves team was able to engage with many of the families onboard and offer them the opportunity to make Christmas 'Gonk's and Candy-cane reindeers. Being mentioned by the Ship's Captain in his welcome speech made sure that families knew who we were, what was on offer and felt encouraged to see how Aggie's could help them during the imminent deployment.

Craft & Sew Together has continued with various projects and have-a-go crafts. Beneficiaries have enjoyed making sugar-craft Christmas cake decorations, glass-engraved gifts, pebble-art and lots of Gonks! The Christmas wreath workshop went down a storm!

Walk & Talk along with **1-1 Walks** have been greatly enjoyed with conversations flowing while in the great outdoors and over hot drinks at the end. Those attending delighted in a few incidental glimpses of wildlife including wild deer, peregrine falcons, mandarin ducks, kingfishers and Dartmoor ponies along with many other sightings.

Vicky from Trinity House, the sponsors of Aggie's Community Waves in Plymouth, visited with Andy Gordon (Aggie's Ops and HR Manager) to see what the team get up to. Vicky was treated to a programme of activities including Coffee pop-up, a baby session at HMS Drake, Wavy Navy and, although the planned Walk & Talk session couldn't take place due to the weather, the back up plan of the café and craft went down very well – more Gonks were made!!!



The team's biggest event of 2022 was **The Christmas Party** with RN FPS at the Crownhill RN family centre. Pastoral Worker Letty & co-ordinator Natasha attended to help RN FPS and their volunteers host the 280 expected participants. It was a very busy day for the team with Natasha losing her voice as she decided to speak to all the families queuing for the face painting!!!! It was definitely an exhausting day for the team, but they spoke to lots of beneficiaries who will, hopefully, be enthused to join in with more activities in 2023. The Christmas fun continued with a Christmas wreath making workshop in the evening!

HMS Montrose's Homecoming was a significant event after a four year deployment. She was met with water cannons and fireworks, all accompanied by the RM band. The atmosphere was great and the weather was kind, all of which meant lots of smiling happy families and sailors. The SURFLOT officers and sailors came along, joining in the fun of making Candy Cane Reindeers which they popped into their top pockets alongside their medals – this added a bit of Christmas sparkle and approachability for the families! The charity tables were set up near the hot drinks/food area which meant the team was able to engage with nearly every person attending the event while they moved slowly along the refreshment queue. I made a candy cane reindeer with each family and gave them the Aggie's flyer along with a brief description of how we can help Service families, the events being planned, /our events/services etc

Several ships came into Plymouth to be alongside over Christmas with some departures & Christmas duties so mixed emotions for the various families



Portsmouth Extra! Extra! Read all about it!

Portsmouth Community Waves Make Waves! From Katie White, Co-ordinator of the Aggie's Community Waves team in Portsmouth

Summer seems so long ago but there was an evident influx of fun during October half term, starting with our **Light Party**. We bobbed for apples, raced to eat dangling donuts, and found prizes by sticking our hands in the biggest vat of jelly in the world! Jelly flooooooood!!!! There were glow sticks a plenty, musical statues and delicious hot dogs to fill tummies before we chose the best dressed.

Next up came our **'Get OWT gets out'** event at the spectacular Stansted House (Get Out With Toddlers). With thanks to Steve Harris and Hollam Nurseries Pick Your Own, we were able to create our own pumpkin patch with Stansted House as our backdrop. With our CEO, Chris New, on hand to help, everyone picked a pumpkin and carved curious creations – they were spooktacular! Next up came making our own broomsticks before whizzing along the 'Room on the Broom' story trail and up to the Forest School. Here we toasted marshmallows and made s'mores, created super sticky bird feeders, eco jewellery and autumn leaf wreaths.

We kickstarted November with a wonderful and memorable occasion for two of our **Pompey's Military Kids (PMK)** schools, who were privileged to meet Her Royal Highness Princess Anne as part of PMKs affiliation with the wonderful historic yacht **BOLEH**. The Princess Royal was keen to know about our connection and the work we do, as well as questioning the children's knowledge on knots!

November also brought about our **Remembrance Lantern Walk**. Chaplain Eamon McGraw conducted a moving ceremony next to the Royal Marines Museum Yomper statue, just before sunset. As darkness set in, we walked with our lanterns along the seafront to remember our fallen. Lest we forget.

And how can we forget the **Aggie's Annual Conference** at the lovely China Fleet Club. Not only was it amazing to see all our colleagues from around the country but our very own Pastoral Worker, Nikki Burge, only went and won the Aggie's Crazy Golf Tournament – she was so happy she nearly fell off the bridge! A woman of many talents.



Christmas craziness consumed December and we were delighted with the huge success of our **wreath making events**. We never imagined such beautiful creations and it was so lovely to sit down and get crafty with a luxury hot chocolate and a mince pie. The glitter is still ingrained into the carpet as a reminder of our fun and the relationships we built during the event. Our Christmas cheer didn't stop there, with **Christmas parties** starring our special guest, Chris Tingle, who explained the true meaning of Christmas, and our **PMK Nativity** in collaboration with Nelson Chaplaincy and St. Ann's Church in the Dockyard. We loved having our Communications Manager, Kathryn Hearn, as our Christmas star; she certainly shone brightly, leading the children around in their various nativity roles. We were also lucky enough to get some discounted tickets for the **Pompey Panto** – oh no you didn't – oh yes we did! The kids around Pompey will be singing 'Five Toilet Rolls' for all eternity.

January has brought new vigour to the team and we are excited to announce our new programme, complete with collaborations with RN FPS, Gosport Community Hub, Hampshire County Council, Naval Families Federation, Homestart Hampshire and the HMS Excellent PTI team to name a few. We are moving forward at pace with PMK and working together with more schools to ensure our service children are receiving the best provision possible. We have a yearlong plan of amazing activities on top of our regular weekly timetable with something to suit everyone, and new bits being added daily, so we do hope you will join us and other service families in the area. We are making waves so go with our flow! We would LOVE to see you!



Around & About

CTCRM

The new Pastoral Workers at CTCRM have truly settled into their new environment and are loving being able to support the recruits, families of those serving and the community at CTCRM.

Pastoral Worker Maria Fraser-Roe regularly visits the Medical Bay, taking biscuits to boost the morale of the nurses, thus ensuring that those who support our beneficiaries are, themselves, well supported.

Vicky has continued to grow her army of volunteers in the recently opened Gordon Messenger Centre which is a wonderful facility for parents and toddlers to meet, play in a safe environment, enjoy refreshment and engage in pastoral conversations.

There have been many events hosted by the CTCRM team over the last few months: The tombola and soft toy stand at the Fireworks night was very popular with families; the "Cake and Wet" stand popped up at chaplaincy for the recruits to enjoy; and an Aggie's Butties event was attended by around 120 recruits and staff. Last but not least, we must not forget the ever popular "Who Let the Dad's out" event that is held on the last Saturday of the month – for Dad's and kids only!



RNAS Culdrose

We have been busy at Culdrose with lots of fun and exciting things going on. We try and get involved with anything around the base and one thing I enjoy doing a lot is the health and wellbeing days. We team up with other people on the station and cook up some yummy food for all the personnel who attend. It is a great opportunity to talk to lots of people, including those running other stalls at the event.

We are still going around the station with our butties which raises moral and gives people the opportunity to stop and chat in their working day.

The lead up to Christmas was full of fun with the carol service, things happening at the community centre and the panto bus that came to Culdrose. I attended the panto, was there to greet everyone who came in, and gave them sweets to enjoy that were kindly gifted.

Our events continue here at Culdrose, getting out and about but also just recently having a cheese evening where we had so much fun. Many people came and joined in a quiz and food evening. I had pastoral conversations and so many laughs. These evening events are something people talk about for weeks and really look forward to.

I was lucky enough to receive an award in December for the work I do here at Culdrose, I really don't think I do anything out of the ordinary but I am so pleased I have an effect on making the lives of our beneficiaries a little brighter.



RM Condor – Arbroath

Aggie's Pastoral Worker Seonid Cunningham looks after the families at RM Condor in Arbroath. Seonid's regular schedule of events include coffee and chat, Aggie's Butties and Waggies with Aggies – a weekly walk with her White Westie who is called Aggie!!!! Seonid always tries to programme bespoke events for families at times when serving personnel are working but the children are on school holidays or in half term. For this term's half term event Seonid was joined by Fiona from Reading Force to host a Storybook Waves book club!

HMNB Clyde – Helensburgh

The team in Helensburgh have started up fish and chip Friday which is a fantastic opportunity for members of the RN and their families to all sit down around our kitchen table to enjoy some food and a good chat. This is an extremely popular event and Sam and I thoroughly enjoy it because it gives us good opportunities for pastoral conversations. We have also had wreath making over the Christmas period with sessions in both the afternoon and evening. This event is very popular every year and is a fantastic way for some of the participants to unwind and relax. We have been told that, despite the prickly Holly, it is very therapeutic.

We continue to run the book club once a month whenever possible and love to invite children of all ages in for snacks, craft work and reading of the books.

RFA

I was pleased to be invited on board Fort Victoria for a 24 hour visit whilst she was alongside in Devonport.

What I aim to do with ship visits is to find the team who work in the Ships Office, since that is a bit of a hub and a good place to leave material about Aggies and how to contact me.

It is essential that I am allocated a 'minder'. The ships are enormous and I would be instantly lost if left to wander. On this occasion it was the Med Tech who took me round, introduced me to everyone we met and delivered me to the Crew bar where Daily Orders decreed I was available to tell anyone who was free to come down a bit about Aggies and what I do.

The ship was in the throes of FOST training so it was busy and slightly tense. But a good experience for me to observe.

I had a cabin with a separate day area should anyone want a 1-1 talk. Very comfortable – I felt well looked after.

I have visited cadets at HMS Raleigh and BRNC Dartmouth, delivering a session to the RFA Leadership and Management Course.

The main aim of all these visits is to introduce myself personally to as many people as possible in a neutral environment. The hope is that if at any point they need to support that a PW can offer, they are more likely to seek help from someone they have met. Because the RFA model is rather different to the RN, I don't have the opportunity to engage with people through the sort of events other PWs can run in their Havens. I have tried to find out where the seamen are when they are not at home and seek them out. An Aggie's PW is still a fairly new thing for the RFA and it is a challenge to let them know that they are welcome to join in with what is offered.



New Starters



Kathrine Clarke – Pastoral Worker – Helensburgh

Kathrine is married to Lewis who is in the Royal Navy - she has been a Navy spouse for over 10 years. Kathrine and Lewis have two boys, 3 & 7, and have now settled in Balloch, Loch Lomond. Kathrine has experienced much of what Navy-wife life has to offer, including all the ups and downs of long deployments, hard goodbyes and exciting homecomings with all the other emotions in-between.

In her spare time Kathrine enjoys playing recreational netball and hiking in the beautiful Scottish hills. She started off volunteering for Aggies and is now proud to officially be a part of the wonderful Aggies team.



Sarah Taylor – Pastoral Worker – CTRM

Sarah is a former Music & RE teacher who loves working with young people, whatever the context! With her husband she has 3 grown up sons - bringing them up proved to be a perfect training ground for working with the recruits at CTRM. She is currently studying at Moorlands College for a Masters in Applied Theology, which is bringing her surprising amounts of joy. In Sarah's spare time you can find her playing piano and singing, hosting and sharing delicious food with people, or going for walks round the lanes where she lives, chatting with neighbours and friends.

Kiki Cotterill – Pastoral Worker – Hamworthy

I'm Kiki, married to Matt who is based at Hamworthy, we live with our 3 very loud sons, Barnaby - a large labradoodle who accompanies me each Wednesday on Aggies Waggies and a very aloof cat - Dickens.

I have a low-key addiction to trainers/shoes that I've promised my husband I'm working on...

My background is in property and interior design but when I read the job description for Aggies Pastoral Worker I just couldn't think of a better job.

Aggies is a Naval Charity Dedicated to supporting the serving men and women of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, and their families.

My role is very varied, I see my primary function to provide emotional and spiritual support for the wives and children, this can look like chatting on the phone, having coffee, or lending practical support. My faith is important to me, and I am always at the monthly church on camp service.

Having been a military wife during countless deployments I know first-hand how much of a rollercoaster it can be.

Fiona Lang

Fiona joined us in January 2023 and brings with her experience working with children and families and Human Resources. Having served for almost a decade in the Army, Fiona left in 2007 and embarked on various roles, including many working within churches locally.

Fiona is currently training as an ordinand in the Church of England and hopes her experiences can help others and is looking forward to the opportunity to speak to beneficiaries. A bit of a chocoholic, you can expect anything she's planning to involve chocolate somehow!

In her spare time (when she has some!) is spent reading and watching TV and films. Fiona also has an almost teenage son who keeps her busy.



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Our supporters



Aggie's continues to be blessed by the continued financial support of the organisations that provide our grants and the generosity of our donors and supporters who have faithfully given us both money and prayer in support of our work.

Thank you!



Aggie's is a Christian charity that has been serving the Royal Navy since 1876. It bears the name of its founder, Dame Agnes Weston, who set up the charity to provide support and comfort to the Royal Navy through the provision of Royal Sailor's Rests in Dockyard areas. Although the Rests have now gone, our Pastoral Workers continue to abide by the principal established by Aggie, namely, to demonstrate the Love of God to all members of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and their families by providing help and pastoral support without judgement or prejudice.



"For the Glory of God and the Good of the Service"

If you would like to learn more about the work of Aggie Weston's and how you can support us, either by donating, volunteering, or remembering us in your will please visit our website at aggies.org.uk or contact our central office on 023 9265 0505.