

MAKING *A* DIFFERENCE



2020



Serving the Naval Family since 1876

Impact Report 2020



**Dame Agnes Weston's Royal Charity
for the Naval Service**

Company No. 11114651
Charity No. 1176596

Patrons

Her Majesty the Queen
Ministry of Defence

Chairman of Trustees
Cdre Bob Fancy RN (Retired)

Chief Executive Officer
Chris New, OBE, FCIPD

Our Year in figures



Locations
18



Pastoral Workers
31



Volunteers
24



Pastoral Worker hours
per week
640



Coffee lounge
16

"The appearance of your Pastoral Worker, with their ever-present Aggie's polo shirt, infectious smile and ability to always make the time to chat, and most importantly, to listen, has made them incredibly popular across the base. They care for everyone at every level from most junior trainee to the Command. I hadn't realised the impact that a great Aggie's worker can have; I could not now imagine myself without one."

Base Executive Officer



Acts of Kindness
160,782



Storybook Waves
Recordings
535



Pastoral
Conversations
2944



Children benefitting
from Storybook Waves
786



Book Clubs Run
47



Children attending
Book Club
646



Annual number of Pastoral
Worker hours gifted to
naval community in the year
30,720



The space in which we are operating

The Naval Service was engaged in 111 operations in the last Financial Year. On a “typical” day towards the end of 2019 there were 6824 personnel on operations in 7 theatres around the world. At the same time 4180 were engaged in operational training, planning or otherwise preparing to move into an operational role.

Life is busy for the men and women of the Naval Service and there is no indication that things are going to slow down any time soon. Whether they are operational right now or on a course and preparing, there will be those who are feeling anxious, stressed or vulnerable. They might have their own issues or perhaps they may be worried about their family.

The Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary are filled with top quality and robust people. So, they will generally park their personal issues and get the job done. That is what they do; there are no “snowflakes” here.

But sometimes, in this high-pressure environment even the toughest members of the team – which includes serving people and their family members – can find comfort in the work of an Aggie’s Pastoral Worker. A cup of tea here, a comfy sofa in front of the TV there. A bacon butty or game of pool. A quiet chat, a shoulder to cry on or an ear to bend. That’s where you will find the Aggie Weston’s team; quietly being there. Ready to listen, encourage, comfort and support.



The Importance of Talking and Listening

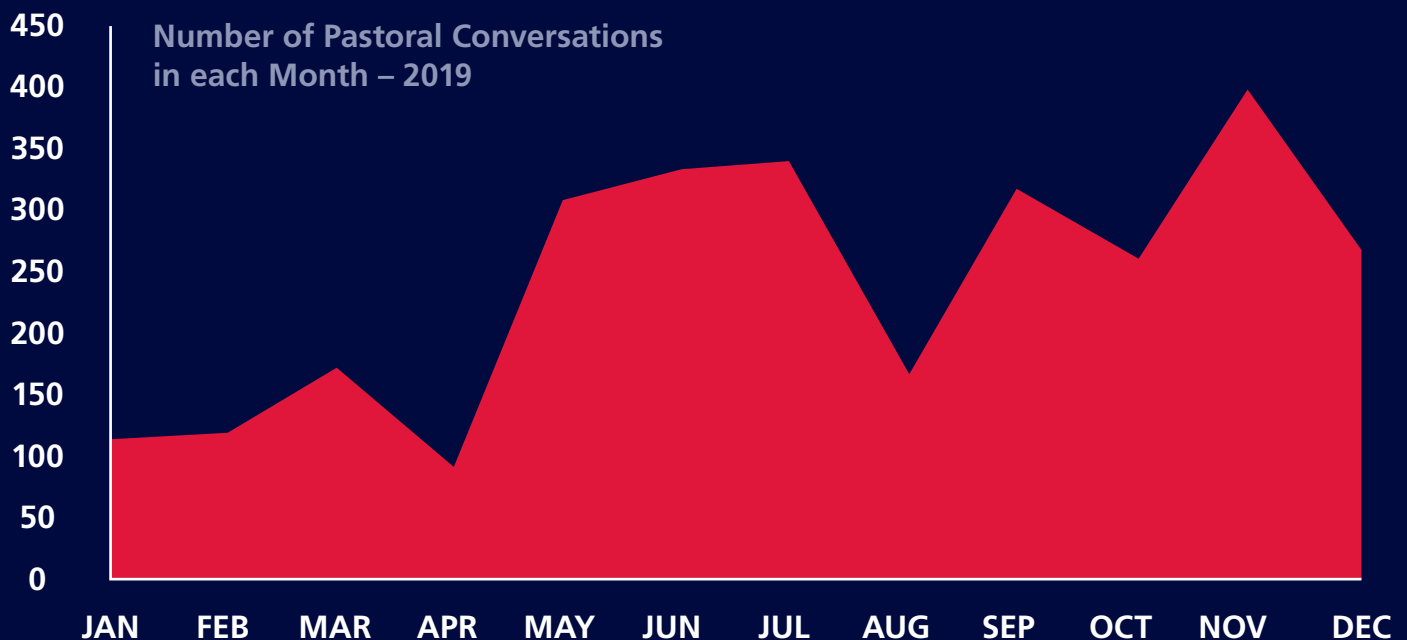
It is easy to forget that we all possess one of the most effective tools for helping people who are feeling stressed or anxious; the power to listen. Whether or not we use this tool to actively focus on those who are talking to us, and to pay close attention to what they are saying, is a personal choice and perhaps dependent on the time available. Aggie's has time, and chooses to listen!

Many mental health concerns, such as depression, anxiety and addictions, thrive on loneliness. In the robust environment of the naval community it can be difficult for people to talk about their problems, and the longer it takes to open-up and talk, the worse the problem can become.

Talking things through privately with someone we trust can help us see issues differently, get things in perspective and ultimately to work out solutions to get through it. Even just knowing that somebody is there to listen can make a huge difference. Mental Health experts acknowledge that giving someone who is feeling stressed your time and undivided attention is one of the best things you can do to support them. So that is what Aggie's seeks to do.

In 2019 we have seen a significant increase in the number of Pastoral Conversations Aggie's staff are having and the support that we are able to offer through these.

We will continue to look for new ways of "creating the space" for this important area of our work.





Case Study

"Last week a Leading Hand from one of the sections was brought over to me by his friend (who I have met with in the past during a period of particular difficulty). He was in complete crisis, depressed, tearful and scared to engage with any agency that could possibly help him. I made coffee and it became immediately clear he was in need of professional help. After coffee I took him to the Personnel Support Group where he talked to the Warrant Officer in charge who in turn booked him an appointment with the Medical Centre. The guy is now medically downgraded and booked onto a Battleback1 course with the Royal British Legion. Since his diagnosis he has been back to see me and is far less anxious about his future."

Aggie's Pastoral Worker



What is a pastoral worker?

Aggie's Pastoral Workers spend their days looking for opportunities to help people in practical ways. They seek to be ready to listen, encourage, comfort and support whenever there is an opportunity to do so.

When an Aggie's Pastoral Worker asks "how are you today?" they really want to know the answer. They understand that there is nothing worse than telling someone about a personal concern, only to find that the person "listening" was checking up on their mobile and hadn't actually heard the issue at all.

Aggie Weston's Pastoral Workers are trained to actively listen. They are not counsellors and can't solve every problem, but they can help people to get confusing and conflicting thoughts out of their brain and into a place where they can be considered objectively; and the Pastoral Worker will also know where more help can be found if it is needed.

Aggie's Pastoral Workers are Christian people who care for people of all faiths and none. Not for reward or recognition, but just because that is the right thing to do. They try to live by what the Bible tells them: "Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger." (James 1:19)

"I would just like to express my thanks for the constant support and boost to morale that you have delivered over the last 10 months I have spent in training. Thank you for being there when we needed a chat over a wet (drink) and for genuinely being interested in how we are getting on."

Royal Marine recruit at CTCRM Lymstone



What does it mean to be a pastoral Worker?

Pastoral Worker hours per week **640**



Rachel O'Malley joined the Aggie's team in September as the pastoral Worker at RM Norton Manor near Taunton. When asked what it means to her to be a Pastoral Worker she summed it up as this:

PEOPLE ORIENTATED
ALWAYS SOMETHING DIFFERENT
SUPPORTING & ENCOURAGING
TAKING TIME
OPPORTUNITY AWARE
ROYAL MARINES
AGGIE'S TEAM MEMBER
LOVING ONE ANOTHER

WIDER COMMUNITY
ONE STEP AT A TIME
REACHING OUT
KINGDOM SERVICE
EVERYONE INCLUDED
RESPECT FOR ALL



What does a Pastoral Worker actually do?

- Stop what they are doing and give their undivided attention to someone who wants to talk.
- Create a 'home from home' environment on the base where people can put their feet up and relax.
- Make sure that the PlayStation is ready and the games are available.
- Check outside the venue to make sure that there is no-one hanging around outside and too nervous to come in.
- Learn who has expertise in all the key areas so that people can be signposted on if they need more help.
- Go where they are needed, to make it easy for deploying personnel to record a Storybook Waves story for their children.
- Ask a personal question and listen to the answer no-matter how long it takes.
- Approaches the service person who is quietly in the corner of the Haven in need of a chat but is too nervous to come forward.



"I just wanted to send a message about one of your Pastoral Workers at our camp. They are an absolute credit to your organisation. I was going through a tough time a few months ago and they were there to lend a balanced, unbiased and caring ear. The support and advice they gave me was invaluable at a time when I felt like I had no one else to turn to. The effort they put into organising events on camp is admirable, and I have nothing but the utmost respect for them. They are a truly wonderful person."

Lance Corporal, Royal Marines

Where are we?

Coffee lounge 16



We work at Naval bases and RM camps all over the country however 2019 has seen Aggie's Pastoral Workers being placed in two further establishments in order to support the work of the Naval Chaplaincy. At HMS Raleigh near Plymouth, Pastoral Workers Brian Green and Mark Kerridge provide support to new recruits both on camp and during exercises on Dartmoor and Rame Head. At RM Norton Manor, newly recruited Pastoral Worker Rachel O'Malley works in support of 40 Commando and the families living near Taunton. These new Pastoral Worker roles are only possible through the generosity of our funding organisations: Greenwich Hospital at Raleigh and the Royal Marines Charity at Norton Manor.



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Supporting the Royal Navy since 1694



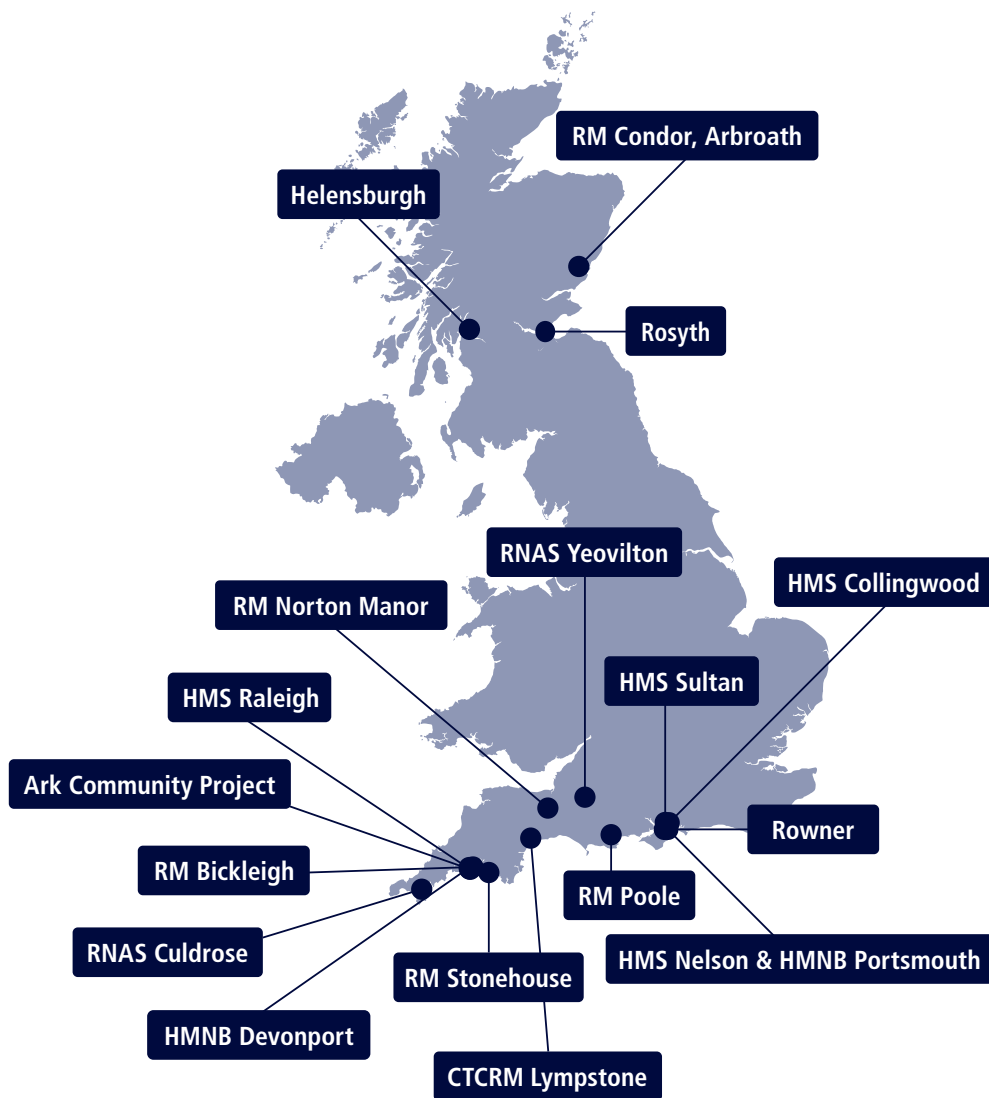


We provide 31
pastoral workers
at 18 locations
across the UK.

Pastoral Workers 31



Locations 18



Storybook Waves

The Storybook Waves project continues to be funded through the generosity of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and offers practical support to the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary and their families. By providing recording equipment and books to each of our Pastoral Teams, pastoral workers can enable personnel to record bedtime stories for their children to listen to whilst they are separated.

This very simple idea keeps families connected whilst they are miles apart and helps children deal with the separation from their serving parent, in some cases it even helps the children to sleep – knowing that Mummy or Daddy is still there!

"Thank you to you and your team. We recently received a recording of my husband reading to our children and books. Not living near a military base makes it difficult to feel part of the military community and the support which comes with it. My son has cried every day for the last 2 weeks but for the first night of listening to his voice he went to bed without tears and slept all night. You have made 2 children very happy and I am very grateful."

Naval wife

During 2019 the Storybook Waves project invested in a number of new recording kits to make the service more accessible and provide the opportunity to record stories mid-deployment. In addition to the 35 recording kits that are available to deployed vessels and units, the service is now offered to RN personnel serving at RAF Marham and members of the RFA.

2019 saw the Storybook Waves 'Book Club in a Box' initiative enter its second year, with groups running across the UK, supporting families and connecting communities through books and crafts. The 'Book Club in a box' project has secured its third year of funding from the Annington Trust – meaning we can support even more families in 2020.

2020 will see the launch of the Storybook Waves Hidden Books initiative, which will be launched during the spring in Portsmouth and across our social media streams.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your support over the past year. I know I have said it before, but those members of the Ship's Company who have made recordings for their children are delighted, but not half as much as the children! This is a hugely important link with home and helping young people manage the separation from parents and loved ones."

Deployed sea going Chaplain

Storybook Waves Recordings

535

Children benefitting from
Storybook Waves

786





"I have used Storybook Waves twice when I was on deterrent patrols. I have no contact with my daughters so having them able to hear my voice while I was unable to speak to them in person really helped them when they were missing me. Especially at bed time. I would recommend using Storybook Waves for anyone with children who is going on extended deployment."

Submariner



Community

Annual number of Pastoral Worker hours gifted to naval community in the year



30,720

As well as supporting service personnel "inside the wire," Aggie's Pastoral Workers also spend time in the naval community working with Service families. Whilst we recognise that naval service families are spread all around the country, we focus our effort on the Service Family Accommodation estates in the vicinity of the naval establishments. This strategy is based on the fact that families who move away from their friends and family support networks in their hometown may need a little bit of extra support. In some cases we facilitate Aggie's events, and in others we offer our help at events run by 'Naval Service Family and People Support' (NSFPS), the Methodist Forces Board and others. It is all about working together, helping to create friendly and robust communities and then creating opportunities to encourage people to join in. Our Storybook Waves Bookclub is a particularly good example of this side of our work and is focussed on families with a deployed member. Likewise, coffee mornings, toddlers' stay and play sessions, craft gatherings, after school teatime clubs and summer fun days are all events which have been successful in encouraging community cohesion.



In 2019 the Children's Fund were able to assist Aggie's in creating a new Pastoral Worker post supporting the service families in the Portsmouth area.





"When we moved to Widewell from Barnstaple 18 months ago it was really nice to find out about the Ark Community Project and "Twinkle Tots" through a flyer posted to our married quarters house. Back then I had a 14-month-old son and I was pregnant with my second child, so it was so lovely to meet mums and people in the area. My eldest, loved going there every Tuesday where he could play along with other children, make friends, do some crafting, storytelling. He will miss the ladies at the Ark who always were so lovely to us. Thank you for your time, effort and kindness which was greatly appreciated."

Royal Marines wife, Plymouth



Acts of Kindness **160,782**



Aggie's cares enough to:

- Provide soup and rolls to the sailors that have to man the car park at big public events.
- Pray with someone if that is what they want.
- Order pizza for film night.
- Get the kids tea ready at the Families tea time club.
- Get dressed up in a Gruffalo suit to keep the children happy
- Provide a quiet space for mums and babies at Families Day.
- Paint children's faces (even as pirates!!).
- Accompany a worried sailor to a Medical Board of Survey.
- Run "Who Let the Dads Out" events for Dad's and their children
- Supervise a Bouncy Castle during a holiday club.
- Have a tissue ready and not notice when even the most macho marine gets emotional.
- Help volunteers organise community events
- Meet a team of recruits on exercise on Exmoor and give them a piece of chocolate brownie.
- Make sure all the kids can join in the fun.
- Visit people in their workplace.
- Visit someone in sickbay.
- Learn sign language so that they can communicate with all members of the community.
- Lead a chaplaincy walk along the Cornish coast.



2020 Projects

At Aggie's we love what we do and we are always looking at ways that we can increase our reach in supporting the naval family. In 2020, through the generosity of our grant givers, we will be progressing the following projects:

The RNRMC has been a longstanding supporter of Aggie's and in 2020 they have confirmed the intention to fund elements of our work for the next 3 years. The RNRMC Greenwich Hospital Grant will enable us to strengthen the work we do with service families, secure the future management of the Storybook Waves project and enhance the level of support provided in Phase Two training establishments.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund is another charity that has had close links with Aggie's and contributed to our work for a number of years. 2020 will see even closer working between the two charities with Children's Fund case workers travelling around the UK and working alongside Aggie's Pastoral Workers in supporting families.

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary is an integral part of the naval capability. Through the support of the Merchant Navy charity, Trinity House, Aggie's will be recruiting a Pastoral Worker to be based within Commodore RFA headquarters to work exclusively with RFA personnel and their families. As well as co-ordinating Storybook Waves within the RFA, the PW will also be able to provide a ship to shore link for families and meet RFA personnel as they attend safety training in Portsmouth.

For many years Aggie's has supported and worked in close collaboration with the ARK community charity based on the Widewell estate in Plymouth. In April 2020 the project will transfer to Aggie's and the staff, with their expertise in supporting service families, will be employed directly by Aggie's. It is intended that this enhanced Aggie's presence, outside of the local military establishment, will provide the catalyst to reach other service families in the wider Plymouth area.

The BFBS (British Forces Broadcasting Service) Big Salute is an annual campaign that raises vital funds for Armed Forces charities. We are delighted to have received a grant from them that will assist us in providing "pop-up" shelter and family support facilities at activities where beneficiaries are gathered; for example, at the quayside when a ship is deploying. This project gets us closer to where people are and increases the likelihood of us being in the right place at the right time.



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TRINITY HOUSE



GREENWICH HOSPITAL
Supporting the Royal Navy since 1694



Message from Chair of Trustees

2019 has been a very successful year for Aggie Weston's. Our Pastoral Workers have become even more deeply embedded within the communities where they operate, and as a result the value of their role has become more appreciated by the beneficiaries that they serve. I have been particularly pleased to see our team getting firmly established in HMS RALEIGH where their pastoral support is firmly focussed on the recruits who are temporarily out of the training pipeline. These young sailors can easily become frustrated and discontent, and we know that sometimes it only takes an extra little bit of encouragement to help someone "stick with it" rather than give up. I am also pleased to report that with the generous support of Trinity House we are planning to increase our support for the sailors in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. These are just two examples of the way our team actively looks for the needs and then works out the best way to help. It is my honour to Chair the trustees of this vibrant charity and you can be assured that our incredible team will be doing all that they can in 2020 to provide encouragement, comfort and support to the serving members of the RN, RM and RFA, and their families.

Bob Fancy



thank
you

Aggie's is a team effort and without the generosity and commitment of our volunteers, supporters and partners we would not have been able to have had the impact that you have read about in the previous pages.

A huge **thank you** to everyone who volunteers with us; whether it is working alongside our Pastoral Workers supporting activities, editing Storybook Waves recordings or overseeing the management of the charity as a Trustee.

It requires funding to offer the services we provide and throughout 2019 Aggie's has been blessed with grants, legacies and donations that have enabled us to carry out our work.

Thank you to everybody who has supported us financially. We will continue to use the money you gift us efficiently and responsibly to ensure we have the maximum impact.

And finally, **thank you** to all our supporters and friends who pray faithfully for Aggie's and the people we serve. Knowing that our work is covered in prayer is a huge encouragement to us and makes all the difference.

Aggie's is grateful to the following partners and organisations who have supported our work; without their help we would not have been able to touch as many lives.



The Privy Purse Charitable Trust

The Pemberton-Barnes Trust

The Everest Trust

The Scouloudi Foundation

HMS DEFENDER Central Fund

Naval Service Family and People Support



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 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**.