



NATIONAL PRESIDENT

RICHARD A MATTHEWS

**(BOURNEMOUTH AND SHAFTESBURY & GILLINGHAM 41 CLUBS)
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June 2009

Dear Club Contact/Chairman,

The President's Five Objectives

1. JOINT PRESIDENTS' CHARITY –



In the June edition of LINKS you will have seen that Jan Mulqueen, National President of Tangent Clubs, and I have committed ourselves to a joint campaign in aid of Help for Heroes.

For every servicemen killed in the current conflicts, 14 have been injured, some very seriously. If this is not bad enough, the even greater problem, is the growing number suffering from serious mental health because of the intense operating conditions in places like Afghanistan. Most soldiers today experience more action in a 6 months tour, than soldiers did in the whole of WWII. Many servicemen who are invalided out of the forces find they are unprepared for civilian life and many end up homeless.

There are very few communities that have not shared the loss or injury of a local serviceman. Help for Heroes has a bold plan to build several new centres like the tri service rehabilitation facility at Headley Court, but closer to the six main barracks, so soldiers can be treated and counselled nearer to their families' homes.

Our request to you is simple,

Give us £50 from every 41 Club and Tangent Club and we will raise over £80,000.

Jan is hoping that Tangent Club Chairmen will embrace the idea of cascading lunches where Club Chairmen invite guests for lunch and asks for a small donation to the appeal. Those attending then commit to hold their own lunch with their own guests and do the same and so on. This brings in new money and we avoid keep asking our own members to put their hands in their pockets.

I am not asking 41ers to go street collecting, unless they want to and are prepared to get the licences. I just feel that, with a bit of effort and a little imagination in using our considerable membership, we could raise a significant amount for our wounded young men without spending hours standing in the rain. I have recently asked my local Rotary and Probus Clubs to support my appeal which they have done. So many 41ers share club memberships why not widen our appeal and involve your local Rotary or Probus Clubs as well?

Very importantly, H4H has a local representative in every county whom you can contact to speak at your club meetings. They do not charge for this service but obviously expect us to contribute to the appeal.

The H4H website: www.helpforheroes.org.uk is excellent and contains everything you need to know. There are many items for sale including badges, T Shirts, ties, wrist bands etc. Also the website has comprehensive information about ideas for fundraising.

My motivation comes from not only H4H, which needs massive support, but also from the fact that the Presidential Appeal provides a terrific opportunity to get involved with our clubs, our communities and, perhaps the media, to lift awareness of 41 Club.

Please send cheques payable to Help for Heroes to my address above. This will enable us to track our donations. If you wish to contact H4H: -

Our registration Number is:- 20090209-0229-5913.
Use this number to purchase items on sale or return and in any email/correspondence with H4H.

2. Membership Survey and Developing a New Strategy for the Association.

At the Southport AGM, the National Membership Officer was instructed to prepare proposals for selected membership for the AGM in Scarborough. The National Executive is currently preparing a new market strategy for the Association which will outline our membership options.

The results of the recent survey of Clubs by the Membership Officer are published on the website.

About 67% of clubs support a change to our membership rules. If Clubs wish to adopt new membership rules it is important they attend the National AGM in Scarborough to have their vote.

3. All Clubs to Debate Membership and their Future at November 2009 meetings.

In my address at Southport I asked all clubs to use their November meetings to hold a debate about the future. The National Exec intends to provide material to aid this debate. Many Clubs (est. 300) have strong Round Tables but over 60% of our clubs will soon have none. We need to discuss the way forward.

4. Improve Communication by Ending Bulk Mailings of LINKS

In LINKS you should see that we wish to end bulk mailings to one addressee. Every member by paying a capitation fee is entitled to receive their own copy. For historical reasons some clubs choose to deny members their right to have a magazine. The current magazine circulation is 16,000 to a membership of 19,500 approx. 8000 go direct to individual homes, 8000 are bulk mailed. Potentially 11,500 members might never read the magazine.

The magazine is the most important medium to involve our members. Travelling to so many Clubs, I soon encounter comments where it is obvious that we are just not getting the message across. Many Clubs hold views that are simply the result of a lack of information. They lack the other side of the story to make a reasoned decision. The day has come when we must break through the barrier to involve our membership in deciding our future. The latest LINKS raises many issues and we want members to respond.

5. Reward the Club Unsung Heroes.

In every club there are dedicated volunteers who have for years given unstinting service. Too often these devoted club members get little or no recognition for their efforts. I think it is time that club members recognised these individuals and my suggestion is the presentation of the Service Award. These can be ordered via the website, through your National Councillor or contact Sue in Marchesi House.

41 Club stands at the edge of an abyss. Do nothing and we will slip down the slope to oblivion. The National Executive and the National Council believe there is a different way. Our objective is to raise interest in our members in the hope that a few might form local action teams to tackle issues affecting our future. Round Table needs our support, our communities need our support and our clubs need a greater sense of purpose to survive. Hopefully, if I achieve my objectives change will start to occur. We have got to stop being negative. Young men do join Round Table. We cannot use our children as the benchmark for life today and keep making the excuse they are so busy. 99% of young men have no idea of what Round Table is. We have a responsibility to tell them. A job that no one else can do but us! Let us give them the choice.

Yours in continued friendship,

Richard Matthews