The magazine for HASSRA members



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# MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY

DWP colleagues from Jobcentre Plus, Service Centres and Visiting Services in the North West, who are participating on the Emerging Talent development programme, were tasked with raising awareness and fundraising for an official Civil Service Charity, the Lifeboat Fund that supports the RNLI. They decided to arrange a visit to Fleetwood's RNLI Lifeboat Station to find out more about the lifesaving work of the dedicated volunteers and to find out how funds raised are spent.

They met at Fleetwood, geared up for a jam-packed day of learning, where they observed the passion, enthusiasm and inspirational work of the dedicated crew of volunteers based on the Fylde coast, who between them had fifteen awards for Gallantry.

One volunteer Alan, and two crew mates provided a history of the origins of Fleetwood's station, in service for more than 150 years. In the station is an all-weather Shannon Class Lifeboat named "Kenneth James Pierpoint" and an inshore D Class Lifeboat named "Harbet". They provide lifesaving aid in the surrounding sea and connecting rivers, as well as supporting Morecambe Bay and Blackpool stations.

As well as storing and maintaining the lifesaving crafts, the station brings the community together with a shared goal of keeping the waters safe.

The group got to experience the day-to-day running of the station, seeing the vessel maintenance and hearing personal experiences from the volunteers of how they saved lives and recovered boats and casualties from the sea.

There were sombre recollections of loss, in particular, one day in 2004 when 21 cockle pickers sadly lost their lives in Morecambe Bay.

The RNLI was founded in 1824 and has saved in excess of 146k lives at sea. The RNLI Lifeboat Crews are ready to respond 24 hours a

day, 365 days a year from 238 lifeboat stations around the UK and Ireland. It typically takes eight minutes, from the pager sounding to the RNLI response.

During summer, in partnership with Swim England, thousands of children aged 7 to 14 are instructed on how to stay safe on beaches through Swim Safe sessions.

In 2023 it cost the RNLI £191 million to run their lifesaving services. This money was raised from donations and fundraising activities. It is their hope that sufficient funds will be raised in 2025 to replace older lifeboats with the advanced Shannon Class vessels.

#### Fundraising is a massive part of this group's mission to support the Lifeboat Fund.

You can support us with that mission by joining colleagues in DWP North West throughout May to fundraise. The significance of fundraising in May is associated with the distress signal, as those in peril would raise the call MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY to request urgent support.

We ask you to support us in our fundraising endeavours and encourage all Civil Servants to wear something yellow on 7th May 2025.

Perhaps you could also organise some other activities to raise vital funds for this very worthy cause. You will find more fundraising information and a pack at The Lifeboat Fund.





We have set up a Just Giving page, please give what you can and be sure to tell us where you're from and what you did today to help save lives. Thank you.





# Welcome to the Spring Edition of HASSRA Livelife Magazine

The Spring Equinox has been reached, signalling brighter mornings and longer evenings, it's the official beginning of Spring. We have also reached the end of Ramadan, and I wish you a joyous and blessed Eid.

If you have been hibernating, you might not have realised this is HASSRA's 90th year since first being launched on 22nd March 1935, and we have lots planned to celebrate with you throughout this milestone year, so read on to find out more.

I have some great articles submitted by HASSRA regions to tell you about the wonderful work they are doing in the community to make it a better place and to raise much needed funds for charities.

The HASSRA Heroes initiative has been re-launched, so make sure you tell us what you did today to make you feel proud. We love reading and sharing your stories.

If you have a hero to nominate or a story to feature, please send it to the email address below and we will try to publish as many as possible in our Livelife Magazine or our website. hassracommunications.andmarketing@ dwp.gov.uk

Robin Williams said, "Spring is nature's way of saying 'Lets Party!'" and the HASSRA Awards season will indeed soon be upon us, providing an opportunity to celebrate the success of our members in the company of our Senior Leadership Team. We do thank them sincerely for their support, it's even more important we continue our successful partnership as the Civil Service faces the challenges ahead.



I hope you like the bluebells on the front cover. Spring is here, and summer is definitely on its way. Image courtesy of Fred Linney, HASSRA Scotland.

Jacky Sneddon Editor

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# Picture Perfect

### A spotlight on the HASSRA National Photography **Competition - Champions of 2024**

A staggering 343 images were submitted by members to the National HASSRA Photography Competition 2024, in the categories Memories, Celebrations and Reflections. An extremely challenging job indeed for the Awards Committee. After much deliberation they made their final selections and the winners are, in first place overall, Steven Todner (HASSRA North East) with his image submitted in the Reflections category. First place in the Celebrations category was awarded to Liam Baillie (HASSRA Scotland). First placed in the Memories category went to Susan Gibson (HASSRA North East).

Also placed in the competition were submissions from Simrian Kaur, Steven Thomas, Fred Linney, Andrew Price, Simon Daly, Zoe King, Steven Dudley, Stephen Ballam, Debra Davies, Karen Williams, Thea Bryant, Russell Pearce and Leighton Jukes. Well done to all of our winners!



All submissions can be viewed on our HASSRA Flickr page but here are the winners for you to enjoy.



#### **Steven Todner**

It was an honour to win as there were lots of very good photographs, and the standard was very high.

The photograph was taken during a walk from Bollihope heading towards Rookhope.

This was one photograph that looked better in black and white with a subtle vignette, I wasn't sure about the tree in the middle of the photograph but, I think in this case, it does work.



#### **Liam Baillie**

The image is of a newly married couple on the Glasgow subway. I was asked to shoot their low key wedding because they were fans of my street photography, focused on the people of Glasgow. They wanted very candid images, so I waited for organic moments like this to happen before shooting.

It was refreshing to be able to capture real moments rather than setting and posing them, I feel it made for a more timeless image.

#### Susan Gibson

Winning this competition enabled me and my daughter to take my dad to some concerts. Before he got dementia he used to go to dances with my mam before she died. He loves music, singing and dancing.

We've used some of the money I won to take him to see Roy Orbison and Elvis tribute concerts where he danced

and sang the entire show. He can't remember going but he's made memories for us to cherish and remember.

Thank you so much for choosing our picture it means the world to us.





# Artistic Excellence

### Celebrating the Best in Drawing, Painting, and Mixed Media!

The Awards Committee were delighted to receive an amazing 161 submissions from our extremely talented HASSRA members for the HASSRA National Art Competition 2024, deliberating over the submissions at length.

Coming in first place overall was Zainab Hussein -HASSRA East Midlands for her painting titled Jack of all Trades'.

"Jack of All Trades is a self-portrait and a reflection on the energy and tension I felt this year, juggling countless roles and ambitions. In this piece, my face catches the sunlight, with a Jack of Spades card casting a shadow across my skin – representing the 'Jack of all trades, master of none' feeling that defines this chapter of my life. Using oils, acrylics, pen, and ink, I've layered techniques and mediums to mirror the balance I'm constantly seeking in my art, career, and personal life. This work reflects both the freedom and the weight of wanting to excel in everything, and the quiet chaos of striving for more."

Jennifer Fowler - HASSRA South West came top in the Drawing category with a lovingly created image of her pet dog, Buddy.

"Buddy, my two-year-old Fox Red Labrador. The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart. Buddy is the



kindest, most loving, loyal dog I have ever met. He has changed my life and was the inspiration for my piece, a celebration of his life."

First Place in the Mixed Media and 3D category went to Lyndsay Massey - HASSRA North West

"I crocheted these from a pattern named The Fallen Soldier created for Remembrance Day to honour our lost souls, past and present.

They're a beautiful design in remembrance of our armed forces. all of whom are unsung heroes who have protected us for generations."



The talent did not end there however, with further cash prizes also awarded to Tracy Passey, Elaine Nash, Rebecca Cresswell, Shanthi Ananthanarayan, Tanya Woodside, Kevin Hawarth, Lynne Arnison, Rachel Dines, Jennifer Jamieson, Sharon Holmes, Jennifer Fowler, Matt Honey, Gargi Chatterjee and Charlotte Joyce.

Well done to you all and thank you for sharing with us.

If you want to see all entries for 2024 so you can plan for this year's competition, check them out at HASSRA Flickr.

# A Lifetime of Giving

Celebrating Our Volunteer's Impact - Richard Huw Jones MBE

As a **HASSRA** member and a dedicated, loyal Civil Servant for 27 years, Richard Huw Jones is an accomplished badminton player who has represented HASSRA Wales at three HASSRA Festivals. He has also played for the National Badminton Team at eight events, including Crawley, where he won the National Championship.

Richard also represented the National HASSRA Badminton Team against many opponents in the wider Civil Service.

At the 2024 HASSRA Wales Sports Day, Richard represented Ty Taf, where he ably demonstrated his passion, strength, grit and determination to succeed, and what a performance it was. Richard was the overall winner in the HASSRA Wales 2024 Badminton competition, and as such, he attended by invitation, the prestigious HASSRA Wales award ceremony to receive his award.

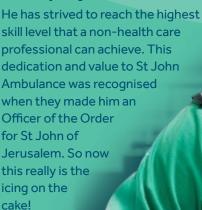
It is with great pleasure, honour, pride and camaraderie that I can now share with you some of the most fantastic and honourable news that Richard has just been awarded Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

in the King's 2025 New Year's Honours List for his dedicated service and commitment to St. John Ambulance Wales and his community.

Richard has been a volunteer at St. John Ambulance for 23 years. He was recently honoured to represent them at the London Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday as part of the Royal March, taking a salute from the Princess Royal.

Richard voluntarily holds a command role for St John at Wales Principality stadium. He is responsible for leading all St John staff and incident control to provide medical safety for over 73,000 spectators.

Richard regularly works voluntarily for up to 1,200 hours per year.





Richard has also been commended for saving a person's life.

Well done Richard, you are an inspiration to us all and we wish you well in your future endeavours.





### **HASSRA** Fylde Christmas Tree Collection

#### Raising vital funds for Hospice Care

On a freezing three-day event in January, volunteers from the HASSRA Fylde Gardening Club joined other community members and staff from Brian House Children's Hospice and Trinity Hospice in their annual Christmas Tree Collection, helping raise much needed funds.

Volunteers collected a whopping 1,960 Christmas trees from the local area and transported them to the HASSRA Fylde Sports Ground for shredding and recycling by a local tree surgeon who donated his time and equipment to help on the day.

Despite the cold, the magnificent sum of £31,300 was raised. An incredible amount and enough to run the Hospices at Home service for an entire month, supporting patients and their loved ones overnight in their own home, when other services are closed.

The Christmas Tree Collection is important to the Hospices, providing a community service while raising funds to support vital hospice care for local families.



"Thank you again, for being part of this fantastic event. You're amazing! Your support in donating your time and resources over the Christmas Tree Collection weekend has made such a difference. We really couldn't have done it without you!"

(The Fundraising Team Trinity Hospice and Brian House Children's Hospice)

# **RHS Britain in Bloom Award**

Congratulations to HASSRA Fylde Gardening Club for their winning entry in the 2024 RHS Britain in Bloom National Awards. Receiving an Outstanding Award was a huge achievement and the first time the Gardening Club had entered the competition.

Judges said "Congratulations on this entry demonstrating engagement with community groups and organisations and creating a high-quality space that addresses environmental and improvement opportunities. We look forward to visiting next year."

The allotments and garden were specially adapted for wheelchair users and patients of two local hospices, (Brian House Children's Hospice and Trinity Hospice) to enable them to socialise and enjoy raised bed gardening. The judges applauded the sensory garden area, especially designed for dementia patients to experience.

The facilities provide respite, social inclusion, and improves mental health and wellbeing, not only for

the patients of the hospices. but for their siblings, families, key workers and healthcare professionals connected to them.



The partnership with the Prince's Trust and Fleetwood Community Care adds real value to the local community, with surplus food grown in the allotments donated to homeless groups, churches and school holiday clubs.

There is more to do across the 21 allotments. This includes adding bee hives, a wild flower meadow, sunflower planting, bat boxes and heritage tree and hedge planting to improve the wider area. With strong organic and conservation ideals, they are proud they don't use chemicals or pesticides and use locally sourced organic compost.

The club looks forward to working with the wider community in 2025 to develop further conservation and wildlife opportunities.

# Southampton Jobcentre Plus Champions Hospice **Charity Fundraiser**

Southampton Jobcentre Plus celebrated a fantastic achievement of raising £5,620 last year for Mountbatten Hampshire Hospice.

Fundraising activities included a HASSRA April Challenge, where members walked, cycled and swam throughout April, raising a fabulous £1,600! Work colleagues and their dogs also did a sponsored walk in September.

Our biggest fundraiser was the 'Models for Mountbatten' sustainable fashion show, where we were joined by The Lord Mayor of Southampton, Dave Shields for an amazing evening. The fashion show was a great opportunity to highlight the excellent work that Mountbatten Hampshire does, bringing together members of Southampton Jobcentre Plus, St James Road Methodist Church, Southampton City Council and the local neighbourhood community to do something amazing!

"Mountbatten Hampshire is incredibly grateful for the unwavering support of Jobcentre Plus over the past seven

This year has been particularly special for their fundraising efforts, as Jobcentre Plus recently hosted a Fashion Show that raised an incredible £2,885.50! The total amount for the year a tremendous £5,620!

Support from Jobcentre Plus ensures Mountbatten can deliver 24/7 expert care and support to people experiencing death, dying and bereavement, giving patients and their families choices about the care they receive, providing the highest quality nursing, medical, and therapeutic care within our West End hospice and in people's homes.

"Thank you again!" - From Caitlyn Sherry, Corporate Partnerships Fundraiser

We are already planning our HASSRA April Challenge-Duck Day! - Easter Activities and Fashion Show, we won't mention next Christmas yet, but it won't be too long before we do!!





# **BREAKING BARRIERS**

#### Honouring the Winners of our Inclusion and Wellbeing Competition.

HASSRA is fully committed to being an inclusive and diverse Association. To demonstrate this commitment, the HASSRA Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Committee chose to support National Inclusion week by promoting and running a successful new competition in 2024. This demonstrates how important inclusion is for HASSRA and its members, understanding the positive impact of including everyone and understanding and embracing different individual needs, together with the constructive effect this can have on health and wellbeing.

The D&I Committee worked in partnership with the HASSRA National Team and DWP Centre of Expertise for Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Wellbeing (EDIW) to put together the criteria and to publicise the competition on HASSRA Live.

Individual HASSRA members, groups or regions were invited to submit entries about an event or activity held that demonstrated inclusion, and the resultant wellbeing impact.

Almost 40 entries were submitted, covering a wide range of activities and events. Entries ranged from those organised and held in the office for example to celebrate Diwali, the Summer Olympics and PRIDE, to those organised and held externally such as Mini-golf, Wellbeing Walks and a Mile Race.

The judging panel focused on submissions that strongly demonstrated consideration of a range of individual needs to bring people together and had a positive impact on health and wellbeing. Deciding on one winner and one runner up proved to be impossible. The panel were therefore delighted to be able to announce joint Winners and two Highly Commended.

Highly commended was Pauline Stukings and HASSRA colleagues from Southampton Jobcentre for planning and organising a "Sustainable Fashion Show" outside work hours bringing together Community 10,000 volunteers and colleagues of all ages, abilities and ethnicities. Together they built stronger relationships, a sense of

belonging and raised money for a local hospice. An excellent example of a team developmental activity with inclusion and wellbeing at its heart.

Also Highly Commended was Stephen Lengden who presented an MS Teams session to over 400 colleagues about LGBT+ children on the autism spectrum. He provided insights and signposted to resource support and coping strategies. This was subsequently rolled out to over 9,000 staff through the DWP Wellbeing Community Network. The presentation led to setting up a national DWP community support group, with Stephen taking the role as Chair. A series of truly transformative activities to raise awareness.

#### Joint winners were Rob Peers from Plymouth and Gary Sandell from Swindon.

Rob Peers and his "Red Hot Chilli Steppers" undertook the Three Peaks Challenge, climbing three mountains in 48 hours. The diverse group of "Steppers" successfully overcame challenges with mutual support, created a strong team ethic, and raised money for a charity supporting children born deaf and with no sight. This is a charity a colleague is closely involved with.

#### The "Steppers" inspired colleagues to be more active and to consider their wellbeing.

Gary Sandell and his HASSRA colleagues, organised a week-long programme of activities including games, salsa dancing, a quiz, car washing and a memorial English Tea to celebrate the life of a dear and respected departed colleague. They ensured all needs were met to make everyone feel part of the occasion, whatever their circumstances. An inclusive series of events raising money for the British Heart Foundation and highlighting activities to improve wellbeing.

The D&I Committee wishes to thank everyone who entered the competition and shared their inclusion and wellbeing experiences. You truly demonstrated the spirit and commitment of HASSRA to diversity and inclusion.

# -eadines

Some of our longer serving members will hopefully appreciate the nod above to the former identity of HASSRA's Livelife Magazine as we celebrate 90 Years of all things HASSRA. But let's look forward and see what's coming next.

Win big with HASSRA Lottery – the annual prize pot now stands at over **£1m** and is guaranteed. **150 winners** each month will share a prize pot of over £78k with the top prize of £20k – and the winner could be you!



We have partnered with Virgin Wines to bring you the latest competition - could you be one of 30 lucky winners to win a case of Wine or Prosecco?

Handy for bank holidays and summer evenings in the garden. Competition closes on 27th April.

90th Anniversary Club Grant – still time for your club to apply for a grant to spend celebrating in your unique way. We've had so much feedback telling us about your ideas, so if you need inspiration on how to spend your Club Grant see page 13 for more information.

Don't forget – it's business as usual for HASSRA Development Fund applications, Business Unit Grants and Fortnightly Puzzles. For sons, daughters and dads - we hope you will be as excited as we are about the Father's Day Competition Prizes coming soon.

And all for an inflation busting £2.45 per month.









What's more, as a member, you'll be part of a charity that looks after England's heritage for everybody to enjoy.

Visit hassra.org.uk for your exclusive discount on English Heritage membership.

\*Terms and conditions apply. Cannot be used in conjunction with other offers. The English Heritage Trust is a charity, no. 1140351, and a company, no. 07447221, registered in England.





# **BUILDING BONDS**

### **HASSRA** Funding enhances team spirit

HASSRA introduced a new funding stream for members in 2024 - the Business Unit Grant (BUG). This was in recognition that not all 'Teams' share the traditional geographical structure that an on-site club provides. Many HASSRA members, although based in local offices, have just as strong a connection with colleagues geographically dispersed throughout the UK. The BUG funding enhances the ability to deliver a team building event either via a Teams Meeting or, on the rare occasion when a dispersed team has a business need to meet face-to-face, by providing funds to incentivise participation.

On one such occasion, a Business Unit used their grant to purchase cold drinks and biscuits to offer to the meeting attendees on arrival to make them feel welcome and break the ice. HASSRA promotional items were gifted and instructions provided for non-members on how to join HASSRA.

The jewel in the crown of the event was an exciting Escape Room activity and a cash prize for the winning team. Here's what one of the team had to say about the event.

"In my opinion the HASSRA funding made the event, people were so engaged it honestly went such a long way in pulling the team together. The talk HASSRA delivered was fantastic! It really showcased the benefits available to members and I'm sure served as a reminder to many about the amazing discounts we have available. Thank you so much for organising it, it was absolutely brilliant, best conference I've been to."

To find out more about BUG funding and how to apply - follow this link

Riders Ready-Watch the Gate!

The HASSRA Development Fund (HDF) helps you achieve your best in your chosen activity with support to help you overcome financial barriers and make progress.

Here's how Jason Lewis from Pontypridd used his funding to pursue his passion for BMX.

Jason competed in the first round of the South West Region BMX Racing Series (1 of 10 rounds), hoping to accumulate maximum points to qualify for the British BMX Championships in August.

Entries were high and the event attracted riders from all over, with over 300 riders of all ages descending on the newly resurfaced track at Exeter Eagles BMX Club. Each rider hoping to secure their first wins of the season.

Jason, who picked up the bronze medal for the 24" wheel category at the 2024 Welsh BMX Championships, raced in the Super Cruiser Class, outclassing over 25 other riders.

Unlucky not to progress to the A final, Jason was pleased to finish 6th overall, competing against the best riders in the region. He hopes to qualify again for the 2025 Championships.

Jason received financial support from the HASSRA Development Fund that helped fund the cost of protective clothing and equipment required for the sport. Without this support, he would struggle to participate.

If anyone is interested in participating in BMX Racing, please e-mail jason. lewis@dwp.gov.uk who will happily direct you to a local club.

Visit HASSRA Development **Fund for more information** and how to apply.



# This May is the Mega Miles Challeng

Are you ready to Make it MEGA? Sign up for free before the end of April using the code MEGA to be in with a chance of winning one of three £500 gift vouchers. Join a community of people walking, jogging, rolling and cycling this May to support colleagues that need our help right now.

Every mile matters and every penny raised will help fellow Civil Servants when they are facing the unthinkable. People like Graham. We supported Graham and his family when his son David, tragically passed away aged just six, after his battle with Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma. Graham now wants everyone to know that the Charity for Civil Servants is here for them when the worst happens.

"Up until that point, we'd been prioritising time with David, not our finances. We'd used up all of our savings from taking time off work and we were worried about how we would pay for his funeral. It's normal to put money aside for an adult's funeral, not for a child."

Last year in the Mega Miles Challenge, 54 Civil Service Departments took part. DWP/HASSRA colleagues

were the number 1 Department with 1,732 colleagues participating and raising an amazing £27,882 in the process - nearly half the overall amount - let's make 2025 even better - together we can do it!

Visit the website to find out more about the Mega Miles Challenge or sign up for free today.



CHARITY MILES FORCIVIL CHALLENGE SERVANTS







# **HASSRA 90th Anniversary Celebrations**

2025 promises to be a packed year of activities and events as **HASSRA** celebrates its 90th Anniversary since its formation on 22nd March 1935.

One new initiative is the 90th Anniversary Club Grant. So far, over 100 Clubs have received their grants ranging from £90 to £1,000 depending on the number of members in each Club.

If you need some inspiration on how to spend your club's grant, here's a few of the ideas we've had so far from some early applications.

- **Galactic Golf competition**
- Charity party in May to raise funds for Alzheimers
- **Street Party**
- **Chess Blitz evening**
- A summer Quiz
- A fishing event

One club is planning a different event each month depicting each decade and are planning a 1940's style afternoon tea, a 1960's bowling night, a 1970's dress up day and an 1980's quiz. The other decades are still to be decided.

To mark this very auspicious occasion – we have also introduced an additional Lottery draw with 90 members about to win £1,000 each in the middle of May – it might be you. And, if you want more, 90 members will win back their annual HASSRA Membership Subscription in a series of monthly competitions lasting through to November.

Exciting times to be a **HASSRA** member, so remember to tell any colleagues who aren't already members – they can still join - you wouldn't want them to miss out?

### 10% discount on car insurance for all **HASSRA** members!

CSIS are delighted to announce a 10% discount on car insurance for all HASSRA members. Call us today for a quote (Mon-Fri 9-5pm) or complete our online form, and a member of the sales team will get back to you. Please quote 'HASSRA' when calling and we'll do the rest!

#### The insurance people who care.

A Not for Profit organisation supporting Civil Servants and Public Sector workers for over 100 years.





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