

Dear Member

29 April 2021

I have looked at my last few monthly letters and I see a gradual increase in optimism and with the vaccination programme going so well, I am becoming even more optimistic that as the summer proceeds, we will return to near normality. The scientific advisers to the Government have confirmed that the schedule for lifting lockdown measures remain on track.

The next significant date for England is 17 May, when the hotels re-open, pubs and restaurants can serve customers indoors, socialising indoors is allowed for up to 6 people, overnight stays with friends are allowed and various live events should be possible with limits on capacity.

The situation in Scotland continues to improve with Scotland now being regarded as Level 3, so travel between Scotland, England and Wales is possible, all shops can fully re-open and it is very much hoped that by 17 May, all areas of Scotland will have moved to Level 2 and from 7 June to Level 1.

The situation in Wales is that outdoor hospitality can now re-open, outdoor attractions and organized outdoor activity for up to 30 people can resume. On 13 May, there will be announcements as to whether pubs, restaurants, café's cinemas theaters and museums can re-open from Monday 17 May.

It's all very encouraging and I very much hope that branches will begin to feel confident to start meetings during the summer.

### **Conference/AGM 2021**

As mentioned previously, plans are moving ahead for the Conference and AGM 2021, to be held between Thursday 21 and Saturday 23 October at the Mercure Piccadilly Hotel in Manchester. Ocean View (IOW) Limited – IOW Tours will shortly be sending out details but the basic cost will be £249 per person, with a deposit of £20 per person required by 31 July 2021, which includes a 2 night stay at the hotel with dinner, bed and breakfast and entertainment. The conference/AGM on Friday will include coffee with chefs treats and lunch followed by a Gala Dinner with a live band.

I very much hope that members will want to attend and we are obviously keen to gauge the numbers of people who would be interested and will be asking branches to see if they can give us estimates.

It promises to be a great event and I know people will look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones.

### **Book Club**

The book club is becoming increasingly popular and the book recommendations were The Big Sky by Kate Atkinson, Midnight Library by Matt Hague and the Boy with the Topknot by Sathnam Sanghera - comments on those were requested to central office by 16 April and the summaries of those comments are now available.

The new set of recommendations is The Beekeeper of Aleppo by Christy Lefteri, Haven't They Grown by Sophie Hannah and Becoming by Michelle Obama.

I emphasise that you do not have to be online to take advantage of this opportunity. There are already several members around the country that don't have access to computers but participate in the book club. If you are in this category do not hesitate to let Sherry in the central office know and she will be happy to write to you.

### **Anniversary of the NHS**

Monday 5 July is the 73rd anniversary of the NHS and I am sure there will be huge relief that it will be possible to physically celebrate the occasion this year. The NHS no doubt will be celebrating with the NHS Big Tea, organised by NHS Charities Together.

What do you think we should do - both to celebrate the event and to raise our profile in the media?

### **Mirthy Talks**

Mirthy talks continue to be popular with over 700 members registering for each event, the next ones are:-

4 May	10.45am	Endangered Wildlife and Conservation	Shelly Lozano
18 May	10.45am	Eyam: The Plague Village	Chris Green
1 June	10.45am	Under the influence	Andy Smith
15 June	10.45am	Tommy Cooper	Steve Short

### **Accord Legal services**

Did you know that it is suggested that over 70% of people over 60 have not yet made a will? A while ago the Fellowship was approached by Accord Legal Services offering a free Will writing service during 2021 to key workers. Accord announced that it wanted to extend this to retired key workers and the offer therefore is open to all former NHS staff (irrespective of grade or discipline/specialty) across England, Scotland and Wales.

Although I have recently updated my own arrangements, I agreed to act as a guinea pig to see what the service offered. I have to say I was very impressed - appointments are conducted by telephone, skype, zoom or any other online platform, the appointments usually take around half an hour and once instructions have been made the consultant arranges for the Will to be drafted and returned to you by post. All the Wills are created on an advice basis - every consultation is bespoke.

Normally this service would cost £150 but Accord is uniquely offering NHSRF members a free service for both the member and partner. The offer is for a simple Will but the Consultants will also advise on a number of other issues including Lasting Power of Attorney and without any pressure being applied, will advise on the prices of more complicated arrangements.

As I have identified, I was very impressed, all my questions were answered professionally by a very competent individual and I am pleased to say I am now happy to endorse this product. An advertisement explaining all the details will appear in the Fellowship Extra to be published in June.

### **Facebook**

A gentle reminder that if you have not yet joined our Facebook group, can I recommend that you do; many of our members participate with their news and highlighting activities. We have now got over 1640 members which is very encouraging but I would like to see the figure rise to 2000.

### **Email**

You are receiving a paper copy of this letter which was sent out by email to members on 30 April. We now are able to communicate by email to more than half our members and it would be so much more convenient and indeed cheaper if we could increase that number. If you are reluctant to give permission for the Fellowship to use your email address, why don't you ring central office and they will explain how easy it is and give further assurances that we will not share your email address with any other organisation and will only use it for communicating to you about aspects relating to the Fellowship.

Lastly, but by no means least, my grateful thanks to all members who have remained loyal to the Fellowship and to those of you that hold office for what you have continued to do to engage with your members over the last 12 months. It will be good to meet with some of you in the months ahead either at conference or at a branch meeting.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely



John Rostill OBE  
Chief Executive