

# Newsletter

TIMBER TRADES'  
BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

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## National President's spring message



*Above: National President, Paul Snape*

**A**s I write this article, I am a few weeks away from completing my first year as National President. It doesn't seem that long ago I was taking over from Ivan Savage at our London AGM, but as we all know these days, time certainly flies and circumstances change dramatically!

Over the last 11 months, I have managed to attend various TTBS and industry lunches and dinners around the country, all of which I thoroughly enjoyed. I even managed to attend four of our regions Christmas lunches in three weeks and despite warnings from past Presidents, I did not put any weight on.

All the events I attended raised magnificent amounts for the Society and at a time of year when we have heavy outgoings, I know this really helps with our fund-raising efforts.

I would like to thank all the regional committees and organisers for their hard work in putting together these events, for the excellent amounts raised for the Society and also for all the positive comments from the many people who attended the events. I hope going forward it gives everyone a confidence boost for when they organise future events. I am looking forward to starting all over again later in the year, when the Covid-19 pandemic has subsided.

Usually at this time of year a lot of the trade would be getting their golf clubs dusted down in readiness for the variety of great golf days that are held around the country.

Sadly we are in lockdown due to the spread of the coronavirus and, as a result, most golf days, along with a variety of other fund-raising events, have had to be cancelled. Some may be reinstated later in the year if things improve, however we have already had to take the sad decision to cancel this year's National golf day at Breadsall Priory and rebook for July 2021.

It is not just these social events that are falling victim to the lockdown and restrictions this has imposed, but usually at this time of year most of the trade associations and trade clubs all have their AGM's, and these have also been cancelled. We have had to put back our TTBS London AGM to October when hopefully it can take

## President's message

## General Manager's update spring 2020

place. However, as nobody knows when things may improve, we will just have to wait and see if this will be possible.

You may recall in our last newsletter, I touched on the subject of the Society's investments. Little did I think at the time what lay ahead, when the financial world reacted to all the governments' restrictions and markets fell over 35%. This has had a major effect on everybody as everyone's pension is linked to the stock market.

The TTBS has seen its investments drop dramatically in value, reducing our dividends. Added to this the fact that we are unlikely to see any other income for most of the year as most fund-raising events have been cancelled, and we are going to have to draw down funds from our investments to cover all the various grants and allowances that we pay to our beneficiaries during the course of the year.

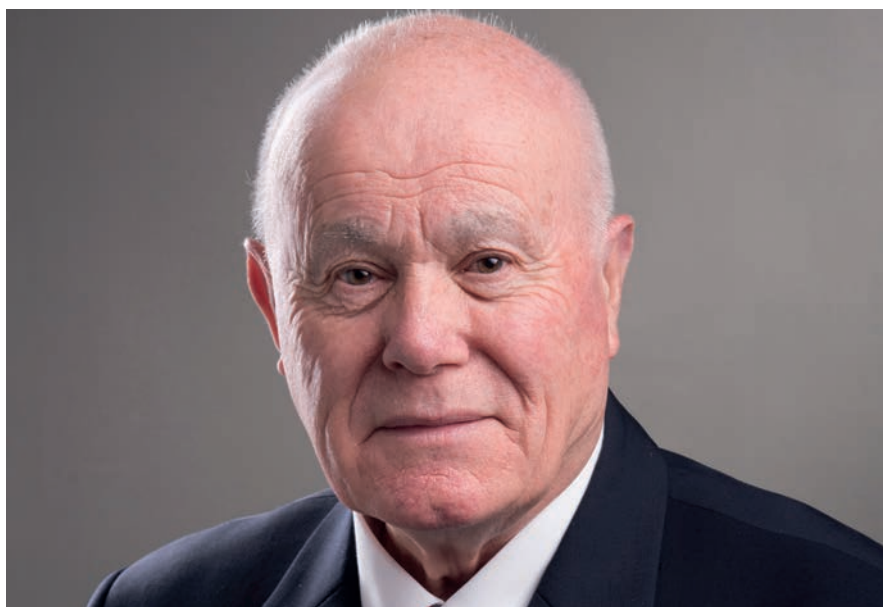
This we can do due to the fact that over the years we have managed our portfolio, so that when funds are needed, they are available. However, the circumstances we now find ourselves in have never been considered, so hopefully this situation will start to improve by the end of the year and we can then commence replenishing the funds used.

Certainly in our history of 123 years we have never faced a situation that we currently face today. In these unprecedented times we cannot predict how and when the situation will improve for us all. We can only hope it is over the coming weeks rather than months.

The Society will attempt to carry on as normal. However, with some of the restrictions that are now in place we will be unable to carry out any beneficiary face-to-face assessment visits in the short term and will have to find new ways to deal with any new claims we receive.

In view of how many companies have now furloughed staff and if this situation continues for a longer period of time, we may see an influx of claims for assistance – no doubt this could place a further strain on our resources. However, we pride ourselves as the "timber trades' own charity" and probably the only help for a lot of people, so we need to be there for when people need us the most. In this current climate I suspect that will be critical in the coming months.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our supporters, our beneficiaries, our regional committee members and our friends in the trade, the very best of health. Keep safe, and let us hope it is not too long before we can get back to a normal life.



In these unprecedented times, we are facing a very difficult period for the Society, as are all UK charities. The recently announced government support for charities is unlikely to help the TTBS and the £750m promised will soon be swallowed up by the high profile charities, at the expense of the many smaller benevolent societies. Our umbrella body, the Association of Charitable Organisations (ACO) is battling hard on our behalf, but the help is limited.

As the National President has stated in his Spring Newsletter message, we face a considerable fall in our fund-raising from our national and regional events, with all the cancellations and postponements that have been made. We hope that some regional events will be able to go ahead later in the year, but this is dependent on the ongoing Covid-19 situation.

In addition, our investment portfolio has taken a battering with the associated reduction in dividends, but we are hopeful that this situation will recover when the pandemic subsides and markets recover. We are hugely grateful to our investment managers, Pippa Latham and John Taylor, together with our team at Smith & Williamson Investment Management in Birmingham, who manage our portfolio and steer us through these extremely difficult times – we are indebted to them for their expertise and guidance.

Of course, we have had to cancel all beneficiary assessment visits and any new applications will have to be done by post, email or over the telephone.

We would emphasise to all beneficiaries, that we will continue to support them with the current range of grants and allowances and that we will consider new applications

or other requests for additional assistance. Our trustees are determined that we will ride out the storm and will continue our invaluable work to support the needy from the timber industry. Please do not hesitate to contact the TTBS office on 08448 922205 or by email at [info@ttbs.org.uk](mailto:info@ttbs.org.uk) should you have need of our assistance.

In 2019, we provided our beneficiaries with grants and allowances totalling £179,696, which was an all-time record for the Society and we are hopeful that this level will be matched in 2020.

As always, we are most grateful to individuals, companies and all the industry associations who help us with advertising and donations throughout the year and we would specifically wish to mention the Timber Trade Federation and its regional associations, the Timber Trades Journal, the London Hardwood Club, the Structural Timber Association and Radar Communications, the Plywood Luncheon Club, the annual Shippers Lunch, the National Panel Products Division, Taylor Maxwell Timber, the recently agreed annual funding from the James Donaldson Group, all of our regional TTBS committees and all other supporters in whatever capacity they assist us.

We will get through this difficult period and will reinstate our fund-raising activities, but in the meanwhile, we hope that you all remain safe and in good health.

**Ivan Savage**  
General Manager  
(Past National President 2017 & 2018)  
Timber Trades Benevolent Society  
[www.ttbs.org.uk](http://www.ttbs.org.uk)



# TTF Annual Dinner

*A selection of photos from the TTF Annual Dinner 2020, held at 8 Northumberland Avenue, London on March 4*



The TTF 2020 Annual Dinner followed its Softwood Conference on Wednesday March 4. The black tie event was held at the same prestigious central London location – 8 Northumberland Avenue – and was attended by more than 250 TTF members, their guests and associates. A drinks reception was followed by a three-course dinner.

As well as being addressed and generally motivated for the year ahead by TTF managing director David Hopkins (*pictured right*) and president Charles Hopping, guests were expertly and hilariously entertained by comedic magician Alan Hudson (*pictured far right*).

The annual dinner raised £2,115.45 for ‘the trades’ own charity’, the Timber Trades’ Benevolent Society and was sponsored by RMS Ports, Reed Consultants, the Belarusian Forest Company, Timber Focus and Jordeson Timber.



# TTBS Events

(including details of cancelled & postponed events)

The TTBS Events webpage [www.ttbs.org.uk](http://www.ttbs.org.uk) is regularly updated with changes, so please check for latest details.

17/04/20 Scottish TTBS Clay Pigeon Shoot - **POSTPONED**

23/04/20 Yorkshire & Humberside TTBS Curry Night – **POSTPONED**

23/04/20 Midlands TTBS Sodra Wood Clay Shoot – **CANCELLED**

29/04/20 Bristol & Western Counties TTBS Karting – **POSTPONED**

07/05/20 TTBS AGM & Lunch, the Royal Air Force Club, London – **POSTPONED TO 8TH OCTOBER 2020 (To be confirmed, subject to Covid-19)**

May 20 North East & Cumbria TTBS Spring Golf - **CANCELLED**

12/05/20 London, Home Counties & East Anglia TTBS Golf – **CANCELLED**

15/05/20 Midlands TTBS Spring Golf – **CANCELLED**

19/06/20 Scottish TTBS Golf, Elie

July 20 North East & Cumbria TTBS Chinese Banquet **(Date to be advised if possible to stage)**

09/07/20 TTBS National Golf, Breadsall Priory – **POSTPONED UNTIL 08/07/21**

02/09/20 North East & Cumbria TTBS Golf

03/09/20 London, Home Counties & east Anglia Bowls Competition.

11/09/20 Midlands TTBS Autumn Golf

24/09/20 Bristol & Western Counties TTBS Golf

Set/Oct 20 Midlands TTBS Full day Clay Shoot **(Date & venue to be advised)**

24/10/20 Scottish TTBS Woodchoppers Ball

Nov 20 South Wales TTBS Woodchoppers Ball **(Date & venue to be confirmed)**

14/11/20 or 21/11/20 North West TTBS Dinner & Dance **(Date & New venue to be confirmed)**

27/11/20 Southern TTBS Christmas Lunch **(to be confirmed)**

04/12/20 Bristol & Western Counties TTBS Christmas Lunch

04/12/20 Midlands TTBS Christmas Lunch & Golf

09/12/20 North West TTBS Christmas Lunch

**(New venue to be confirmed)**

11/12/20 Yorkshire & Humberside TTBS Christmas Lunch

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The following companies have generously sponsored production of the president's newsletter and the support of all sponsors is gratefully acknowledged. Why not join our list of newsletter sponsors?

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Don't miss out on the latest news and fund-raising events from the Timber Trades' Benevolent Society



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