SEVERN AREA RESCUE ASSOCIATION

England & Wales · Charity number 505504

Details

Other names	SEVERN AUXILIARY RESCUE ASSOCIATION, S A R A - SEVERN RESCUE, SARA, SEVERN RESCUE
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	1976-09-08
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Severn Area Rescue Association The Lifeboat Station Beachley Chepstow NP16 7HH
Phone	03448460226
Email	info@sara-rescue.org.uk
Website	www.sara-rescue.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE PROTECTION OF LIFE AND PROPERTY BY THE PROVISION AND MAINTENANCE OF A RESCUE SERVICE WITH, IN PARTICULAR, SPECIALIST SKILLS IN MARINE AND CLIFF RESCUE; TO ASSIST GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND COUNTY AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THEIR PROVISION OF EMERGENCY SERVICES.; TO ADVANCE PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MARINE AND CLIFF RESCUE IN PARTICULAR, BUT WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO THE GENERALITY OF THE FOREGOING BY THE PROVISION OF TRAINING COURSES, IN FURTHERANCE THEREOF BUT NOT OTHERWISE, TO RAISE FUNDS INVITE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ANY PERSON OR PERSONS WHOMSOEVER BY WAY OF SUBSCRIPTION, DONATION. OR OTHERWISE.

Activities: Provides inshore lifeboats and inland search and rescue, on the tidal Severn, Wye, and Usk and across the wider area of the River Severn including all of Gloucestershire.On 1 Jan 22 SARA become a Charity CIO. All assets and operations of the Charity were moved into Charity CIO 1193634, and this Charity (505504) is now dormant pending formal closure.

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Services
- **What:** The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** MARINE OPERATIONS - PRINCIPAL AREA - BRISTOL CHANNEL AND THE SEVERN, WYE, AVON AND USK RIVERS. LAND OPERATIONS - SOUTH EAST WALES, THE WEST OF ENGLAND AND THE MIDLANDS.
- Gloucestershire
- Monmouthshire
- Shropshire
- South Gloucestershire
- Telford & Wrekin
- Worcestershire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-12-31	£0	£0	-	-
2024-12-31	£0	£0	-	-
2023-12-31	£0	£0	-	-
2022-12-31	£0	£0	-	-
2021-12-31	£237,153	£252,105	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Alan Palmer		2017-05-18
Alan Stanley		2016-07-22
Jim Hewitt		2003-03-10
John Earnest William Cairns		2016-05-22
Mervyn Fleming		2018-03-08

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SEVERN AREA RESCUE ASSOCIATION

England & Wales - Charity number 505504

Accounts

Severn Area Rescue Association
Annual Report and Accounts 2021

Multi-Disciplinary Volunteer Search and Rescue Team with over Forty-Five Years of Lifeboat Service on the River Severn

Registered Charity 505504

FOREWORD

I think I can speak for all of us in saying that 2021 was a great deal better than 2020. It has not, though, been without its challenges, especially from a charity perspective. Fundraising remained difficult and, of course, operating in a COVID environment was a constant battle. However, with very few cases within the organisation in the almost two years that we have been living with the virus, the time spent writing and following new procedures was, and remains, worthwhile, and the sacrifices made to the detriment of fundraising and training have paid off. One cannot help but be impressed with the way in which SARA has maintained its operational capability and continued to serve its communities.

In parallel with operations and training, the year's largest project has been the work to change SARA's status from a 'standard' charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Volunteers from within SARA were able to complete most of the work, obviating the need for the charity to use valued funds. As a result, SARA is in an excellent position to go forward with a new governance structure and a wider Trustee base. On a somewhat smaller scale, I was delighted to see the formation of a new SARA station at Cirencester.

With people unable to travel as freely, 'staycations' became the thing. Large numbers of tourists visited the Severn area to take part in sailing, hiking, biking, and climbing, and with increased activity came additional pressure on the rescue services. Overall, there were 113 callouts in 2021 across all disciplines. The majority were within our own area, but SARA was occasionally asked to provide support to neighbouring rescue teams and, in turn, they also supported SARA. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the rescue services SARA work with. We frequently train together and can seamlessly integrate when it matters.

An army may march on its stomach but charities 'march' on funding. A professional search and rescue service depends on the funds to train and equip. Please do keep supporting these wonderful volunteers and what they do. SARA also needs YOU. People are the most valuable asset; not only operationally but also in fundraising, admin, vehicle and station maintenance, equipment management and many other roles across the organisation. If you can spare a few hours a week, please do get in touch with your local station.

Thank you for your support over the last 12 months.

The Rt. Hon. The Countess Bathurst

In 2021, SARA volunteers attended 113 separate operations:

*SOME CALLOUTS INVOLVE MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES

and

Raised £178,000 to Support these Operations

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Sharpness' SARA Lifeboat 4 attends a Grounded Yacht in April

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Name	Severn Area Rescue Association. Also known as Severn Rescue and SARA
Registered Charity Number	505504 (Charity CIO 1193634 from 1 Jan 2022)
Registered Address	The Lifeboat Station, Beachley, Chepstow. NP16 7HH
Independent Accounts Examiner	Azets, Stourbridge
Bankers	Lloyds Bank Plc

The Trustees, who have final overall Legal responsibility for the Organisation and its Governance serve for a term of 3 years are appointed in rotation at the Annual General Meeting. Those who served as Trustees during the year were as follows:

J Hewitt (Chair of Trustees)
A Stanley
M Fleming
J Cairns
A Palmer

The Executive Committee is responsible to the Trustees for the overall running of the association, in relation to all Financial, Safety, Legal and Operational matters. Those who served on the Executive Committee during the year were as follows:

Chief Executive (CEO)	M Carwardine
Deputy CEO	E Davy
Secretary	I Roberts
Chief Financial Officer	I Jarvis
Fundraising Officer	R Newhouse
Beachley Station General Manager (GM)	R Dainty
Newport Station GM	M Duggan
Tewkesbury Station GM	A Toseland / M Gardner
Sharpness Station GM	D Palmer
Upton Station GM	M Nelson
Wyre Forest Station GM	D Gale
Cotswolds Station GM	J Dutton

During 2021 a number of additional technical and specialist managers were co-opted at the Executive level.

The Committees for the Beachley, Newport, Tewkesbury, Sharpness, Upton, Cotswolds and Wyre Forest Rescue Stations are responsible for the day-to-day running of each of the respective rescue stations.

The Association is made up entirely of volunteers.

CONSTITUTION OBJECTIVES AND OPERATIONS

The Severn Area Rescue Association, also known as Severn Rescue, and as SARA, is one of the largest independent multi-disciplinary volunteer search and rescue team in the UK, with approximately 180 volunteer personnel. SARA is also a major lifeboat service in the UK, with 14 operational boats, of which 5 are declared Lifeboats.

Constitution

SARA is governed by its Constitution and is a registered charity. The objects of the Association, as stated in the Constitution are:

- The protection of life and property by the provision and maintenance of a rescue service with, in particular, specialist skills in marine and cliff rescue;
- To assist Government Departments and County and Local Authorities in their provision of emergency services;
- To advance public education in outdoor safety, particularly in and around water.

The Association is non-profit making, and financed by voluntary contributions, grants from any public or private organisations, and any such fundraising activities or commercial arrangements as the Executive Committee recommends to the Trustees.

The Achievement of the Objects of the Charity

The policies adopted by the Executive Committee during the course of the year have met the objects of the Charity in the following ways:

- Through the Association's 7 rescue stations and one sub-station attending over 100 callouts during the year, all tasked by the principal emergency services.
- Through the provision of Water Safety scenarios for schools and other interested groups to raise awareness for everyone, especially children, to become more 'water aware'.
- Through the ongoing provision of recognised training courses held both internally and externally to promote the professionalism of the organisation.

One of Wyre Forest's inland rescue boats, SARA 26 'Stuart Frost' on a search callout on the Wye south of Hereford

The Operations of the Charity

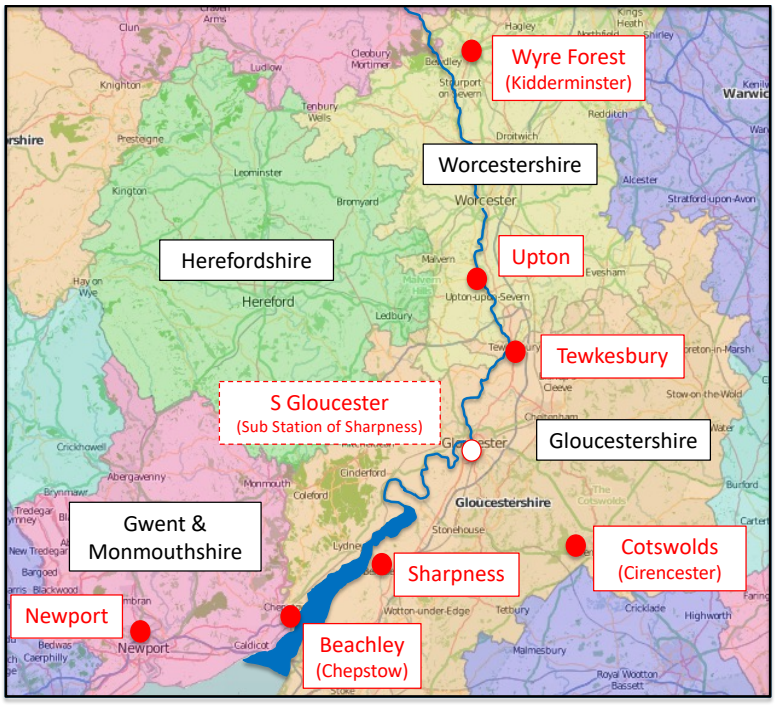
SARA's Mission Statement is:

> To protect life and property through the provision of a professionally trained, specialist rescue service for marine, flood and land search incidents

The principal area of marine operations comprises the Bristol Channel and the Severn, Wye, Avon, and Usk rivers. Typical situations involved vessels suffering breakdown or damage by grounding, becoming lost in severely restricted visibility - a particularly dangerous situation in the tidal Severn - and searching for missing people. As a Lifeboat Organisation, SARA complies with the Rescue Boat Code of Practice (RBCP) and is a founder member of the National Independent Lifeboat Association (NILA).

Inland operations extend to the West of England and the Midlands and South-East Wales. SARA is a member of Mountain Rescue England and Wales (MREW) and SARA is part of the South West England Rescue Association (SWERA). SARA's technical and flood rescue standards are assured by qualifications from Rescue3Europe, which comply with national standards

SARA works closely with the statutory emergency services – Police, Fire & Rescue and Ambulance Services, likewise HM Coastguard – also with neighbouring and related volunteer rescue organisations. These particularly include the RNLI at Portishead, Penarth and Barry, the Coastguard helicopter based at St Athan, Longtown Mountain Rescue Team and both the South Wales Search and Rescue Dogs Association (SARDA(SW)) and K9 Serve-On Search Dogs, to name just a few. There is a strong mutual relationship with Gloucester Cave Rescue (GCRG) whose members often participate in land search operations as integrated search party members. Further details of SARA's operational roles are provided in the Annex.



The SARA Rescue Stations

Why SARA? A Short History!

The inaugural meeting to form the organisation which became SARA was held in 1973, and the charity was formally created in 1976, as 'The Severn Auxiliary Rescue Association'. Its headquarters were at Tutshill - near the current Beachley station. At this time the RNLI did not cover river estuaries, such as the River Severn. There was felt to be a need for rescue organisation responsible for this hazardous stretch of river, particularly following the closure of the Aust Ferry after the opening of the Severn Bridge in 1966. In 1985 SARA also became an official Mountain Rescue Team in the role of Cliff Rescue for the Wye Valley, and SARA Beachley Station was designated as a 'Mountain Rescue Post'.

In 1986 a second station was opened at Sharpness, primarily in response to a tragic loss of life in the Sharpness area and the name of the organisation was amended to what it is today. A station was opened at Wyre Forest in 2004, to cover the upper Severn area. In 2014 Wyre Forest Station moved into the Fire Station at Kidderminster, under a co-hosting arrangement, and in early 2021 moved again into the new Kidderminster Tri-Service 'Emergency Hub' Station.

In 2011, following major flooding, a Joint 'Water Rescue Centre' opened in Tewkesbury, as a strategic alliance between Gloucester Fire & Rescue Service, SARA and Gloucestershire County Council, and the new SARA Tewkesbury Station became SARA's fourth.

For many years, emergencies in Newport were attended to by crew from SARA Beachley. In 2014 an equipment hub was placed in Newport, and in 2015 a base was established at Malpas Fire Station. Following a major bequest, new boats were purchased in 2016 and the Newport Lifeboat Station was established, within the Malpas Fire Station, becoming independent from Beachley in 2019.

The small independent 'Water Emergency Incident Response' (WEIR) team at Upton-upon-Severn elected in 2019 to merge with SARA, forming SARA Upton Station in 2020. SARA's seventh station SARA Cotswolds, based at Cirencester Fire Station, was established in mid-2021 to provide a base for land search in eastern Gloucestershire.

Attending an Asthmatic Patient in the Forest of Dean

TRUSTEES' REPORT

This will be the final Annual Report for the original SARA Charity, number 505504, as we transferred on 1 January 2022 to a new status as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation or CIO. Little will change for SARA, at least from the outside, as we remain a fully volunteer organisation with unchanged aims, rescue services and tasking authorities. We now comprise 7 operational stations, with a new station added at Cirencester (SARA Cotswolds), to provide a much-needed base and additional resources for land (i.e. missing person) searches in eastern Gloucestershire.

At the end of 2021 we were more than 18 months into the Covid Pandemic, but I am delighted to report that SARA remains in an excellent state, fully operational with good numbers of properly equipped volunteer rescuers and a healthy bank balance. We concluded the year with around £150,500 in Unrestricted Reserves in the bank, supplemented by another £20,000 in the operating account, in addition to £15,500 in restricted amounts for ongoing projects. We benefitted from some generous grants and legacies during the year, and were able to take advantage of the opportunities for effective fundraising activities when Covid restrictions allowed. This has allowed us to make some important investments in our capability, such as replacing most of our inland water drysuits as well as opening the new station.

Our overall Callout Count was remarkably consistent with previous years. SARA did not see the huge growth in callouts related to 'staycation misadventures' which plagued some Mountain Rescue Teams, though we too had an increased number of callouts related to leisure activities. The cliff rescue team was called upon more than in recent years, and worked with the statutory emergency services several times during the year.

Much effort was dedicated this year to preparing for a formal visit from HM Coastguard, which was delayed several times by Covid. I am happy to report that when they did visit, in January 2022, SARA's Declared Facility Agreement was renewed for a further 5 years and they described SARA as setting the 'gold standard' for independent lifeboat organisations. I am also pleased that after a number of years of discussion, the 'National Independent Lifeboat Association' (NILA) has now been formed and SARA has played a significant role in this.

At the start of 2021 SARA was transitioned to the status of an 'Associate Member' of Mountain Rescue England and Wales (MREW), a decision partly related to MREW's decision not to accept our regional association SWERA as a recognised regional body. Thus far Associate Membership status has not had a negative effect on SARA, but we will continue to manage that relationship carefully.

As ever I would like to pay tribute to our dedicated volunteers, and to all of our donors and supporters who make it all possible. I would also like to thank the emergency services for their support and assistance.

Lastly I thank and pay tribute to Jim Hewitt, the founding Chairman of the Association, who has again been Chair of the Trustees for the past 4 years and retired from the Board at the end of 2021. The organisation owes him a great deal and his continuing support is much appreciated.

Alan Stanley
Trustee
On Behalf of the Board

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

2021 was another year in which I have been very proud to have been part of this organisation. It was dominated and book-ended by Covid restriction, but in spite of that we maintained our operational capability throughout, responding to well over 100 callouts and made substantial progress in many areas, some of which I outline below. That we can do all this with an entirely volunteer organisation is in many ways incredible, and I am grateful to everyone involved – both inside the organisation and supporting us from outside.

I would like to start by paying tribute to Malcolm Bradley, who tragically passed away very suddenly in January 2022. Malcolm was a SARA member at Beachley for 10 years, serving as the station medical manager, as a radio operator manning the Operations Room, supporting fundraising events and latterly also as a 'Deployment & Launch Authority' (DLA) responsible for deploying appropriate assets to a callout. He supported many lifeboat operations in which I was involved from the station Operations Room and his friendly voice on the radio or cheery smile in the station was always reassuring. Whatever he was asked, the reply would be 'Yep, no problem', and that's a big part of how we will all remember him. Friendly, helpful, a true gentleman who was proud to be a member of SARA. We miss him dearly, as a friend as well as a colleague.

The first key development last year was that in July we were able to open a new SARA Station, SARA Cotswolds. The absence of a base for land or missing person search crew in the eastern side of Gloucestershire has been felt for many years, and we are grateful to Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service for making available space within the Cirencester Fire Station. The station – SARA's 7th – was set up by a core of experienced members who were previously part of the SARA Tewkesbury team, but actually lived much closed to Cirencester. As I write this they are coming to the end of the training of a first cohort of new team members. The SARA Cotswolds team was one of the regional winners for the Calor Rural Community Fund, and recipients of a generous grant from the Screwfix Foundation, both of which will help the physical setup of the station, and they have already become a fixture at important local events such as the Cotswolds Show and events at Badminton House.

The second key development during 2021 was that we achieved the transition to Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) status, which involved two EGMs during the year as well a significant amount of paperwork. Many thanks to Jim Hewitt for leading this work, ably supported by Beachley team member Omar al-Nuaimi and others across the organisation.

The transition to CIO status was the culmination of Jim Hewitt's final term as Chair of Trustees, and he retired at the end of the year, a year which had been especially challenging for him personally. Jim was the founding Chairman of SARA and for many years the force behind its development, and we owe him a great deal. He is a Life Member of SARA and we know we can count on his support for many years to come.

Operationally, 2021 did not have any of the spectacular floods which we saw in 2020, and indeed which returned in 2022, but there were other very busy periods and overall we responded to 113 separate callouts – and there were plenty of other contacts from the emergency services which did not result in a callout for a variety of reasons. Two especially busy weekends were the late May Bank Holiday, which saw 6 separate callouts, and one in October which saw 5.

We are often asked to explain or describe any pattern or trends behind our callouts, and these remain elusive. There seems to be a steady mix of misadventure, accidents and mechanical issues on boats for both locals and tourists, people missing as a consequence of mental illnesses such as Alzheimer's and mental health issues, property issues involving the rivers (drifting boats or other items etc), a few animals or birds in distress and a few false alarms. Some incidents are resolved quickly, others less so. One case this summer in the Forest of Dean involved the teams being called out by the police on 5 separate days, with both land and boat search teams being involved on 3 of those days.

Amongst the most dramatic operations for the teams were a pair of yachts which had run aground near Lydney in May, ably attended to by the SARA Sharpness and Beachley lifeboat crews, and a chap rescued from the River Wye in Chepstow, in the small hours, by the SARA Newport lifeboat. She happened to be on the road already returning from an earlier callout and was urgently diverted. They were assisted by a police helicopter, which used its powerful searchlight to assist their rapid passage back to the Beachley slipway (and sent us some photos afterwards!).

In October the rope rescue team played a leading role in rescuing three climbers at Woodcroft Quarry - one of whom had quite a bad head injury – working seamlessly with the Fire and Ambulance Services as they arrived. This is a venue at which we train regularly, and it was great to see the training paying off.

A great deal of work goes on behind the scenes to support our operations. One of the most important workstreams is the on-going work to remain compliant with the Declared Facility Agreement with the Coastguard. As well as regular training and maintenance, this year we have progressed towards all our night-time helms & Cox'ns achieving the RYA Advanced Powerboat Certificate and are now focussed upon completion of the RYA/MCA Advanced Powerboat Certificate of Competence through 2022

Another example is the team of Beachley coxswains who spent many evenings adapting and refurbishing a trailer which has been acquired from the RNLI as a new and significantly more robust trailer for SARA Lifeboat 1. This was finally put into service in October, and the old one retired to be sold off.

In the autumn we conducted a first online 'members' survey'. The results were generally reassuring but the survey highlighted some areas for management attention, which was our hope, and a small series of workstreams have been initiated as a result. We hope to make such surveys a regular occurrence.

We have maintained routine training as far as possible given the Covid restrictions, but 2021 also saw some significant advances in this area. In June we ran – jointly with ASSAR – two successive 2-day Casualty Care training and qualification weekends in the Mendips, and were able to qualify or re-certify 9 SARA members in this important advanced first aid area. Many thanks to our medical Officer Dr Jon Dallimore for getting this organised in his first year, along with 'Paramedic Pete' Sadler from ASSAR.

We also trained and qualified the first tranche of Swiftwater & Flood Rescue Boat Operator Instructors (SFRBO-Is), and ran a Search Controller training course for 11 team members. The latter has already resulted in two of the attendees being signed-off to work as fully independent search controllers, which adds significant resilience to our search capability.

Technical training included another Fall Protection Equipment Inspection Course – organised by our regional association SWERA – and another Rope Rescue Supervisor Course. We have also run multiple training courses for new team members and upskilling of existing ones in swift-water & flood rescue, and almost all members are now trained to at least Swiftwater First responder standard.

Fundraising activities remained a challenge during 2021, with significant limitations during the periods of Covid restrictions at the start the year in particular, but here also there were some wonderful highlights. 4 trainee members of our Wyre Forest Station raised over £3,000 by walking the length of the 'SARA Severn' from the Wyre Forest to the Beachley Station, Lynsey swam Ullswater End to End and Rachel Brown 'Raced to the Stones' (that's a 100km race on the Ridgeway) – all raising money for SARA. We were fortunate to receive a bequest of £20,000 and Chepstow Town Council approved a generous grant of £6,000 in addition to their regular support contribution.

Our flagship fundraising events of The Wild Wye Swim, the Sharpness Open Day and the Chepstow Duck Race were all held again in 2021. Having been cancelled in 2020 we ran the Wild Wye Swim over 2 days – which was popular with the swimmers but less so with the fishery owners so we won't be repeating that format – and raised £20,000. The Beachley team also organised the first edition of another new (and smaller) event, the 'Wild Wye SwimRun' based at Chepstow. This includes a 100m swim across the tidal Wye below Tintern, with SARA providing several boats as safety cover. Other new SARA-organised events are being discussed… watch this space!

We maintained an occasional presence on national TV. In February our flood boat training was featured on BBC Crimewatch Live!, filmed in Monmouth the previous month, and then in July we were the subject of a feature on ITV Wales Coast & Country.

I would like to pay tribute to SARA Tewkesbury member, and Olympic para-athlete, Mel Nichols, who in October completed a continuous hand cycle journey of over 4000 miles over 10 weeks, around the permitter UK, setting a world record for the longest, unsupported hand cycling. A truly inspiring achievement.

I am eternally grateful to all of our team members, both operational and supporting members who are all volunteers, for making all of this possible, in SARA's 48th year. I would like to pay particular thanks to the small teams of 'DLAs' who respond immediately to contact from the emergency services, and to Search Controllers who are the cornerstone of our search efforts. Also to those who also serve on the management teams at station and at the association level; very few of who joined SARA to get involved in these matters. Thank you one and all!

Mark Carwardine
Chief Executive Officer

Hosting the Chief Fire Officer and his Deputy at Beachley, together with the Deputy CEO and Fundraising Officer

Working with HART Team Paramedics to move an Injured Climber in the Wye Valley

A SARA Tewkesbury Fundraising event in Cheltenham

A Competitor in the Wild Wye SwimRun completes her crossing of the River Wye

Crowds return to the SARA Sharpness Open Day

A Paramedic explaining equipment they can use in a Technical Rescue, on a training day in the Mendips

Supporting the campaign to improve Water Quality in the River Wye

RISKS AND INSURANCE

Review of risks

The Executive Committee continues to conduct a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and systems are in place to mitigate those risks.

The Association has Standard Operating Procedures which each member must follow, and a Health & Safety Policy implemented in 2003 is continually under review by the Executive Health & Safety Advisor. Whilst SARA is not bound by the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, (as we are a part of Mountain Rescue England & Wales (MREW) which is exempt from the above act) the Executive Committee policy is that – due to the fact that we work with other emergency services that are bound by this act – it follows that the organisation should take it on board as 'best practice'.

Insurances

The charity has in place the following insurances:

- Public Liability
- Marine Insurance (covering all boats, trailers, engines etc.)
- Launch Vehicles specialist insurance,
- Motor Insurance for all mobile rescue units
- Buildings Insurance cover (Beachley Station)
- Buildings Contents liability (Beachley, Sharpness and Wyre Forest)
- Medical Indemnity Insurance
- Trustees Liability Insurance

Additional insurance cover is provided through Mountain Rescue England & Wales (MREW) via our membership of the South West England Rescue Association and by various Police Authorities within our operational areas, by whom we are tasked and cover is provided for callouts and training. The Executive Committee continues to monitor Insurance policies.

The cost of Insurance cover has grown from £15,840 in 2016 to £35,706 in 2021.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

It will come as little surprise that the continuation of Covid-19 restrictions into and through 2021 presented significant financial and operational challenges for SARA. I am though delighted that these accounts show that the overall income was only around 10% lower than in 2019 before Covid-19 surfaced. The sources of this income were though quite different, compared to 2019, with less income from fundraising and collection activity and significantly more from online and corporate donations. This reflects the way that the charity has succeeded in adapting to the economic realities that we have faced.

Our continued focus on costs also produced a favourable result compared to 2019 with overall costs some £15k lower. Much of this reduction reflected the investment in PPE in 2020 and the consequently lower costs in 2021. There are of course cost pressures with fuel and utilities and these look set to continue into 2022 and beyond.

The charity therefore ends the year with assets slightly less than £400K with two thirds of this value accounted for in the fixed assets – chiefly buildings, lifeboats and vehicles. £170k of unrestricted assets are being held in liquid bank balances. This represents approximately 8 months of operating costs and is therefore 2 months ahead of our target to maintain a financial reserve of £100k.

These are of course the final accounts for the charity in its current form. The assets and liabilities of the charity will pass to the new Severn Area Rescue Association CIO on 1 January 2022. This is a fundamental change in the governance of the charity but on the ground the hard work and dedication of the past will continue into the new organisation which will begin life in a healthy, though not overly comfortable, financial state.

The CEO as Rope Rescue Team Leader, working with the leads from Fire and Ambulance Services on a Cliff Rescue in the Wye Valley

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SARA

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Severn Area Rescue Association (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2021

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

As the Trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Nicholas Webb
Azets
First Floor, Copthall House, 1 New Road
Stourbridge. DY8 1PH

Dated: 6 September 2022

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Statement of financial activities

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Restricted Funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £
Income and Endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	3	165,864	53,587	219,451	257,670	40,114	297,784
Charitable activities	4	8,168	-	8,168	5,050	-	5,050
Other trading activities	5	4,023	200	4,223	645	-	645
Investments	6	16	-	16	49	-	49
Other Income	7	5,295	-	5,295	15	-	15
Total income		183,366	53,787	237,153	263,429	40,114	303,543
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	8	5,018	-	5,018	1,170	-	1,170
Charitable activities	9	155,911	91,176	247,087	173,207	123,900	297,107
Total resources expended		160,929	91,176	252,105	174,377	123,900	298,277
Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources before transfers		22,437	(37,389)	(14,952)	89,052	(83,786)	5,266
Gross transfers between funds		6,378	(6,378)				
Net (expenditure)/income for the year / Net movement in funds		28,815	(43,767)	(14,952)	89,052	(83,786)	5,266
Fund balances at 1 January		220,929	169,902	390,831	131,877	253,688	385,565
Fund balances at 31 December		249,744	126,135	375,879	220,929	169,902	390,831

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**13**		240,223		294,829
Current assets					
Debtors	**14**	32,661		35,070	
Cash at bank and in hand		186,200		174,976	
		218,861		210.046	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**15**	(83,205)		(114,044)	
Net current assets			135,656		96,002
Total assets less current liabilities			375,879		390,831
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**16**		126,135		169,902
Unrestricted funds			249,744		220,929
			375,879		390,831

The accounts were approved by the Trustees on 6 September 2022

J Hewitt
Trustee

A Stanley
Trustee

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

1. Accounting policies

Charity information

The Severn Area Rescue Association, also known as SARA is the largest independent multi-disciplinary volunteer search and rescue team in the UK. SARA is also the largest independent lifeboat service in the UK, second only to the RNLI, with 14 operational boats and approximately 200 personnel.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the SARA Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The accounts are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £1.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the 'going concern' basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Grant income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

1.5 Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Freehold land and buildings:	Straight line over 25 years
Plant and equipment:	Straight line over 5 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments. Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Debtors and creditors receivable / payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

2. Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the SARA's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	142,046	12,471	154,517	224,849
Grant Income	23,818	41,116	64,934	72,935
	165,864	53,587	219,451	297,784

4 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Fundraising Events	7,918	4,550
Sponsorships	250	500
	8,168	5,050

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£
Other Income	1,376	-	1,376	-
Sale of Goods	2,381	200	2,581	431
Rental Income	266	-	266	214
Other Trading Income	4,023	200	4,223	645

6 Investments

	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Interest receivable	16	49

7 Other Income

	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	5,295	15

8 Raising Funds

	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Fundraising & Publicity	5,018	1,170

9 Charitable Activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation and Impairment	64,567	87,354
Fuel	15,561	11,029
Training	15,814	11,849
Insurance	35,706	32,408
Consumables	28,497	25,264
Repairs & Maintenance	15,526	51,048
Equipment Purchases	41,344	48,875
Interest Paid	915	-
	217,930	267,827
Share of Support Costs (see note 10)	22,880	25,470
Share of Governance Costs (see note 10)	6,277	3,810
	247,087	297,107
Analysis by Fund		
Unrestricted Funds	155,911	173,207
Restricted Funds	91,176	123,900
	247,087	297,107

10 Support Costs

	Support Costs	Governance Costs	Total 2021	Support Costs	Governance Costs	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Heat Light and Water	5,861	-	5,861	5,656	-	5,656
Phone, SMS and Broadband	13,942	-	13,942	10,336	-	10,336
Support Costs	(1,633)	-	(1,633)	1,633	-	1,633
Printing, Postage & Stationery	596	-	596	316	-	316
Computer Costs	2,285	-	2,285	4,254	-	4,254
Travel Costs	215	-	215	1,089	-	1,089
Bank Charges	1,015	-	1,015	982	-	982
Other Support Costs	199	-	199	139	-	139
Rent	400	-	400	1,065	-	1,065
Accountancy & Audit Fees	-	1,950	1,950	-	1,625	1,625
Legal & Professional	-	4,327	4,327	-	2,185	2,185
	22,880	6,277	29,157	25,470	3,810	29,280
Analysed Between:						
Charitable Activities	22,880	6,277	29,157	25,470	3,810	23,822

Accountancy fees contain costs for the independent examination of £1,950 (2020: £1,500)
Legal & Profession fees contain costs related to the transition to CIO status

11 Trustees

None of the Trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the SARA during the year.

12 Employees

There were no employees during the year nor in 2021.

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Plant and equipment	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 January 2021	397,751	964,525	1,362,276
Additions	-	9,962	9,962
At 31 December 2021	397,751	974,487	1,372,238
Depreciation and impairment			
At 1 January 2021	232,723	834,725	1,067,448
Depreciation charged in the year	12,681	51,886	64,567
At 31 December 2021	245,404	886,611	1,132,015
Carrying amount			
At 31 December 2021	152,347	87,876	240,223
At 31 December 2020	165,028	129,801	294,829

14 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade Debtors	518	435
Other Debtors	10,016	14,966
Prepayments & Accrued Income	22,127	19,669
	32,661	35,070

15 Creditors:

Amounts falling due within one year	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	15,789	21,612
Accruals & deferred Income	67,416	92,432
	83,205	114,044

16 Restricted Funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Movement in Funds			Movement in Funds			
	Balance at 1 January 2020	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Balance at 1 January 2021	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 Dec 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Fixed Asset Fund	202,336		(87,354)	114,982	-	(64,567)		50,415
Lifesaving Eqpt Fund	16,376	7,087	(14,985)	8,478	1,400	(4,711)	(5.167)	
Vehicle Fund	11,673	1,000	(3,162)	9,511	3,945	(1,313)	(8,199)	3,944
Training Fund	784	100	(75)	809	-	(25)	(784)	
Sharpness Lifeboat Fund	5,619	1,414	(2,208)	4,825	27,016	(260)	24,672	56,253
FLIR Fund	14,200	-	-	14,200	-	-	(14,200)	-
DFT Fund	2,700	-	-	2,700	-	-	(2,700)	-
Sharpness Building Fund	-	19,313	(9,626)	9,687	1,552	(3,936)	-	7,303
SFRBO-I Fund	-	11,200	(6,490)	4,710	-	(4,710)	-	-
Lifeboat 4 Engine Fund	-	-	-	-	1,378	-	-	1,378
Wyre Forest Eqpt Fund	-	-	-	-	12,181	(10,366)	-	1,815
Cotswolds Stn Start Up Fund	-	-	-	-	6,315	(1,288)	-	5,027
	253,688	40,114	(123,900)	169,902	53,787	(91,176)	(6,378)	126,135

The FLIR fund is for the Infra Red search camera system.

The DFT fund is a Department for Transport grant for the purchase of SARA Lifeboat 2.

The SFRBO Instructor Fund is for training and qualification of the Flood Boat Operator Instructors.

The Lifeboat 4 Engine fund is a lifeboat engine replacement project.

The remaining restricted funds are to be spent on equipment or building maintenance as stated above.

17 Analysis of Net assets Between Funds

	Unrestricted Funds 2021 £	Restricted Funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds 2020 £	Restricted Funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £
Fund balances at 31 December are represented by:						
Tangible assets	129,612	110,611	240,223	151,311	143,518	294,829
Debtors	32,661	-	32,661	35,070	-	35,070
Cash and cash equivalents	170,676	15,524	186,200	148,592	26,384	174,976
Creditors	(83,205)	-	(83,205)	(114,044)	-	(114,044)
	249,744	126,135	375,879	220,929	169,902	390,831

18 Related party transactions

During the year the charity entered into no transactions with related parties.

19 Subsidiaries

Details of the charity's subsidiaries at 31 December 2021 are as follows:

SARA Trading Limited - Registered in England (company number 11820156), incorporated 11 February 2019. A company with no share capital and limited by guarantee. The charity has given a guarantee of £100, and is the relevant legal entity by virtue of the ability to appoint and remove trustees. The four officers of the company are members of the management team of the charity. The company provides commercial training and organises events to raise funds for the charity. The company had net assets at 28 February 2022 of £7,750 (2021: £17,348). The company made donations of £16,500 to the charity during the year.

The subsidiary company is not required to prepare consolidated accounts.

Police and SARA Team Members wait for a Briefing at a Search near Birdlip in Gloucestershire

The SARA Water Team Fitness Test involves Swimming, then moving a Simulated Casualty and then delivering CPR for two minutes

ANNEX: OPERATIONAL ROLES AND TASKS

SARA is a multi-disciplinary volunteer search and rescue organisation and is the designated rescue service for an area of over 20,000 km^2 on and around the Severn. It provides:

- Lifeboat cover for large parts of the Rivers Severn, Wye, Usk and the Bristol Avon*
- Cliff rescue, particularly for the lower Wye Valley climbing areas including Symonds Yat
- Mud rescue
- Swift water and flood rescue
- Land Search

At the start of 2021 SARA operated from six rescue stations, at Newport, Chepstow (Beachley), Sharpness, Tewkesbury, Upton-upon-Severn and Kidderminster (Wyre Forest). A new station at Cirencester – SARA Cotswolds – came online in mid-2021. SARA Crew receive 'callouts' through a combination of dedicated Pagers and through SMS messages using the SARCALLsystem.

Lifeboats and Mud Rescue

SARA is the designated rescue service for the Rivers Severn, Wye and Usk. The SARA lifeboats, based at Beachley and Sharpness are tasked by HM Coastguard, largely in response to 999 calls.

The River Severn below Gloucester is used for around 350 commercial ship transits per year and the lower Wye around 150. The Severn also has over 500 registered leisure craft transits between Gloucester and Sharpness alone each year, and many more that are not counted. The tidal range on the Severn at Beachley, and on the Wye at Chepstow, is 15 metres (the second highest in the World!), which means that the river changes within a few hours from a wide expanse of deep water, to narrow shallow channels weaving through extensive sandbanks.

In addition, the tidal current on the Severn reaches 12 knots; this can lead to very turbulent river conditions in even a moderate wind. Most of the way to Gloucester the riverbed is very broad, with a narrow and winding navigable channel, marked with numerous buoys, beacons and transits. The margins of all the tidal rivers have wide and thick mudbanks below the high-tide levels, and in places the exposed mud leads out to rocky islands at low tide.

Typical incidents for SARA include vessels grounding, or losing power hence requiring urgent assistance to avoid grounding. People have been rescued from islands or ledges where they were being cut off by the tide, or actually plucked from the mud. On other occasions boats, and other floating hardware, are broken loose by the water and drift with the fast currents and have to be recovered. On average lifeboats are launched operationally around once a week (50-60 launches per year).

*SARA's declared area of lifeboat operations, for which it is tasked by HM Coastguard, is the Severn, north from a line between Newport and Clevedon to Maisemore Weir near Gloucester, and the tributary rivers Wye (to Bigsweir Bridge), Usk (to the M4 Bridge) and the Avon (to Bristol Docks). If required in exceptional circumstances, SARA Lifeboats can extend beyond this area, using a re-fuelling stop at Newport, to operate north of a line from Barry to Weston Super Mare.

The SARA lifeboats area also features several high bridges – notably the M48 Severn Bridge but also the A48 in Chepstow and several in Newport. SARA is often called out to a 'person at risk' on a bridge. The majority, but sadly not all, are resolved directly by the Police. However, a lifeboat is always launched so as to be ready. Recoveries are therefore not uncommon, but SARA has successfully rescued people from the water below a bridge.

Land Search

SARA provides land search capabilities in support of the Police. SARA has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) in place with the Police Forces for Gloucestershire, Herefordshire & Worcestershire, the West Midlands, Shropshire, West Mercia and Warwickshire. These Police Forces request SARA support for 'Missing Person' searches in their respective areas, and teams from the various SARA Stations work together as appropriate to the search area location.

Such missing person searches can range in duration from less than an hour to spanning several days and may become 'recovery' rather than rescue operations. SARA is able to deploy one of its two Mobile 'Incident Support Units' (ISUs) to support such searches and other operations; searches are managed from the ISU, which is the focus for liaison with the Police and other agencies. SARA's MoUs with the Police are to assist with any search, in any terrain, for a vulnerable missing person – including urban searches if required.

SARA is also a member (Associate Member since Jan 2021) of Mountain Rescue England and Wales (MREW). Generally, MR teams deploy into mountainous environments (or at least challenging ones); in the SARA area the more technical areas would include the Wye Valley, Forest of Dean, Wyre Forest or Cleeve Hill.

In addition, all neighbouring MR teams back each other up, so SARA is considered a backup for Longtown MR Team, and other teams in the Brecon Beacons. One example was the extensive search for April Jones around Machynlleth; SARA did not deploy as many other MR teams did but was put on high alert to back fill for any jobs in these teams' areas.

Cliff Rescue

SARA Beachley is a specific base for the Cliff Rescue in the Lower Wye Valley, where the cliffs around Wyntours Leap, Symonds Yat and other walls are a popular destination for climbers of all abilities. It is estimated that there are 3,000-4,000 climber-days per year in the Lower Wye Valley. There are also a number of disused quarries in the area, in which accidents involving non-climbers happen.

SARA has an MoU with Gloucester Fire & Rescue Service (GFRS) for effecting cliff rescue operations, and an increasingly close relationship with South Wales FRS (some of the cliffs are on the Welsh side of the Wye). The SARA rope rescue training is based on Rescue3 qualifications, also used by the Fire and Rescue services which facilitates interoperability.

There is a further close relationship with Gloucestershire Cave Rescue Group (GCRG), which also has rope rescue trained personnel and relevant equipment, which are available as required. Conversely SARA is available to provide surface support to cave rescue operations, and indeed is integral to the contingency plans for caves such at 'Otter Hole' in the Wye Valley. Rope rescue operations are thankfully rare, but joint exercises are conducted with the FRS and GCRG – including a test of an Otter Hole casualty evacuation scenario in October 2021.

Swift Water and Flood Rescue

Swift Water is defined as 'that moving fast enough to produce sufficient force to present a life and safety hazard to a person entering it'. Operations in 'swift water' are referred to as 'SRT' tasks and include life-saving rescue. However, due to the time-sensitive nature of water incidents these are often search and if necessary recovery operations. Their initiation is often by a combination of Police, FRS or Coastguard. Dependent on the water concerned, a small boat may be deployed, or a floating platform, in addition to crew directly in shallow water. SARA has the ability to launch such small boats in almost all rivers, with no requirement for slipway or road access to the riverbank. Such small boats are referred to as 'Rescue' boats; SARA prefers rigid rescue boats to reduce the risk of punctures from the use of inflatables.

SARA Swift Water crew are qualified as 'Swift Water and Flood Rescue Technicians', which is the national standard. The Swift Water Teams are also able to deploy on flood rescue operations nationally, as Flood Response Teams. DEFRA, through the National DEFRA Flood Rescue group, coordinate the Flood Response Team deployments nationally. SARA has 2 x 'Type B' and 4 x 'Type C' declared teams of 7, shared between its 7 Stations, which need to be ready for deployment anywhere in the country. SARA has a proven track record of deploying around the UK on such incidents including Essex (2014), Devon (2014) and Yorkshire (2015/16).

Wading Practice in the Monnow in Monmouth

First Aid and Casualty Care

All SARA crew are trained, at minimum, in basic first aid. A number of SARA crew are further qualified to the much higher level of 'Casualty Care' as defined by MREW. In addition, a number of crew are professional paramedics, nurses or serving as Community First Responders.

First aid equipment is carried during all searches and in all SARA vehicles; depending on the nature of the operation, equipment such as Oxygen, portable defibrillators, back- and neck-stabilization boards may be taken into the field.

Education and Training Provision

SARA provides training and education to the wider community through a variety of routes. These include:

1. Emergency Services Training. For the Emergency Services, SARA provides lifeboat training. For example, SARA Beachley has an ongoing relationship with the South West Ambulance Services Trust to provide structured, water-based rescue training for members of their Hazardous Area Response Teams (HART). This provides specialist knowledge, training and experience of working with boats, including in the tidal waters of the Severn Estuary.
2. School Visits. Covid-permitting, the SARA stations frequently host visits from and undertakes visits to local primary schools, Scouts and Guides Units, etc. These are designed to be educational as well as fun, informing young people of the dangers of the water and other aspects of the local area of which they may be unaware.
3. Outreach Activities. SARA frequently particulates in relevant 'community outreach' activities such as the Drowning Awareness Weeks, again providing education about the avoidance of risks as well as information concerning SARA and other emergency Services.

Event Safety Cover

Most years SARA also provides safety and first aid cover to local outdoor-based events, generally sports related. These are usually events which involve water, and/or off-road running, such as rowing regattas, raft races, triathlons and off-road running races. SARA undertakes this role for several reasons:

1. To support the local community. SARA has historically provided this service at a discount to the notional cost, in order to facilitate and support these local events to a greater extent than alternative organisations would be able to. The number of such races and events supported continues to rise, as local organisations realise the capabilities which SARA can bring to their events.

2. To raise SARA's profile. SARA is usually paid for providing the service, albeit at hugely discounted rates for community groups to enable these to be viable, but for many members of the public spectating, this is an excellent opportunity to see SARA in action.

3. To put SARA's skills into play 'in the field' and provide real-world experience.