

SPECIAL EDITION

caba:140 years of support

ESTABLISHED 24TH MARCH 1886



INSIDE THIS

SPECIAL EDITION

THE VICTORIAN GRANTS THAT STARTED IT ALL

THE £65M FARMLAND LEGACY THAT SECURED OUR FUTURE

20M+ DISTRIBUTED IN THE LAST 20 YEARS

STORIES FROM CLIENTS

SOME GENEROUS BENEFACTORS

AS RELEVANT TODAY

WHERE WE STARTED Throgmorton street, London.

London, 1885. A group of councilmen, members of the recently formed Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), gather.

They're discussing the affairs of the day, the room filled with the low hum of conversation, when one mentions the plight of a junior clerk in his employ, afflicted by terminal illness.

The story strikes a chord. At a time when there was no reliable safety net and personal hardship could very quickly become overwhelming, the members feel compelled to act. Moved by the young man's troubles and by the stark lack of support available, they instinctively empty their wallets and gift their colleague £50. It was a simple gesture, offered without fanfare, but one rooted in compassion and solidarity.

With that act of quiet generosity, what would become caba was born. The moment marked the beginning of a shared belief that accountants should look after their own.

At 3pm on 24 March 1886, at the offices of the ICAEW on Throgmorton Street, the Chartered Accountants' Benevolent Association was formally constituted for:

"The object of the Association shall be the relief of necessitous members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales whether subscribers to the Association or not, and of the necessitous widows and children of deceased members, whether actually members at the time of their decease or not, and in the event of the death of a member without widow or child, the relief of necessitous relatives or others dependent on him for their support."

AS RELEVANT TODAY

The charity's objects remain as relevant today as they were at the time caba was founded.

The relief of poverty and sickness and the preservation of good health of the beneficiaries;

&

such other purposes as are charitable under the laws of England and Wales for the benefit of the beneficiaries.

While the context in which caba operates has changed significantly since 1886, the underlying need has not. Financial hardship, physical and mental health challenges and sudden life events continue to affect people.

OUR VISION

We want a future where Chartered Accountants receive the support they need.

OUR PURPOSE

We provide support to alleviate hardship and poor health faced by any member of our community.

NUMBERS OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS

Over 40,000 enquiries

Nearly 10,000 people supported with direct financial assistance

Over 8,000 people accessed counselling

Financial grants and donations totalling more than £20m given

£17m spent on counselling, career coaching, learning and advice

THE EARLY YEARS

Our history tells a story of colleagues quietly helping colleagues.



W.W. Deloitte
caba President 1886-1898

Of widows supported.

Of funerals paid for.

Of careers rebuilt.

"Among those shaping caba's early years were some of the most recognisable names in accountancy." Deloitte, Cooper and Waterhouse.

THE FARM THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING



OUR SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY STORY: Celebrating 140 years of caba



With its roots in philanthropic Victorian England, caba had always been generously supported. Volunteers would give their time and expertise, and regular donations and bequests would be made.

Gifts of land were not unusual, but one in particular changed the course of our modern history. Henry Merrett had been an ICAEW member since 1908 and enjoyed an illustrious career. When in 1958 doctors told him he only had a short time to live, he generously proposed to leave three quarters of his substantial estate to caba.

The farmland generated a modest income over the years, enabling additional land to be purchased. In 2005, land including Peacock Farm in Berkshire, which incorporated Henry's original bequest, was sold to a developer for £65 million.

Not only was our immediate financial future secured. The sale also sparked a programme of support that would quickly raise caba's profile among a much wider community of ICAEW members.

Over the years this meant our support could expand beyond financial grants to include...



Henry Charles Merrett FCA (1881 - 1959)

- Legal advice
- Counselling services
- Debt support
- Career coaching
- Neurodiversity assessments
- Online resources and tools

November 1886
Pay *Mrs Hansfield*
the sum of *£10*
To compensate her struggles as a widow. Half to be paid immediately, half in six months' time.

November 1886
Pay *Mrs Pashley*
the sum of *£10*
To set against the cost of clothing and educating the widower's two children

December 1886
Pay *Mr W.E Dawes*
the sum of *£10*
Formally an ICAEW fellow, hospitalised by a complication of disorders.

February 1887
Pay *Mrs W.E Dawes*
the sum of *£30*
For funeral expenses following the death of her husband and a grant to train her daughter as a teacher.

August 1890
Pay *Mr M.J Saunders*
the sum of *Twenty Guineas*
Suffering from advanced consumption, a grant to winter in a climate more conducive to good health.

OUR EVOLUTION



Queen Victoria signs a Royal Charter creating the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), establishing the professional body that caba would later support.



£50 is raised by councilmen of the ICAEW for a junior clerk afflicted by a terminal illness.



The Chartered Accountants' Benevolent Association is formally constituted, chaired by W.W. Deloitte and supported by 22 ICAEW council members.



Rules & Policies established. Early support includes grants for health-related travel, recognising the impact of illness on financial stability.



Following the death of Dr.J. Westby Gibson. £20 is sent to Mrs Gibson to help her join family in Melbourne, Australia.



First World War, help for households affected by war. Support for the injured and fatalities of war – widows and children.



caba's grants change in line with the Old Age Pensions Scheme for the over 70s.



Support expands to include exam coaching and to assist ICAEW members in finding employment.



Second World War. Financial Grants during times of rationing, displacement and rebuilding. Food parcels are sent to members across the UK by colleagues overseas.



A lasting legacy. Henry Merrett bequeaths his estate to caba.



Recognition that support is more than financial grants alone. Guidance and practical assistance begin to form a larger part of caba's work.



ICAEW's centenary appeal raises £750,000 for caba.



caba's first website launches.



A pivotal year. The sale of land left by Henry Merrett helps secure caba's future. First telephone advice and counselling helpline launches.



New services are available for those in debt, nearing retirement, or out of work. Support is also offered for carers and for those needing care.



Support eligibility broadens further to include ACA students.



Support, training and resources broaden - looking after the wellbeing of the community.



A new five-year strategy refocuses caba's work on those facing hardship and health challenges as pressures across the profession evolve.



caba marks 140 years of support, continuing its mission to stand beside the ICAEW community.

CONGRATULATIONS

For 140 years, this organisation has reflected the best of our profession, a belief that collective care strengthens individuals, families and the wider community.

The challenges facing ICAEW members today may differ from those of 1886, but the need for accessible, compassionate support remains unchanged.

As we mark this anniversary, we do so with gratitude for those who began this work and with determination to ensure it endures. Our responsibility is not only to honour our history, but to stay relevant and ready to support future generations.

I have been struck by the professionalism, compassion and expertise of caba staff, volunteers and partners, and I thank them for their dedication. That founding promise - that no one in our profession should face hardship alone - continues to guide us.

Roger Merchant
caba Chair

For 140 years, caba has been there for members of the ICAEW community when life becomes difficult. Today, we are privileged to continue that tradition of support.

Behind every enquiry is a person navigating a challenge. Our role is to listen carefully, understand what someone

is going through, and provide support that makes a meaningful difference. Whether someone is facing financial hardship, health challenges or a period of uncertainty, they should know they do not have to face it alone.

I feel incredibly proud to play a part in caba's story, and to act as a steward of this remarkable charity, even if only for a short chapter in its long history

Cris Holmes
caba Chief Executive

As Patron, I am proud to be associated with a charity that recognises the realities faced by the accountancy profession and responds with care, respect and practical help. caba's focus on hardship and poor health reflects the importance of offering meaningful support when it matters the most.

Too often, caba has been described as a 'best kept secret'. It should not be. Ensuring that people know help is available and feel able to access it without stigma or shame, is essential if caba is to fulfil its purpose.

caba remains committed to listening carefully, responding thoughtfully and providing support that makes a genuine difference.

Derek Blair
caba Patron, ICAEW President

THE CHALLENGES ARE DIFFERENT The Principle is the Same

TODAY, THE PROFESSION FACES:

Rising living costs
Redundancy linked to AI and restructuring
Long NHS waiting times

Increased neurodiversity diagnosis
An ageing population
Burnout and mental health pressures

caba continues to put the individual client at the heart of everything, understanding and empathising that at every stage of the journey, there is a person struggling with health, financial hardship or both, that needs our help.

We're staffed by specialists with a unique understanding of the pressures of living and working in today's accountancy profession. Our team and partner service providers are dedicated case managers, qualified councillors, career coaches, trainers, debt advisors and medical professionals.

Wide-ranging services available to:

**ICAEW MEMBERS
PAST AND PRESENT**

*ACA students as well as close family dependants,
both in the UK and abroad.*

caba offers a huge range of resources, practical tools and, most importantly, caring professionals at the end of the phone. They can provide a wide range of support, from counselling and financial grants to neurodiversity assessments and help with care.

In 1885, compassion for one junior clerk became a 140-year legacy. Every year, new members join this profession. Life will not always unfold as planned.

But no one needs to face hardship or poor health alone. That has been true since 1886. And it remains true today.

REAL LIVES, LASTING IMPACT

When support arrives at the moment it matters most.

Each year, thousands of people across the ICAEW community turn to caba during some of the most difficult moments of their lives. While every story is unique, the need for understanding, practical help and reassurance is often shared.

Richard's Story

An accident altered Richard's life in an instant. One call to caba helped him rebuild it.

At 21, Richard had his whole life ahead of him. He had completed his economics degree at the University of Birmingham and secured a place on a graduate scheme at KPMG. Shortly before starting work, an accident left him paralysed from the shoulders down.

Richard was just two weeks into his graduate scheme when his **"life profoundly changed."** Following months of rehabilitation, he returned to work with the support of his employer and family. While much around him looked the same, his circumstances were very different. As Richard adapted to life after his accident, the practical and financial challenges of living independently became increasingly apparent. Although he had been aware of caba's services throughout his career, it was only when he began planning to move into his own home that he reached out for support. The property Richard wanted was suitable in principle, but not accessible. It required significant adaptations, including a wet room and a bedroom on the ground floor. When Richard contacted caba, he was surprised by the response. Richard said:

"When I heard the news that caba were going to support the adaptations to my property, I was over the moon and incredibly delighted – almost lost for words."

With caba's help, Richard was able to adapt his home in a way that allowed him to live independently and with confidence. Further support followed when his long-standing car became unusable. With guidance from caba, Richard was able to access support that enabled him to return to driving, restoring an important sense of freedom and independence. Reflecting on the cumulative impact of caba's support, not just on his day-to-day life, but on his longer-term prospects, Richard said:

"Without caba, I'd probably still be living in a home that wasn't fit for purpose. I'd have had to save up and use all my income not just to do those normal things, but for the bare necessities, and I'd probably be a decade behind in my life."

Today, Richard is a chartered accountant and has gone on to build a successful career, alongside roles as a non-executive director, speaker and volunteer for caba.

While his life did not follow the path he originally planned, the support he received helped ensure that it remained full, active and purposeful.

Victoria's Story

The right home helped Victoria protect her family's wellbeing and their future.

Victoria is a former chartered accountant and a mother of four. When it became clear that one of her children had complex additional needs, Victoria made the decision to step away from her career to focus on caring for her family.

While life continued, the limitations of the family's home became increasingly difficult to manage. Living in a three-bedroom house with four children, two of Victoria's daughters were forced to share a room – a situation that became unmanageable as her children grew older.

One of her daughters required frequent care during the night, disrupting sleep and affecting her older sister's ability to rest, study and thrive. Over time, the impact on the whole family's wellbeing became clear.

Determined to improve the situation, Victoria explored all available options. She applied for a government facilities grant to adapt their home, hoping to convert a small garage into an additional bedroom. Despite an initial assessment, the application was refused. Victoria said:

"It felt like every door was being closed, I didn't know where else to turn."

Although she had been aware of caba, Victoria hesitated to reach out, unsure whether the charity was meant for people in her situation. Eventually, with few alternatives left, she made contact.

What followed surprised her, caba listened carefully, helped her understand her options and arranged for a full occupational therapy assessment. With caba's support, Victoria was able to appeal the decision successfully. The garage was converted into a bedroom, giving her daughters their own space and restoring stability at home. The change had an immediate and lasting impact on the family's quality of life.

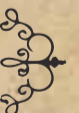
"Having the right space changed everything," Victoria said. "It completely changed the trajectory of my eldest daughter's life."

With improved sleep, privacy and space to study, her daughter went on to thrive academically, including securing a place at grammar school.

For Victoria, the support was about far more than bricks and mortar. It helped protect her children's wellbeing, restore balance at home and provide the foundation her family needed to move forward.



Generosity Across Generations



Since 1983, caba has received:

£16,826,961.28
in donations

Legacies that continue to support members today, if you're able to support caba in any way, big or small, and to find out more about our 140 years, please visit our website

caba.org.uk



**SUPPORTING
ICAEW MEMBERS**

**PAST AND PRESENT,
ACA STUDENTS & THEIR FAMILIES.**

Free. Confidential.

If you ever need us, we're here

01788 556366 ~ caba.org.uk