



Ministry
of Defence

Issue 33

September 2014

Veterans **WORLD**[®]

Raising awareness of the range of help and advice available to veterans



Families' Charity Success in 2014

HELP AND SUPPORT FROM Veterans UK



Call the Veterans-UK Helpline: 0808 1914 2 18

Email: veterans-uk@mod.uk

Web: www.veterans-uk.info

Facebook: Veterans UK

Twitter: @VeteransUK_MOD

**You may be offered a call back if lines are busy*

Veterans **WORLD**[®]

Contents

September 2014

Issue 33

IN THIS ISSUE

- 11** **Gardening World**
Covenant greatly helps gardening project grow
- 12** **Veteran gets disability confident**
DWP campaign raises awareness with employers
- 20** **Birthday Celebrations**
X-Forces on their first anniversary
- 26** **In Memoriam 2014**
Work continues on preserving memorials
- 4-5** **Regulars**
News in Brief



Front cover: Armed Forces Day 2014 - see page 7

The content of *Veterans WORLD* is provided to raise awareness of help, advice and support available to the veterans community. Publication of articles on services provided or developments affecting the veterans community does not mean that they are endorsed by *Veterans WORLD* or the Ministry of Defence.

For advertising opportunities please contact:
Veterans-UK-VeteransWorld@mod.uk

Veterans WORLD is distributed to those who work in an advisory role.
To contact the Editor email: Veterans-UK-VeteransWorld@mod.uk

Want to make an editorial contribution?

Contributions are most welcome.
To raise awareness of an initiative, scheme or organisation that offers help, advice or support to veterans, contact the Editorial Team by email: Veterans-UK-VeteransWorld@mod.uk or by calling: 01253 338816

For distribution enquiries

Email: Veterans-UK-VeteransWorld@mod.uk
or call: 01253 338811

For information relating to War Pension/AFCS claims please call the Veterans UK Helpline 0808 1914 2 18

© Crown copyright 2014

News in brief

Outreach service Rotherham

A bespoke trailer has been designed to spread awareness of the services and support that is available to veterans across the Rotherham borough.

The service is part of Rotherham's commitment to the Armed Forces Community Covenant which it signed in January 2012.

Since that time, Rotherham Council has worked with other organisations with one of its key developments being the creation of a community group, the Military Community and Veterans Centre (MCVC), run by veterans for veterans. Another key issue is to discover just how big Rotherham's veterans community is. The group has held drop in sessions at the Unity Centre and at the Voluntary Action Rotherham offices in Coke Hill, but it was felt that this was still not reaching out to the majority of potential people.

The group decided that an outreach service needed to be developed to travel to various locations around the borough to meet their target audience and to promote the existence of the group.



Another reason for the outreach is that not everyone has enough available money to pay for bus fares into Rotherham.

An Armed Forces Community Covenant grant of £22,088 was received to fund the purchase and running costs of the trailer, which is currently staffed by volunteers. A programme of locations is being developed and talks are ongoing with other South Yorkshire councils for the outreach service to be included in their own Armed Forces Covenant work.

www.rotherhammcvc.wordpress.com

East Lancashire outreach extends

OUTREACH services being offered by East Lancashire-based charity 'Veterans In Communities'(VIC), for veterans and their families living in Blackburn, with Darwen have hit the ground running.

The service, launched in March, has already seen a number of veterans enquiring about the support VIC can provide.

The new outreach received a £300 boost from Blackburn with Darwen Council and operates every Tuesday from 10 am to 1 pm at Darwen Town Hall. The sessions

are run by veterans Pat O'Reilly and John Clark.

VIC, established in 2012, now operates outreach in Rossendale, Pendle, Heywood and is looking to extend to other areas of East Lancashire in the near future.

The charity offers a unique mix of outreach services, community-based projects, social inclusion projects, art classes and outdoor activities which included regular walks, fishing, sailing and mountain biking.

www.veteransincommunities.org/

Discounted travel for reservists

Train companies have extended the offer of Armed Forces travel discount scheme to tens of thousands of volunteer reservists.

The deal signed between rail companies and the Ministry of Defence now means the HM Forces Railcard will now cover all active volunteer reservists, their spouses and children.

The railcard will save reservists a third off fares for family days out and trips

to visit friends, meaning they get to enjoy time with loved ones for less.

With growing numbers of volunteer reserves supporting the country and working as part of a fully integrated force, train companies have worked closely with the Ministry of Defence to make the benefit available to all active troops.

www.hmforces-railcard.co.uk/

Veterans Commissioner announced

In June, First Minister Alex Salmond announced Mr Eric Fraser CBE as Scotland's inaugural Veterans Commissioner – the first role of its kind in the UK.

In his role as Scottish Veterans Commissioner, Eric Fraser will work with Service charities, local authorities and health boards to identify any areas in public services that might provide greater support to veterans and help shape future policy development and opportunities.

The establishment of this new role reinforces the Scottish Government's commitment to provide support to the estimated 400,000 ex-Service men and women living in Scotland.

A graduate of Edinburgh University, Eric Fraser joined the Royal Navy in 1976 and during a 37-year career served in a wide range of appointments, both at sea and ashore. As a junior officer in 1982 he saw service during the Falklands Conflict on board the minesweeper HMS FARNELLA, later commanding the Fishery Protection Vessel HMS GUERNSEY and the frigate HMS BOXER. This latter role included periods operating in the Adriatic at the height of the Balkans War and a spell combating drug smuggling around the Caribbean.

Subsequent appointments focussed on joint operations including spells at the Permanent Joint HQ in Northwood where he headed teams directing operations in the Balkans and Afghanistan and, later, had the responsibility of providing communications and IT support for all UK forces deployed overseas. He was awarded a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 2009 as a result of this tour.

Eric took up his appointment as Scottish Veterans Commissioner in August 2014.

ScottishVeteransCommissioner@scotland.gov.uk



Cabinet votes to support veterans

A volunteer group supporting veterans and their dependents will continue to operate out of a dedicated building, thanks to a commitment from Warwickshire County Council.

Cabinet members agreed to grant a ten-year lease for the use of the Horsa Building in Queens Road, Nuneaton as the Veterans Contact Point.

The Centre is staffed by a combination of volunteers and professionals from the Veterans Partnership which includes staff from the MOD's Veterans UK service, The Royal British Legion, Adult Community Learning and Bedworth, Rugby and Nuneaton CAB.

The services available include welfare assistance, employment training, literacy and numeracy (particularly with Gurkha veterans where there are currently 72 learners involved in this area), an internet café, peer and emotional support. The Veterans Contact Point Armed Forces Centre is open Monday to Friday, call 02476 343793 or email contactus@veteranscontactpoint.co.uk

Extending help to veterans

An advice and support service aimed at helping local armed forces veterans and their families to make the difficult transition back into Civvy Street is being extended right across Tyneside.

Gateshead Council appointed an Armed Forces Community Outreach Worker last year to provide advice and support to local veterans and their families, but the project has proved so successful that it is now being extended right across Newcastle, North and South Tyneside.

Almost 200 Gateshead veterans and their families have so far received help and assistance on issues such as housing, employment, benefits and healthcare since the scheme was launched in Gateshead in 2013.

The new scheme will see Community Outreach Workers appointed by Newcastle, North and South Tyneside councils to help veterans in their own areas to make the transition into civilian life.

For further information, call the Armed Forces Community Support at Gateshead Council on 0191 433 4545

Helping Residents to Reminisce



Nurse Mark Bebbington and resident Leslie Nelson chatting in the Rempod Bar. Mark had to wait until he got home to open his beer

The Royal Star & Garter Home in Solihull has purchased a selection of Rempods for the Home.

Remembrance Pods or 'Rempods' are a reminiscence tool for the elderly and for people living with dementia. In keeping with the Charity's mission to help residents live life to the full, the Rempods have already proven to be a popular and valuable asset.

The Rempods are pop-up reminiscence rooms that transform the

space around them into a therapeutic and calming environment, which can help to stimulate memories. Using the Pods encourages conversation amongst residents and assists them with remembering their lives. One of the new Pods was generously donated to the Home by the Rotary Club of Solihull St Alphege.

Remembrance Pods are the invention of entrepreneur, Richard Ernest. Richard thought of the idea after visiting a care home back in 2009. He was struck by how the residents living with

dementia were often living in the past. After appearing on the BBC2 television show, *Dragon's Den*, Richard managed to secure a £100,000 deal to develop his idea.

Currently, eight different versions of the Rempod are available, including a pop-up Dance Hall, Cinema, Kitchen and decade-specific themes, ranging from the 1950s to 1970s. The Solihull Home has a Shop, a Bar and a Cinema.

www.starandgarter.org

Combat Stress CPN awarded Winston Churchill Fellowship

As a veteran and community psychiatric nurse working with Combat Stress, Andrew Smith has an vested interest in trying to improve the services available to veterans across the UK. This has led him to explore areas for research and development, discovering the various models of care offered to veterans abroad. This February, Andrew was awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship based on his aspirations to study and explore community mental health care services available to veterans who reside in Canada.

The fellowship will take him to the province of Alberta where he will work on a six-week project alongside various community mental health services, with specific focus on the function of

operational stress injury clinics which have a history of healthcare provision throughout the region.

Andrew hopes this research will help Combat Stress continue to develop and improve aspects of their own community services while creating collaborative partnerships with other healthcare providers, in the interests of sharing best practice and improving services in mental health care.

The fellowship will enable him to work towards improving the services provided in the UK and thanks must go to the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust who have made this possible and shown such support. Anyone interested in applying for a fellowship should visit www.wcmt.org.uk for further information.

Key announcements at the annual Armed Forces Community event

First Beneficiaries of Veterans Accommodation Fund announced



The first eight beneficiaries for the Veterans Accommodation Fund were announced

The Prime Minister acknowledged the ‘huge sacrifice’ that the Armed Forces make for the nation at the second annual Armed Forces Community event at No 10 Downing Street, emphasising that ‘it is right that all of us recognise that sacrifice’.

THE event, held in July, brought together a wide range of members from the Armed Forces Community, Service Charities and Corporate Covenant signatories to celebrate and recognise the work being taken forward under the Armed Forces Covenant. The Prime Minister reflected on what has been a busy year for the Covenant and provided recognition that the whole nation has a moral obligation to the Armed Forces Community.

So what did the Prime Minister highlight during the reception?

This summer, the Community Covenant reached 100 per cent sign up in Great Britain, with the Isle of Scilly confirming their commitment to support their Armed Forces Community. The Community Covenant pledge, launched in June 2011, continues to help foster mutual understanding and cooperation between the Armed Forces and the wider community.

Benefits from the Community Covenants include the establishment of a pastoral programme - *Lost Worlds* - in North Yorkshire in order to help council staff support Service families upon deployment. Dumfries and Galloway's have created of a priority

system for re-settling veterans in the social housing sector, one of the first regions to do so in Scotland.

However, it was stressed that support for the Armed Forces can be something as simple as displaying an Armed Forces Day sticker, as a positive way of acknowledging the Armed Forces community.

The Community Covenant Grant Scheme, now in its final year, encourages applications from local projects that centrally uphold the terms of the Covenant and integrate communities with their Armed Forces population.

Successful projects are diverse . . . Eastleigh is using their £6,000 grant to help Ghurkhas learn English and integrate with their local communities. The £10,000 given to



The second annual Armed Forces Community event was held at No 10 Downing Street in July

Royal Wootton Bassett was used for a civic event commemorating their new Royal status. A grant of £159,000 was given to replace a Scout and Guide headquarters with a new building which will be made available for community use in Bedale, North Yorkshire.

Fund announcements

The reception was also an opportunity for the Prime Minister to announce the first eight beneficiaries from the £40 million Veterans Accommodation Fund, which aims to expand the availability of accommodation for veterans, with a housing need, by supporting charities and other benevolent organisations. The Prime Minister said: "I am proud to announce the first successful projects that will be supported by the Veterans Accommodation Fund. Our Armed Forces make huge sacrifices for the nation and it is right that all of us recognise that sacrifice – that is why this government enshrined the Armed Forces Covenant in law." The first eight projects to be funded include: the construction of a Dementia Wing at The Royal British Legion's Maurice House in Broadstairs,

Kent and the installation of a new lighting system in Erskine Care Home, Scotland.

"eight projects from across the UK will from today be receiving very well deserved funding which will allow them to continue their efforts in assisting veterans and their families in finding and adapting accommodation"

Defence Minister Anna Soubry, also in attendance, was 'delighted' with this initiative and praised the diversity of the projects endorsed so far, both geographically and in terms of need. She said: "Our Armed Forces and their families give so much to our country so it is only right that we continue to recognise their

contribution and sacrifice after they have left Service. I'm delighted that eight projects from across the UK will from today be receiving very well deserved funding which will allow them to continue their efforts in assisting veterans and their families in finding and adapting accommodation."

For organisations seeking to publically support the Armed Forces community, the Corporate Covenant exists as a pledge of commitment to make real changes that recognise the Armed Forces' contribution and the mutual benefits of their employment, utilising skills and knowledge obtained during a career in the Services.

Pledging corporate commitment

Launched in June 2013, over 200 businesses and charities, from Amazon to Aldershot Town Football Club, have already signed their pledge. These pledges see a range of commitments and support including Barclays' assurance to make work placements available for veterans and Deloitte's military transition and talent programme which provides coaching and mentoring for those leaving the Services, alongside insight days for veterans.

Projects funded by the £35 million, taken from banks manipulating the LIBOR, continue to flourish. Among the 96 charities and good causes supported were The Bridge for Heroes has been granted £103,000 which will provide face-to-face mental health support to Serving personnel, veterans and their families in Norfolk.

Looking to the Future

Although the LIBOR funding scheme has now closed, the future of the Covenant remains vital and with a new £10 million fund expected to be announced in 2015, the national commitment to the Armed Forces Community continues to strengthen.

Web

www.gov.uk/the-armed-forces-covenant

New mentoring support for Scottish veterans and their families

Two-year volunteer mentoring programme launched



The two-year programme will be available to veterans and their immediate family members

The national volunteering charity TimeBank has joined forces with one of Scotland's leading veterans charities, Erskine, to launch a new mentoring project to support Scottish veterans and their families.

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER ERSKINE is a two-year volunteer mentoring programme for 80 ex-Service personnel and 20 of their immediate family members in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

TimeBank will draw on the experience of its successful Shoulder to Shoulder programme in London and Birmingham to recruit and train volunteers to work with veterans who are recovering from mental health issues, as many sufferers struggle to adjust to life after the military. Volunteers will also support veteran's family members, who often face unique challenges in understanding and dealing with the issues their partners, sons and daughters are going through.

The project's beneficiaries will include early Service leavers and older non-commissioned officers – both

groups identified as being at particular risk of homelessness, unemployment, crime and domestic and community violence*. In addition, the Cross Party Group at the Scottish Parliament on Armed Forces Veterans (April 2012) identified a number of issues specific to Scottish veterans – the use of alcohol; the need to move away from an institutionalised lifestyle; and an unwillingness on the part of many to engage with civilian support services.

There are around 400,000 veterans living in Scotland. One in five of the Scottish population is a member of the veterans' community, with eight per cent of veterans in Scotland more likely to have a mental health problem than elsewhere in Great Britain.

In addition, 10 per cent are more likely to become homeless; five per cent to have financial problems; five per cent more likely to have a criminal record and three per cent to be more likely to suffer from alcohol problems than elsewhere in Great Britain, according to Scottish veterans charity Poppyscotland**

Helen Walker, Chief Executive of

TimeBank, said: "Many Service veterans are in a state of crisis in their lives, with complex and multi-faceted problems including financial hardship, homelessness, alcohol dependency and health issues including depression, anxiety and panic attacks

We know from our Shoulder to Shoulder projects in London and Birmingham that mentoring can be a powerful tool to aid the recovery and reduce the risk of social exclusion in veterans and their families; therefore strengthening the family unit as a whole."

"... mentoring can be a powerful tool to aid the recovery and reduce the risk of social exclusion in veterans and their families"

Steve Conway, Chief Executive of Erskine said: "Erskine has been caring for Scotland's veterans since 1916 and now we are seeing a whole new generation of veterans who need our help. We are very excited to be working with TimeBank to support ex-Service personnel."

Shoulder to Shoulder Erskine has been funded by the Forces in Mind Trust and the Henry Smith Charity.

Web

www.timebank.org.uk/shoulder-to-shoulder

Phone

Ali, Project Coordinator
0141 814 4510

email

ali@timebank.org.uk

Twitter

@timebank
@Erskine1916

*http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/CrossPartyGroups/Armed%20Forces%20Veterans/minutes_20120425.pdf.

**www.poppyscotland.org.uk/index.php/content/show/about_us/facts_and_statistics

Falklands veteran launches Legion Scotland new wellbeing service

New service to provide friendship, advice and connect veterans into local services



Kevin Gray CEO (left) and Lewis Montague, at the launch of the wellbeing service in Edinburgh

Falklands veteran and entrepreneur Tony Banks and Iraq veteran Lewis Montague, 32, who rebuilt his life after a near fatal car crash, have backed Legion Scotland's new wellbeing service, which provides support and advice to veterans after they leave the Armed Forces.

LEGION SCOTLAND has set up the new wellbeing service which will see befrienders across Scotland providing a first point of contact to help veterans of all ages and backgrounds to settle back into civilian life.

Tony, 52, served in the Falklands where he witnessed at

first-hand the horrors of war. His experiences in the Falklands had a life-changing effect on Tony. The entrepreneur says Legion Scotland's new wellbeing service will help meet the needs of veterans in Scotland today. He said, "The conflicts I was involved in 30 years ago will stay with me forever. It's vitally important that when you leave Service the support is there. It's not easy to get back to civilian life and veterans need to know that it's okay to ask for help."

The wellbeing service will provide friendship, advice and connect veterans into local services that can help them cope with changes after leaving military life.

Lewis, from Kirkcaldy, joined the Army in 2000 and served with Black Watch 3 Battalion of the Royal Regiment Scotland in Kosovo, Germany, Poland and at the frontline of the Gulf War. Lewis was still coming to terms with the loss of friends who died in combat when he was involved in a near fatal car accident.

The incident while he was on leave put him in a coma for two weeks and in hospital for a year. Lewis

was told he would never walk again. He was determined to get back on his feet and against all odds, after five years in rehab he learned to speak and walk again.

Lewis, who is now a mentor and support worker for adults with learning disabilities, works part-time as a DJ after doing training during rehab and is getting married in August. He said rebuilding his life would have been easier with better support. He said: "There is support out there so it's important that there is a port of call so people know how to get the help they need."

The new service, which was awarded £10,000 funding from the Scottish Government's Scottish Veterans Fund, will also offer veterans the chance to benefit from the charity's comradeship activities and free wellbeing and pensions support.

The launch of the wellbeing service comes as the charity announced its new brand Legion Scotland as part of a drive to modernise and better meet the changing needs of the ex-Service community whether they served 50 years ago or yesterday.

Kevin Gray MM, CEO of Legion Scotland said, "Legion Scotland has been helping the ex-Service community for over 90 years since we were set up in 1921 to help veterans who were in need after the First World War. In this centenary year of the outbreak of the First World War we are now launching this new service to better serve today's Scottish ex-Service community and their families."

Phone 0131 550 1583

Web www.legionscotland.org.uk

Facebook Legion Scotland

Twitter @LegionScotland

Project Nova

Partnership working to support Norfolk and Suffolk veterans in police custody



Organisations from the charitable and public sectors are working in partnership to support veterans

In a first of its kind partnership, RFEA, The Forces Employment Charity, Walking with the Wounded, Norfolk and Suffolk Police Force, Anglia Ruskin University and Forces in Mind Trust are working together to support veterans who have entered police custody.

THE formal Project Nova initiative, launched in July, is an 18-month trial jointly delivered by RFEA and Walking With The Wounded. The trial will provide advice, guidance and support to veterans using a 'Nova Network' of military charities and organisations in Norfolk and Suffolk that can assist veterans depending on their individual needs. The trial will also be underpinned by an academic evaluation carried out by Anglia Ruskin University and funded by Forces in Mind Trust, to measure effectiveness and successful outcomes.

Project Nova will be coordinated by Colin Back, who has already been

working closely with the Norfolk and Suffolk police custody suites to support and engage with veterans identified. Colin served in the Army for six years, leaving in 1983; he then served with Norfolk and Kent Police until joining the RFEA charity in 2011 as a specialist employment consultant, working with veterans in Prison. Colin has strong links across both counties and actively supports veterans in the criminal justice system, linking them into the military charity network available to them.

Colin Back said: "The rehabilitation process back into the community is sometimes not an easy one, veterans deserve all the support they can get – Project Nova will provide assistance, advice and continued support after release from police custody, to both the veteran and their family, and it is fantastic how supportive Norfolk and Suffolk Police have been regarding the project. "What makes my job so worthwhile are the emails and cards

I get from time-to-time, telling us how much we helped and saying thank you. The word Nova means "new beginnings", and that's exactly what we want to help these veterans achieve".

"The word Nova means "new beginnings", and that's exactly what we want to help these veterans achieve".

Jenny McKibben, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk commented: "Veterans can struggle to overcome challenges presented to them and may find themselves coming into contact with the criminal justice system. Project Nova offers veterans and their families help with integration back into civilian life and we are pleased to support such a beneficial initiative."

Air Vice Marshall Ray Lock from Forces in Mind Trust added: "This project will provide an invaluable insight into an extremely vulnerable cohort. FiMT is very pleased to provide funding for this type of research, which adds to the strong evidence-base to which we are contributing across the sector. The findings will enable support services to improve the intervention we can offer veterans entering police custody, ensuring they have the necessary additional help to take their place in society."

Web www.rfea.org.uk

Funding Boost for Veterans Project

Plans for new veterans gardening therapy project blossom



From left Horticultural Therapist Zisky Stovell, veteran Danny Quinn, Heather Budge-Reid, Trustee Roger Moore, Vicky Page from Scotts Miracle-Gro, Stacey Crump – Armed Forces Covenant Fund Manager and Jacqueline Francis from ISS Landscaping

Gardening Leave has unveiled detailed plans to open a new horticultural therapy site for troubled Armed Forces veterans in Dundee later this year – and has received a £10,000 donation from Scotts Miracle-Gro to get the project blooming.

GARDENING LEAVE will be transforming an old, inner-city bowling green in Dudhope Park in central Dundee into a working horticultural therapy garden filled with raised vegetable, herb and cut flower beds. The project will allow the large veteran population living on Scotland's east coast to access the charity's gardening therapy services.

The new garden, to be built by ISS Facility Services Landscaping, has received a £10,000 Gro100 Grassroots Grant from Scotts Miracle-Gro. As well as giving the project this cash boost, Scotts Miracle-Gro has forged green links between Gardening Leave and a veteran's horticultural therapy charity garden in North Carolina in America, which it also funds. The charities' gardens will be twinned when they both open later this year, sharing best therapeutic practice and experiences.

Gardening Leave's Dundee project has also received a £73,000 award from the Armed Forces Covenant LIBOR fund and £10,000 from the Lethendy Trust.

Heather Budge-Reid, chief executive of Gardening Leave, said: "The east coast of Scotland has traditionally always had a large Armed Forces veterans population and Dundee is the third largest recruiting centre in Scotland, so we're really excited about launching a new project in the city. To have the support of Scotts Miracle-Gro and ISS, as well as our original funding grant from the Armed Forces Covenant, is wonderful. Without the support of the City Council and their commitment to the veterans of Dundee, this dream would not be turning into a reality."

"We're looking forward to seeing the Dudhope Park space being transformed into a garden where local veterans can grow and tend vegetables, as a first step on their journey to good health and a successful transition to civilian life."

Vicky Page, head of the Scotts Miracle-Gro UK Community Outreach Programme, said: "Scotts Miracle-Gro has worked with Gardening Leave on

several projects over the years. When we heard about the new Dundee garden project we were very happy and excited to help get the garden up and running. Gardening Leave is a wonderful charity and the work they do for our veterans using horticultural therapy is simply outstanding."

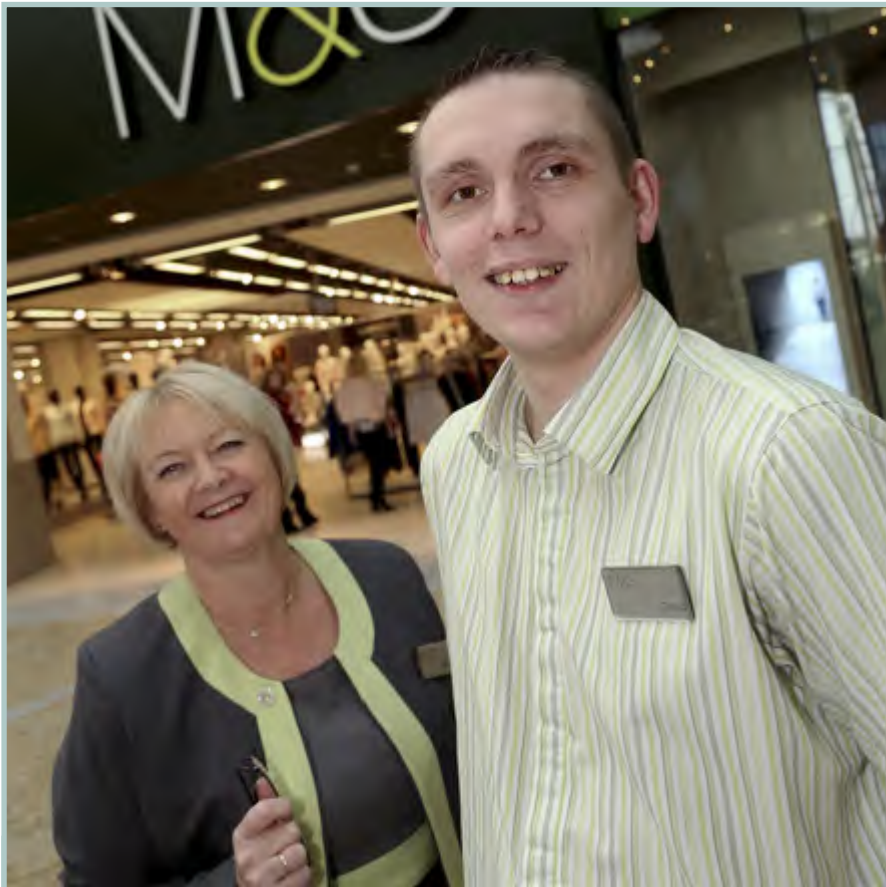
Defence Minister Anna Soubry said: "I am delighted that we have been able to provide Gardening Leave with as much as £73,000 of Libor funding, and this is just another positive way that the Armed Forces Covenant is supporting our people. Our personnel and veterans play an invaluable role in society and it is only right that they get the support they deserve after leaving the Forces."

The new Dundee garden will boast raised wooden vegetable and flower beds, communal seating area, kitchen, office and quiet area and will be planned along the lines of a traditional kitchen garden with the produce destined for local community activities.

Web	www.gardeningleave.org
Facebook	Gardening Leave
Twitter	@Gardening_leave

Veterans get Disability Confident

New job is life changing for David



Veteran David Parker with Betty Niven, the Recruitment Coordinator at M&S's Silverburn store

Government and employers are working together to remove barriers, challenge negative attitudes and ensure that disabled people have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

ARMED FORCES veteran David Parker turned to Remploy, Disability Confident campaign partner, for support when his extreme anxiety and loss of confidence prevented him from making a fresh start and finding employment in Civvy Street. David's condition, triggered by Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, also caused him to

Remploy is the UK's leading provider of specialist employment services to people who experience complex barriers to work. www.remploy.co.uk

“This has been life changing for me ...”

stammer in difficult and stressful situations.

David secured a work placement on the Marks & Start scheme, M&S's community programme that provides access to employment for lone parents, homeless, disabled and young and long-term unemployed people. And not long after, successfully completing the placement, David accepted an offer of a permanent job as a customer service assistant in the busy food Hall at M&S's Silverburn store in Glasgow.

“This has been life changing for me,” he said. “Employers were overlooking me because of my condition and my own lack of confidence hindered my job search, which fed my depression and stress. I felt I was in a vicious circle and was only able to break out when Remploy and M&S showed faith in me. “Now that I have a permanent job at M&S the future is so much brighter and I feel I can start making plans again.”

Betty Niven, Recruitment Coordinator at M&S's Silverburn store said: “I'm delighted for David, who is proving a hard working and popular colleague. At M&S we look beyond disability and focus on a person's ability.”

The Disability Confident campaign aims to help increase employer confidence in recruiting and retaining disabled people as part of a diverse workforce and to encourage employers to be positive about the skills that disabled people bring to business.



Web www.gov.uk/dwp/disabilityconfident

Twitter @DWPgovuk

Facebook Department for Work and Pensions - DWP

Inspire . . . Enable . . . Support

Course to boost veterans' employment prospects



Sarah Tomlinson, Training and Development Manager at Help for Heroes, with one of the corporate mentors, who work with the veterans. They are raking aggregate to fill a footpath in the Yorkshire Dales as part of the Enable phase of Pathfinder.

Wounded, injured or sick veterans are encouraged to sign up to a new course being run in Catterick to boost their employment prospects or give them ideas for vocational opportunities.

THE Pathfinder Experience course will take place at the Help for Heroes-run Phoenix House Recovery Centre on Richmond Road and is aimed at veterans who have been medically discharged or who have developed a medical condition post-discharge.



Stuart Redman

The course, run in partnership with Serve On, a community interest company set up to help the transition from military to civilian life, is split into three phases. With guidance from a mentor, it looks at helping

individuals get established back into 'civvy street' and preparing for employment or a vocational activity.

The first stage, INSPIRE, which lasts six days, will take place at the end of November/beginning of December. It's free of charge and includes food and accommodation. Phase two, ENABLE, which takes five days, will be run in February 2015. Phase three, SUPPORT, is two days and will take place in May 2015.

Sally Mendonca, Supported Courses Coordinator for the Support Hub at Phoenix House, said the Centre had already run two successful Pathfinder courses.

She added: "The whole experience has really helped the veterans who attended. They have been matched with a mentor, who will help them over the next 12-18 months."

"We'd love more veterans to sign up to the course as it's a great way for them to get support in thinking about their opportunities, whether that is vocational or a new career. We are also always on the lookout for new mentors."

Veteran Stuart Redman's Army career with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers was cut short due to injury after he was partially

blinded in his right eye. He served in Iraq in 2006 as well as in Kosovo and Kuwait and was medically discharged in 2010.

He said: "My experience of the Pathfinder programme is a positive one. The military environment feels familiar with like-minded people attending it for the same reasons as me. This in itself was a great start to the programme.

"I found myself (and others) quickly settled into it after the initial reservations and as the week progressed the aim of the programme becomes apparent.

"It assists getting back on track and knowing the fact that there are others (facilitators included), who have been in a similar position at times in their lives.

"The majority of Service leavers are lucky enough to know exactly what they want out of Civvy street. For some of us adjusting to Civvy street isn't quite straightforward. The Pathfinder course is a good starting point for those who are stuck in that rut.

"If you're stuck at home, twiddling your thumbs and running round in circles then I'd certainly recommend you reach out and grasp an opportunity to get on a Pathfinder course."

For more information and an application form, contact Sally Mendonca. Businesses interested in mentoring should also get in contact.

Anyone who served in the Army, Royal Navy, Royal Marines or Royal Air Force who needs the help of Phoenix House Recovery Centre can self-refer by calling 01748 834148.

Phone Sally Mendonca 01748 834148

Web www.helpforheroes.org.uk

email Sally.mendonca@helpforheroes.org.uk

Twitter @HelpforHeroes or @PhoenixHouseRC

Facebook Help for Heroes Official

From Troops to Teachers

Veterans seeing benefits of programme placing them in education



As part of the programme trainees will spend four days a week as part of the school staff

In July 2013, the Department for Education launched the Troops to Teachers programme to give the best non-graduate Service Leavers the opportunity to train for a teaching qualification. Successful completion of the two-year programme will lead to a degree together with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

THE programme was designed and developed jointly by a group of outstanding schools and initial teacher training (ITT) providers, working together with the Career Transition Partnership. It builds on the skills and experiences Service Leavers have gained throughout their military careers.

After a rigorous assessment and selection process, the first cohort began their training in schools in January 2014. Each trainee works as

part of the school staff, spending four days each week in school and one day on academic study. There are also several residential study weeks which take place throughout the year, bringing together trainees from across the country. In addition, they receive tailored training and development that further draws upon and develops their experiences and expertise for teaching in schools.

The trainees

After almost two terms in school, trainees are already seeing the benefits of their career change . . . Mike, a secondary school trainee explained: "It's been brilliant, very exciting, very busy. I've been juggling developing in the classroom with the university side of things which has been a challenge at times, but also

"I was a bit nervous at the start thinking 'How am I going to do this?', because it's completely different to anything else I have done. I have done a bit of presenting in the Forces but it's very different to be faced with a classroom of children."

enjoyable. I'm starting to get into a routine now, but when you first start there isn't really one because you're just trying to immerse yourself into the school, get around to see as much as possible. So at the beginning I was dipping into lots of different lessons, lots of different departments but now as I have moved on a bit I am very much focused on my subject. I have

started taking on a few lessons myself which is really fun. I was a bit nervous at the start thinking 'How am I going to do this?', because it's completely different to anything else I have done. I have done a bit of presenting in the Forces but it's very different to be faced with a classroom of children. I also get involved a few activities after school, for example the football club.

You do four days in school and on Friday it's University work, which involves webinars that you can do from home. It's a really nice way of doing it [studying]. At the start of the course I wasn't sure how that was all going to work and exactly how the webinars would run, but having done them now it's a really nice way of

learning. Personally I am not far from the University of Brighton, so I have also travelled down there a few times and used the library, and that's also a nice way of working – sitting in the library, reading a few books and getting on with the assignments. Overall the studying has been brilliant and complements what I do in school nicely."

Emma, a primary school trainee said: "It's that moment when you're trying to introduce a new concept to a child, and they are not getting it and they are struggling. It's that moment when the penny drops and you know they have understood - for me that is what this is all about."

Alison, another primary school



The trainees have found the children they teach inspirational



Successful completion of the programme will lead to a degree together with Qualified Teacher Status

trainee added: "It's been extremely inspirational. The inquisitiveness of the children has surpassed my expectations".

The next class

The second cohort will start their training in September 2014 with a week-long school-based induction and then a week of study workshops with their fellow trainees, before beginning their school-based training.

If you want to know more about the programme, or hear more from current trainees, there's plenty of information on the Troops to Teachers non-graduate programme website. You can also register an expression of interest for any future application rounds.

Visit the website for further information and to submit an expression of interest, at

www.troopstoteachers.ctp.org.uk

For Service Leavers with degrees, there are several school or university based options to gain a teaching qualification. Further information can be found on the Department for Education's website.

Phone The Teaching Line 0800 389 2500

www.troopstoteachers.ctp.org.uk

Web www.education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/teacher-training-options

There for the families

Military children's charity amazing achievements in 2014



Nikki and daughter Brooke at Scotty's holiday lodge

Military children's charity Scotty's Little Soldiers is celebrating a great year for fundraising, allowing it to purchase a third holiday lodge in the south of the country that provides holiday breaks for bereaved children.

THE charity for the children of the fallen, set up by army widow Nikki Scott in 2010, provides holidays, gifts, treats, parties and experiences for members up to their 19th birthday. The charity honours husband Corporal Lee Scott's memory - both as a loyal soldier and a loving father - with funds for the charity raised through events, fundraising, donations, merchandise and corporate sponsorship.

Scotty's is currently helping 148 children and fundraising efforts have enabled the purchase of a third holiday lodge at Devon Cliffs Haven resort, which opened at Easter. Scotty's already owns two holiday lodges in Blackpool and Great

Yarmouth and the new lodge is already booked up throughout the summer.

"It's all possible thanks to the amazing support we have received," said Scotty's chief executive Stuart Robinson. "We know that there are many more children out there affected by the loss of a parent in the Armed Forces and our main focus for 2014 is raising more awareness of Scotty's Little Soldiers nationally to help us reach out to these brave children."

Each lodge is filled with home comforts, and the charity makes sure the families have everything they could need, including bedding, high chairs, toys and games for the family. Travel fees are also taken care of and the charity provide each family with £100 each time they stay to help towards food and activities.

"I feel very proud of everything the charity has achieved and I love

"It's somewhere we can go and it's private and there's that element of support for other wives."

that people want to help the children who are left without a parent. It means more than I could ever put into words," said charity founder Nikki Scott.

The Davies family is one of the families supported by the Charity... "They've been absolutely fantastic," said Joanne Davies, 37, who lost her husband Damian while he was serving in Afghanistan in 2008. "Our son Matthew loves receiving things on his birthday and Christmas and we enjoyed a holiday at a Scotty's lodge, and I went to the Scotty's ball. It's somewhere we can go and it's private and there's that element of support for other wives."

As well as offering the children the opportunity to have some fun and make some new happy memories, the charity is also hard at work preparing a number of new services to help its members with bereavement support and personal development.



Scotty's Little Soldiers members with celebrity chef Jamie Oliver at The Sun Millies Awards

Phone 01553 763 000

Web www.scottyslittlesoldiers.co.uk

Facebook Scotty's Little Soldiers

Twitter @CorporalScotty

Youtube SLSoldiersTV's channel

Veterans in North of Scotland get dedicated support

Charity expands its veterans service into North



Chris, a veteran supported by Thistle, is now a facilitator on the course supporting other veterans

Ex-servicemen and women from across the North of Scotland will now be able to get dedicated support to help them adjust to civilian life, after a charity won funding to expand into the North.

INVERNESS veterans will be the first outside the central belt to benefit from the Thistle Foundation's peer-support veterans' course, which is proven to support veterans facing a range of issues after leaving the service.

The North of Scotland has a high ex-Service population of around 118,000 and a large serving presence at nearby bases. Not all veterans need help but research, by the Citizens Advice Scotland, has identified several issues faced by the Armed Forces community when they return to civilian life, including finance, employment, physical and mental health, housing and social isolation.

Edinburgh-based Thistle Foundation is a pioneering charity that supports people with a range of disabilities and health conditions to live the life they want. The charity started life in the 1940s, providing

accommodation and support for veterans and their families.

The new Inverness veterans' course will make a significant difference to the lives of veterans and their families, helping to support them on issues such as depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorders and anxiety. The course is shaped and supported by veterans who have been through it themselves.

Speaking out about his experience of the course, in a new video released by the Thistle Foundation, veteran, Ross Swinton, said: "I knew in my head that if I didn't sort myself out I could end up in a bad place, a really bad place, lose everything, family, home, life. And the course helped me to sort myself out. I have good days and bad days but the difference is that now I know a bad day is only going to be a bad day cause there's always tomorrow. It's like starting anew; learning to live again."

Diana Noel-Paton, Chief Executive of the Thistle Foundation, said: "We are delighted to expand our veterans' course to Inverness so we can support local veterans who may be experiencing difficulties as a result of their time in Service or as they try and settle back in to civilian life.

"The Veterans' Self Management Service works because veterans are there for each other. They can relate to each other. And once they have completed it successfully veterans go on to support others who are experiencing similar struggles. We know that a 'peer support' approach is

highly successful as individuals can say 'me too' and share how they coped with what was going on in their lives."

The veterans' course is based on the lifestyle management courses developed by Thistle that helps those with long term health conditions live the life they want.

Thistle was awarded £155,877 over two years from the Scottish Government's Self Management Impact Fund, administered by the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) last year. The money enabled Thistle to continue the veterans' service and expand to Inverness.

In addition to the ALLIANCE and Scottish Government's backing, the Thistle Foundation veterans' course has also received the support of Poppyscotland. Over the past six years, the charity has committed £100,000 to support Thistle to run its veterans programme and to train veterans to provide the much needed peer support to others.

Poppyscotland are also working with Thistle to ensure veterans in the North of Scotland get the help they need, for example, helping them to connect up with veterans that may need support. Poppy Scotland will also host the course from the charity's Inverness base in Strothers Lane.

Phone service coordinator, Pat Mackinnon 0131 656 7356

Web www.thistle.org.uk/

email pat.mackinnon@thistle.org.uk

Facebook The Thistle Foundation

Twitter @thistlecharity

University of Wolverhampton discovers Armed Forces Entrepreneurs

Unique Start-Up programme supports unsung heroes



Sally Wagstaff, one of the first cohort on the 'Supporting the Unsung Hero Programme'

"The programme has given me the confidence and knowledge to understand how to approach my business and with the help from my business mentor I successfully secured the funding I needed to acquire premises and equipment."

'Supporting the Unsung Hero' is available to the Dependants' of veterans, Reservists and Serving personnel at no cost as it has been funded by the Armed Forces Covenant LIBOR Fund.

Since October 2013, when the University of Wolverhampton ran its first cohort, the programme has received in excess of 250 enquiries with 150 registered applicants, currently there are eighty Service Dependants participating in the programme. Demand for the Dependants

Business Start-Up Programme has been widespread throughout the UK and word has spread to military locations overseas. In response the University has agreed to deliver a cohort in British Forces Cyprus by the end of 2014 and are exploring the possibility of delivery in Germany to support families who are returning to the UK in 2015 with the Army Re-basing Programme.

Helen Lloyd-Wildman, the University of Wolverhampton Registrar and Secretary, and the Executive lead on relations with the Armed Forces said, "We are proud to be leading this programme which forms an integral part of the

The University of Wolverhampton and the Black Country Chamber of Commerce have come together to deliver a unique Business Start-Up Programme, specifically tailored to meet the needs of Armed Forces families.

DRAWING on the University's success and reputation to provide business growth the Armed Forces Dependants' Business Start-Up Programme 'Supporting the Unsung Hero' gives Service families

the opportunity to start their own business with the support of a dedicated business adviser. The 10-month programme consists of an Introduction to self-employment session, a four-day Business Start-Up course and a seven-month Individual and Group Mentoring programme. It is delivered through the Wolverhampton Business Solutions Centre in conjunction with the Black Country Chamber of Commerce and the MOD Hive Information Service.



The Programme includes the support of a dedicated business adviser

opportunities we offer Armed Forces personnel, Veterans, Reservists and their families. This programme has the potential to create up to one hundred new business start-ups, significantly boosting economy on a local and national scale, with the opportunity to expand overseas to military locations such as Cyprus by the end of the year and potentially Germany in 2015. This is important for families who are struggling to find employment and those who will be affected by the MOD's rebasing plans when they relocate from Germany to the UK over the next few years."

One of the course's success stories is Veteran Sally Wagstaff, a former Nurse in the Royal Navy and a Dependant of a serving Royal Navy Officer. Sally enrolled on cohort one of the programme in

October 2013. Since completing the course she has opened a state of the art laser hair removal clinic in Lichfield. Sally said: "The programme has given me the confidence and knowledge to understand how to approach my business and with the help from my business mentor I successfully secured the funding I needed to acquire premises and equipment. I am now the proud Company Director of Xodos Aesthetics Limited and I cannot praise the programme enough."

Lianne Bradbury is the University of Wolverhampton Armed Forces Co-ordinator and the Programme Manager for the Dependants' Business Start-Up Programme. Lianne who retired from the Army herself in October 2011, having served 22 years with the Royal Logistic Corps, said: "I

understand how difficult it is for service families to find employment; my husband who is also a veteran followed me around the world for 12 years while caring of my two daughters. I had seven postings during this period and my husband had eight different jobs. I have seen him go through the highs and lows of searching for and securing work and the impact this has had on us as a family. The courses that the University offers give the Service family the opportunity to enhance their employability and break the cycle of an uncertain career"

The University of Wolverhampton aims to support Armed Forces personnel, veterans, Reservists and their families by providing quality courses designed to enhance personal and professional development. It can accredit prior learning and experience gained while in service which could reduce the time required to study for an undergraduate or post graduate degree. Service personnel and veterans who would like to undertake academic study can utilise their Enhanced Learning Credits towards the cost of the course as the University is registered with the Enhanced Learning Credits Administration Service (ELCAS).

For further information on the courses available and the Dependants' Business Start-Up programme, contact Lianne Bradbury the Armed Forces Co-ordinator at the University of Wolverhampton.

Phone 01902 321677

Web www.wlv.ac.uk/mod
www.wlv.ac.uk/supportingtheunsunghero

email mod-enquiries@wlv.ac.uk

Facebook Supporting The Unsung Hero

Lord Young Urges Cohesion for Military Transition to Enterprise

X-Forces celebrates first year of success



In July, the organisation's stakeholders, candidates, corporate partners and supporters gathered to celebrate this impressive milestone at an event at Wellington Barracks in London's Westminster.

The Prime Minister's Adviser on Enterprise has called for greater cross-sector collaboration to maximise the entrepreneurial potential within the Armed Forces community.

SPEAKING at the first year anniversary celebrations of X-Forces, Lord Young of Graffham - serial entrepreneur since 1961 and life peer in the House of Lords - stressed that, although progress had been made, collaboration is crucial in enabling the UK's ex-Service personnel to move from the battlefield into their own boardroom.

Lord Young said "So many leaving our Forces have the skills and experience to make a great success in civilian life and at last, are being given the chance to show us what they can do. I hope that, not only will they succeed, but that they will be an inspiration to those who follow them."

Since its launch in July 2013, X-Forces has helped to launch 170 new entrepreneurs, and facilitated more than £1.5 million in seed funding. A plan for regional roll-out has begun; X-Forces' second base was opened in Newcastle in April 2014.

X-Forces' founder and Chief Executive Officer Ms Ren Kapur said "We embarked upon a mission to help Service leavers and Armed Forces dependants to achieve their dreams. Twelve months on, our network grows more supportive as it expands to include more corporate partners and military organisations.

Kapur does not believe in relishing this impressive milestone; "We have worked intensively, but there is so much more to do.

"Our vision is a warm reception for Service Leavers choosing enterprise, with clear signposting and the investment to see their determination and commitment developed with solid training and vital first-year assistance."

X-Forces receives a dozen new registrations per day from Service leavers, veterans, military spouses, reservists and cadets wishing to engage support for their business idea.

At the core of the X-Forces service is thorough business planning and support to ensure that each new business is supported with sound advice; it's a journey that lasts years.

The unique X-Forces Corporate Membership programme offers an



Lord Young

opportunity for established organisations to support a new generation of entrepreneurs from the Armed Forces community. In support of the Big Business helping Small Business initiative, and using a proven mentoring framework, the X-Forces scheme also benefits the organisation in developing their future senior leaders with broadening experience of mentoring a start up outside the mentor's normal business environment. This is further enhanced for commercial organisations by cross-fertilising the values and core work ethic of military life.

Plans for year two include the establishment of further regional hubs to allow X-Forces to work with the broadest geographical spread of the Armed Forces community and giving one-to-one access to business advisers, mentoring and finance.

Business workshops that consider how to take the first steps into entrepreneurship are already run in various regional locations across the UK, and will be scaled up, along with networking events involving Corporate Members and the existing military community.

Web www.X-Forces.com

Phone 0207 811 3237

Twitter @OfficialXforces

Facebook www.facebook.com/x-forces

Heroes Return programme extended

Big Lottery Fund supports Heroes Return to Normandy 70 Years On

© copyright David Parry at PA



David Render was one of over 250 Normandy veterans who were supported by the Heroes Return Programme

As dawn broke 70 years ago on 6th June 1944, the first of 156,000 allied troops stormed the Normandy beaches under a hail of German artillery. By sunset there would be 10,000 casualties. It would be one of the most momentous days in history and the start of a two-month epic struggle to liberate Normandy, one that would cost over 225,000 dead, wounded, or missing in action.

IN SALUTE to their memory the Big Lottery Fund is proud to have supported over 250 UK Normandy veterans who made a Heroes Return journey back to the shores of France to join in the 70th commemoration ceremonies to pay their respects to lost comrades.

The Big Lottery Fund has awarded

over £28 million to ensure that over 57,000 Second World War veterans, widows and carers have had the opportunity since 2004 to go back to battlefields to attend commemorations.

One veteran who made a Heroes Return pilgrimage back to Normandy was 89 year old veteran David Render, who returned to Gold Beach, where 70 years ago he served with the Sherwood Rangers as a troop leader in command of six Sherman tanks.

In the battle for Normandy David had two tanks blown from under him but remained a troop leader to the end of the war and, apart from a few bruises and nicks, came out the war physically unscathed, a rare achievement given that the



© copyright David Parry at PA

David Render made a return to Gold Beach where 70 years ago he served with the Sherwood Rangers

Sherwood's lost 59 officers between June 1944 to May 1945.

David said "We all knew we were going to get killed; the average lifespan for a trooper was a fortnight. We became numb to it. I certainly wasn't a hero. When we did an action, it was just on to the next one. They drove us to death. A day in Normandy was from 4am in the morning to 1am the next morning."

David said of the 70th commemorations: "To go back to the cemeteries to see our lads is really heart-rendering. We were the lucky ones, make no bones about it. And we are lucky that we have got an organisation like the Big Lottery Fund who cares for our old soldiers who are still very interested in keeping alive their memories and passing them on to the younger generation who we sincerely hope will not do it again."

The Big Lottery Fund has extended its Heroes Return 2 programme to enable veterans to apply for funding to make second trips. The programme deadline for closure will now be the end of 2015.

Phone 0845 00 00 121

Web www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/heroesreturn

Twitter @biglotteryfund #biglf

Facebook Big Lottery Fund

Traineeship programme helps veterans step into new career

Ex-Military Traineeships now available in the East Midlands



The Programme will provide trainees with 'work ready' skills

To provide a stepping stone from the military into a quality logistics job, Skills for Logistics in partnership with Future Horizons, the Career Development Partnership, Job Centre Plus and leading logistics employers have developed a short, practical Traineeship Programme. The programme will provide the functional skills that service leavers need in order to step out of the Service and into either a logistics apprenticeship or a full-time logistics career.

THE Programme is the first of its kind and will be supported by West Nottinghamshire College and major logistics employers such as Norbert Dentressangle.

Commenting on the programme, Dr Ross Moloney, CEO of Skills for Logistics said: "Ex-Military? Aged 16-24 years of age? Based in the East Midlands? Your country still needs you. Without doubt, leaving the Armed Forces can be a daunting prospect. Yet ex-Service men and women have a wealth of skills and experiences - such as attitude, team spirit and the ability to deliver with

limited resources - which is unmatched by civilians. Getting the most positive reaction to these qualities depends also on the individual having the 'work-ready skills' and confidence to complement their military training - which includes skills that are in high demand from logistics employers."

The Ex-Military Traineeships now available will provide these 'work-ready' skills. Over 10 weeks, the structured Traineeship Programme will provide practical learning and 'work ready skills' at Level 1 - both in the classroom and on-site at the workplace. In addition, with coaching and mentoring, the Programme will instill individuals with the confidence required to do the job. At the end of the Programme, there will be a guaranteed job interview with the opportunity of a job placement with a quality logistics company.

The Traineeship Programme is open to anyone who has left the Military, is aged between 16-24, is unemployed and a resident of the East Midlands. Candidates must be available to end of October 2014.

To register for the Traineeship

"ex-Service men and women have a wealth of skills and experiences - such as attitude, team spirit and the ability to deliver with limited resources - which is unmatched by civilians."

Programme applicants should email carol.fisher@skillsforlogistics.org with their name, age, address, email address and daytime telephone number. The Traineeship Programme will be held from the beginning of June 2014 to 30 September 2014. You must meet the eligibility criteria and be available for the duration of the Programme.

Closing date for applications is the end of September 2014.

Web www.skillsforlogistics.org

Twitter @skillslogistics

Veterans get gardening with Thrive

gardening projects improve health and wellbeing



Sid Hill (left) and Ray Warner are two of the veterans 'thriving' on the programme

National charity Thrive has places available for veterans on gardening projects in Birmingham and Gateshead funded by The Royal British Legion.

IT WOULD SUIT veterans looking to improve their health and wellbeing, work in a team with fellow servicemen and women, gain an accredited qualification in horticulture and get back into civilian life.

The Thrive charity uses gardening to bring about positive changes in the lives of people living with disabilities or ill health, or who are isolated, disadvantaged or vulnerable.

For the past six months the charity has been working with veterans arming them with the skills, qualifications and experience needed for a job working outdoors.

Working in a team, veterans will also improve their fitness, strength and stamina. They are taught gardening skills and use them to help maintain a local park. This means they

gain vital work experience and a City and Guilds qualification which could lead to a different career, new employment or onto further educational pathways.

Tim was referred to Thrive by his Consultant Psychologist, who can't believe the transformation in him in such a short space of time.

Tim has been through a lot since leaving the Army in 1995 after seeing active service in Northern Ireland and the Falklands conflict.

He found adjusting to civilian life hard and said there was no help during the 90's for people who were struggling to cope. He turned to drugs in a bid to blot out how he was feeling and soon started relying on them to get through the day.

Before his diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Tim said the way he was feeling almost drove him to suicide. But once he started getting help for his drug problems and following a PTSD diagnosis and the

support that came from that, he began to feel better.

It's through his doctor that Tim found Thrive.

Tim said: "Thrive is amazing. It's a place where you are made to feel welcome. I've learnt such a lot. Did not have a notion about gardening before, but now I love it. I can get lost in planting. I want to stay for as long as I can. It is so therapeutic. I can't believe I feel so strongly about something in such a short space of time."

Former soldier, army medic and Thrive trustee Rory Mackenzie praised the project, which has been funded by The Royal British

Legion, saying: "For those coming out of the Forces with some of the issues I experienced, the chance to work in a team again, learn something new and doing it outdoors in all weathers, is just the job.

Sue Freeth, Director of Operations, The Royal British Legion commented: "We are delighted to be supporting Thrive in recognition of the great work they do in using gardening to help people improve their health and wellbeing and arming them with the skills and qualifications needed to get a job working outdoors."

Phone 0118 988 5688

Web www.thrive.org.uk/

email info@thrive.org.uk

Facebook Thrive

Twitter @thrivecharity

Supporting Veterans on the Road to Civilian Life

Network of support available to the Armed Forces Community



John served in the Royal Artillery and was helped by SSAFA

“They have given me a leg up onto the right track making me independent, and I have also regained my self-esteem.”

Finally, realising he needed help, John went to the Citizens Advice Bureau who advised him to contact SSAFA. After calling his local branch office, John was allocated a volunteer caseworker, who immediately got on the case and contacted the Royal Artillery Association who helped to clear John’s debts. He was also advised to contact Combat Stress who have helped him work through his depression and PTSD.

John is now a changed man. He sees his children every weekend, his work is going well and his debts have been cleared. John said “SSAFA and the Royal Artillery have given me the ability to help myself again. They have given me a leg up onto the right track making me independent, and I have also regained my self-esteem.”

If you would like to find out more about SSAFA, whether it’s to help you or someone you know or if you would like to learn more about volunteering, call 020 7403 8783 or visit ssafa.org.uk.

SSAFA is a charity providing lifelong support to anyone who is serving or has ever served in HM Armed Forces and their families.

EVERY YEAR their network of volunteers and professional staff provides advice and support for around 50,000 people. Its services range from care for those bereaved through recent conflicts to befriending those who served during the Second World War.

A regional network of over 7,000 trained volunteers, throughout the UK and on military bases around the world, means that support is always close at hand, whenever and wherever it is needed.

David Singletary, a volunteer Branch Chairman says that people are coming to SSAFA in increasingly dire circumstances. He said: “Those who have recently left the military can find

the civilian world a very confusing place, add in mental health issues and things can quickly spiral out of control.”

“At SSAFA we know how difficult the transition from military to civilian life can be.”

When former soldier John completed his military service and commenced work as a lorry driver he could not have imagined that one of the roads he would take would lead him to depression and debt.

John’s troubles started during one of his tours as an Air Defence Gunner in the Royal Artillery. After witnessing five of his colleagues being killed in a terrorist attack on their vehicle he began a downward spiral into Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which ultimately lead to debt, marriage break up and thoughts of suicide.

ssafa Lifelong support for our Forces and their families

Phone 020 7403 8783

Web www.ssafa.org.uk

Facebook [ssafafb](https://www.facebook.com/ssafafb)

Twitter @SSAFA

New Medals Announcement

Changes to Ministry of Defence Medals and Clasps following Sir John Holmes's Independent Review

This Autumn, the first of the new military awards, a result of the independent medals review, will be issued.

THE PRIME MINISTER appointed Sir John Holmes in 2012 to conduct an independent review of the policy governing the award of military medals. His report published the same year, concluded that the existing guiding principles were reasonably based but that there should be greater readiness to review past decisions. Sir John was then commissioned to independently review a number of cases to consider for a change in medallic recognition.

This substantial and complex piece of work is now complete. Each of the reviews has been subject to detailed discussion by the Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals and its conclusions have gained Royal approval.

The Ministry of Defence Medal Office is now planning the implementation of the new awards. A phased approach has been adopted to allow time for their design and manufacture.

The details are:

New Clasps

Cyprus 1963-64

Those servicemen who served in Cyprus during the period 21 December 1963 to 26 March 1964 will be awarded the General Service Medal (1962) with clasp 'CYPRUS 1963-64'. Applications for the new clasp will be accepted from 1 March 2015 onwards. The first of the awards will be despatched towards the end of that month. (However these timings remain under review)

Berlin Airlift

The General Service Medal 1918-62 with clasp 'BERLIN AIRLIFT' will be awarded for at least one day's service to all aircrew, RAF and civilians, who



The Ministry of Defence Medals Office is now working to implement the new awards

took part in the Berlin Airlift operation from 25 June 1948 to 6 October 1949 inclusive. Applications for the new clasp will be accepted from 1 March 2015 onwards. The first of the awards will be made towards the end of that month. (However these timings remain under review)

There are also changes to existing Medals and Clasps that are to be awarded under revised qualifying criteria . . .

South Atlantic

The qualifying period for the award of the South Atlantic Medal without the Rosette will be extended from 12 July to 21 October 1982, when the airfield at Mount Pleasant was made operational. Applications for the South Atlantic Medal, under the new time extension, will be accepted from 1 October 2014 onwards. The awards will begin to be despatched towards the end of that month.

Cyprus 1955-59

Those who participated in the suppression of acts of terrorism in Cyprus between 1 April 1955 and 18 April 1959 will qualify for the General Service Medal 1918-62 with clasp

'CYPRUS' if they served for 90 days or more. The qualifying period has been reduced from 120 days, bringing it into line with the qualifying period for service during the Kenya anti-terrorism campaign. Applications for the clasp 'CYPRUS' under the new qualifying period will be accepted from 1 October 2014 onwards. The first of the clasps will be despatched towards the end of that month.

How to Claim

Full details on how to claim the new awards are available at <https://www.gov.uk/the-ministry-of-defence-medal-office> but please note the above dates from which applications will be processed. With the exception of the South Atlantic Medal, RAF and Civilian Pilots are encouraged to submit copies of their flying logbooks to provide evidence of eligibility. Please note all applications will be dealt with in date order.

Phone	veterans - 0808 1914 2 18 Serving Personnel - 0800 085 3600
Web	www.gov.uk/the-ministry-of-defence-medal-office
email	DBS-Medals@mod.uk

Protecting our history

Royal support for the national campaign to reduce war memorial theft



© copyright Matt Horwood

HRH The Duchess of Cornwall marking the Welsh National War Memorial with smartwater

In Memoriam 2014 was delighted to welcome War Memorials Trust's Patron, HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, to the Welsh National War Memorial in Cathays Park, Cardiff. Her Royal Highness marked the war memorial with SmartWater as part of a national campaign to protect war memorials.

MANY of the nation's valued war memorials remain at risk from thieves and vandals attempting to steal metal from monuments. Despite the metal having relatively little monetary value, in 2011 it was estimated that on average one war memorial a fortnight is being targeted by thieves looking to illegally remove bronze, copper or other metals to sell on for scrap. Since it reached a peak in 2011, the number of war memorial metal thefts

reported to War Memorials Trust has fallen for two consecutive years, although in 2013 incidents of vandalism rose.

In Memoriam 2014 is a partnership between War Memorials Trust and the SmartWater Foundation that was established to provide greater protection to war memorials across Wales and the rest of the UK. Launched in November 2011 In Memoriam 2014 is offering SmartWater free of charge to the custodians of the estimated 2-3,000 war memorials in Wales as part of a UK-wide campaign.

SmartWater can be applied to metal sculptures or plaques assigning them with a state-of-the-art forensic

code that can only be seen under UV light and provides undeniable traceability. Once SmartWater has been used to mark a war memorial it is virtually impossible to remove and can withstand burning, sand blasting and long term exposure to UV. It therefore represents an increased threat of detection, arrest and subsequent conviction to thieves. Many war memorials have already been protected and In Memoriam 2014 is calling upon anyone yet to take up this offer to ensure their war memorial is marked with the forensic liquid.

Supporting communities who have experienced metal theft is one aspect of War Memorials Trust's work. The charity is now working with Cadw to support the recently launched

Grants for War Memorials scheme for Welsh war memorials.

Applicants to Cadw can receive up to 70 per cent of project costs up to a maximum of £10,000. In cases where projects cost more than £1,000 War Memorials Trust can offer an additional 15 per cent of funds sought. All applications should be submitted directly to Cadw.

War Memorials Trust's Director, Frances Moreton, said: "War Memorials Trust greatly appreciates the support of HRH The Duchess of Cornwall. As we start to mark the centenary of the First World War this year, interest in war memorials has been at record levels. We hope today we can encourage more communities across Wales to engage with In Memoriam 2014 to pro-actively protect their war memorials. We hope this scheme, alongside Cadw's Grants for War Memorials Programme, will help ensure the people of Wales have protected, secure and conserved war memorials at which to pay their respects in the next few years and for many years ahead."

While marking the Welsh National War Memorial with SmartWater, HRH The Duchess of Cornwall met representatives of War Memorials Trust, the SmartWater Foundation, Cadw, One Voice Wales, War Memorials Trust's Regional Volunteers who have been promoting the project in their communities, veterans and schoolchildren engaged with war memorials through the Trust's educational work. Cardiff Council is the custodian of the memorial and has given permission for the memorial to be marked.

Phone 020 7233 7356

Web www.warmemorials.org

www.inmemoriam2014.org

email enquiry@inmemoriam2014.org

Facebook In Memoriam 2014

Twitter @InMemoriam2014



Ministry
of Defence

 **Veterans
UK**



VETERANS WELFARE SERVICE

The Veterans Welfare Service can help anyone who has served in the UK's Armed Forces. Support is provided on issues from benefits to housing, by either telephone contact or a home visit by one of our Welfare Managers.

Contact the Veterans Welfare Service on the Veterans UK Helpline:

0808 1914 2 18

email: veterans-uk@mod.uk or visit: www.veterans-uk.info

The Heroes Return Programme supported Normandy veteran David Render make a return to Gold Beach where he served 70 years ago - see page 21

