



Ministry  
of Defence

Issue 32 June 2014

# Veterans WORLD<sup>®</sup>

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



**Countdown to  
Armed Forces Day 2014**

# HELP AND SUPPORT FROM **Veterans UK**



Call the Veterans-UK Helpline: 0808 1914 2 18

Email: [veterans-uk@mod.uk](mailto:veterans-uk@mod.uk)

Web: [www.veterans-uk.info](http://www.veterans-uk.info)

Facebook: Veterans UK

Twitter: @VeteransUK\_MOD

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

# Veterans **WORLD**<sup>®</sup>

## Contents

June 2014

Issue 32

### IN THIS ISSUE

- 11**     **Let the games commence**  
The Invictus Games launched
- 12-13**   **Where there's an app**  
Mental health support online
- 20**     **Service charity receives Royal visit**  
Broughton House plays host to HRH Prince Andrew
- 23**     **Fun for all the family**  
Activity holidays available in 2014

#### Regulars

- 4-5     News in Brief
- 26     SPVA News



**11**



**13**



**20**



**23**

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.  
Editor: Clare Ellis  
Email: [Veterans-UK-VeteransWorld@mod.uk](mailto: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](mailto:Veterans-UK-VeteransWorld@mod.uk) or by calling: 01253 338816

**For distribution enquiries**  
Email: [Veterans-UK-VeteransWorld@mod.uk](mailto:Veterans-UK-VeteransWorld@mod.uk)  
or call: 01253 338811

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

© Crown copyright 2014

# News in brief

## Veterans' Transition Review

In February Lord Ashcroft published his report which examines the transition of Service personnel into civilian life.

The Prime Minister's Special Representative for Veterans' Transition, Lord Ashcroft published his findings following his examination of the transition of Armed Forces personnel from their military careers into civilian life at the end of their Service.

As part of the independent review, Lord Ashcroft considered the policies and provision for Service leavers in areas including; education, training, employment, health, housing, welfare, finance and information.

He also looked at the operation of Service charities and the role of advocacy, including the delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant.

The report broadly concluded that although there is no shortage of provision

for Service leavers as most do well, preparation by the individual and the supply of information are important for a good transition.

Lord Ashcroft's principal recommendations are:

- MOD and the Armed Forces should be more proactive in changing perceptions of Service leavers;
- a new work placement scheme should be created in partnership with industry;
- early Service leavers should get the same transition support as longer Serving personnel;
- a new veterans' card should be given to all Service leavers with the number and web address of a single 24/7 contact centre for forces charities; and
- all personnel should complete an online personal development plan.

[www.veteranstransition.co.uk/](http://www.veteranstransition.co.uk/)

## They did their bit

'We Did Our Bit' is an 11 minute film about 11 heroic veterans who fought in the Second World War and who live in Worcestershire.

The project, funded through an Armed Forces Community Covenant grant of £9,500 and supported by Worcestershire County Council, is a short film which features moments of courage and terror, horror and heroics from men and women who served in the Armed Forces in the Second World War. The film aims to raise awareness and recognition of veterans in the Worcestershire area.

Groups across the whole of Worcestershire were encouraged to share the short film with many organisations including veterans groups, schools, libraries, care homes and churches screening the film on or around Remembrance Day. Over 200 organisations held screenings of the film.

The film can be viewed by visiting Worcestershire County Council's YouTube page

<http://bit.ly/wedidourbit>

## Legion launches 2nd Pop-in centre

The Royal British Legion has launched a new public 'Pop in' Advice and Information Centre in the heart of Plymouth city centre.

It's the second of 16 brand new centres that the Legion will open in major cities across the UK, as part of its biggest ever transformation to bring its work closer to the Armed Forces community. Each centre will offer a welcoming space for Service personnel and veterans to get practical help and advice, and for members of the public to find out more about the wide range of services and community activities provided by the Legion.

The new 'Pop in' Advice and Information Centre serves the Devon and Cornwall area and is based at 174 Armada Way, Plymouth PL1 1LB. Its normal hours of opening are Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm.

## Business support for the over 50s

For veterans over the age of 50 and not currently working, The Prince's Initiative for Mature Enterprise (PRIME) could help them start their own businesses as a viable route back into sustained employment.

*“... a viable route back into sustained employment.”*

PRIME supports people from a range of backgrounds, who are over the age of 50 and unemployed or not in full-time work, start their own enterprises through online resources, workshops and comprehensive business training courses.

The charity also provides help to people who have just started their business, as well as those who have



A classroom of over 50s

already been trading, through business clubs, networking events and mentoring schemes.

Now, thanks to funding from Seafarers UK, PRIME will be delivering services exclusively for ex-seafarers, as well as their families and dependents, which includes people who have previously served with Naval forces.

PRIME will be hosting a series of activities for the seafaring community in Portsmouth and London over the coming months and these will be open to people aged 40 and above.

Julie and Mark Bestford both spent 22 years in the Royal Navy before leaving as Master-at-Arms and have since gone on to establish their own boat building and repairs service, known as Boatwork Ltd thanks to training from PRIME.

[www.prime.org.uk](http://www.prime.org.uk)



Veterans Julie and Mark Bestford set up their own business with training support from PRIME

## Disability Confident



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.

Minister of State for Disabled People Mike Penning said: "One in five of us has a disability and although the employment rates for disabled people have increased gradually over the years, we know that all too often their talents are left untapped."

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 be positive about the skills that disabled people bring to business.

Supporters of Disability Confident include Falklands veteran and businessman Simon Weston. Simon says: "Employers need to get rid of their fears and misconceptions about what disability is and what it will mean for them. Openness and transparency is really important to employers. I would say to employers, if you have a disabled person, speak to them about their disability, break down barriers and get a real understanding of what adjustments you might make."

The Disability Confident campaign has already won the backing of leading businesses across the country - including Barclays, KPMG, Balfour Beatty, Honda, ITV and Fujitsu.

Find out more about the campaign [www.gov.uk/dwp/disabilityconfident](http://www.gov.uk/dwp/disabilityconfident) The campaign is looking to work with organisations supporting disabled veterans moving into and remaining in employment. If you would like to get involved please email [dwp.disabilityconfident@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dwp.disabilityconfident@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

## Placement scheme success

Leading logistics employers and military top brass congregated at London's Naval and Military Club - also known as the 'In and Out Club' - in St James' Square - to celebrate the success of the Military Work Placement Scheme (MWPS) and to investigate the way forward for future schemes.

*"... despite it simply offering work placements, more than 250 people secured permanent jobs at the end of their experience,"*

"The MWPS is clearly a great scheme with 1,000 placements being achieved and despite it simply offering work placements, more than 250 people secured permanent jobs at the end of

their experience," said Dr Ross Moloney, CEO of Skills for Logistics. "We are now investigating ways to source funding to build on the pilot's success."

Dr Moloney added: "We already have plans to roll out a local MWPS in Doncaster and Oxford, and will also be discussing with Brig Jon Brittain, Head of Defence Logistic Policy at the Ministry of Defence, who was at the meeting, about turning the MWPS into policy."

The pilot MWPS involved a free, two-week work placement to give individuals going through resettlement the opportunity to 'try out' a career in logistics, while also giving the employer a chance to observe how Service leavers would fit into their company. Employers involved in last year's pilot scheme told the meeting how pleased they had been with the calibre of individual who had taken their placements.

[www.skillsforlogistics.org](http://www.skillsforlogistics.org)

## Free fitness for Armed Forces community extended

Rochdale will continue to offer the serving Armed Forces community free use of Link4Life fitness facilities and swimming pools to the end of 2014. Following a successful pilot, Link4Life which manages leisure and cultural facilities on behalf of Rochdale Borough Council have also decided to extend the offer to local veterans who are out of work.

Serving personnel and unemployed veterans can use Rochdale Leisure Centre, Middleton Arena, Littleborough Sports Centre, Heywood Sports Village, Bowlee Park Sports Centre and Castleton Swimming pool free of charge.



**Gym time: Link4Life offer Serving personnel and unemployed veterans free use of fitness facilities and swimming pools.**

Since June 2013, there have been 2,809 visits by members of the Armed Forces Community, both Service personnel and veterans.

Details of free fitness can be found at [www.link4life.org/activities/armed-forces](http://www.link4life.org/activities/armed-forces) or from any Link4Life centre.

## New homes for veterans near completion

A new housing facility for vulnerable and disabled veterans that is near completion thanks to a £1.25 million grant and a further £1.25 million loan provided through The Royal British Legion's External Grants programme.

The housing is being built by veterans charity Stoll, who organised a tree-planting ceremony to mark twelve months of building on the site in Feltam. The 36-flat development for ex-Service personnel is rising surely and steadily to

completion.

The development will receive its name and be formally opened later in 2014, with the first new tenants due to move in during the summer.

The total cost of the development is £7,500,000. Funding has also been secured from the Homes and Communities Agency, the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund and The Goldsmith's Charitable Company. Stoll has contributed through borrowing and a commitment from its reserves.

# When two become one

## Merger creates one of Europe's largest Shared Service centres



DBS is based across eight key sites including Innsworth House based at Imjin Barracks, Gloucestershire

**April 1, 2014 saw the merger between Defence Business Services and its existing services with those of the former Service Personnel and Veterans Agency.**

THE merger is a strategic priority for MOD in terms of transforming its Corporate Services and for Defence Business Services (DBS) in relation to its vision to become the premier business services organisation across the public sector.

### Why Merge?

The merger is a direct result of Lord Levene's Defence Reform report published in 2011: where it was agreed that enabling services should be delivered as efficiently, effectively and professionally as possible. In particular, the report recommended:

*'the establishment of a single delivery organisation – Defence Business Services– to deliver transactional and other services in the fields of civilian HR, finance, some elements of information and commercial services, and, at a later date*

*"... from our customer's perspective, it's absolutely 'business as usual', with no change to the services they receive, while creating one of the largest shared service centres in Europe."*

*in the transition, security vetting and military HR.'*

### What does it mean to customers?

The merger was a seamless transition and as a result customers shouldn't have noticed any change in the services we deliver; it is completely business as usual. There are some minor changes to correspondence and contact points for customers, as Sian Gausden from DBS Media and Communications explained:

"The changes have not affected our services, however, customers will notice that the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) name and logo will be phased out and there are

changes to the names of the business areas and email addresses.

"The former SPVA 'Veterans Services Directorate', which delivers Armed Forces pensions, compensation schemes and welfare support has become 'Veterans UK', taking the name of the existing Veterans UK website and helpline services. Correspondence to customers will now be branded with the MOD logo and Veterans UK address block for the majority of correspondence.

"To contact Veterans UK, call our helpline on 0808 1914 2 18 and the email for Veterans UK customers is veterans-uk@mod.uk."

### What does DBS look like now?

DBS now operates from eight main sites: Abbey Wood; Gosport; York; Glasgow; Liverpool; Gloucester; Cheadle Hulme and Norcross with other staff at another 100 locations. There is now a combined staff of 2,200 civil servants and 700 contract staff supporting MOD military functions.

Mike Stone, CEO for DBS\*, said; "The merger follows a great deal of hard work by teams from both SPVA and DBS. SPVA's service delivery functions have moved through to DBS seamlessly and from our customer's perspective, it's absolutely 'business as usual', with no change to the services they receive, while creating one of the largest shared service centres in Europe."

**\*Editor's note: Mike Stone has been superseded by Rod McCurdy, the new CEO of DBS.**

<b>Phone</b>	Veterans UK Helpline 0808 1914 2 18 JPAC Helpline 0800 085 3600 for pensions or medals issues
<b>Facebook</b>	Veterans-UK
<b>Web</b>	www.veterans-uk.info
<b>Twitter</b>	@VeteransUK-MOD

# Stirling Unveils Spectacular Programme for Armed Forces Day

Just weeks to go until Armed Forces Day 2014



[Crown Copyright/MOD 2014]

Launching Armed Forces Day 2014 in Stirling are [from left] Musician Nikki King, Corporal Ashley Holme, Senior Aircraftsman Georgia Lennox-Lamb, Leading Seaman Craig Kilgour and Lance Corporal Piper Ewan Jardine.

**Proud host of this year's national event is the historic city of Stirling, which has revealed a programme of events which will see them leading the UK's celebrations in honour of Servicemen and women past and present on June 28.**

KICKING off festivities will be an impressive parade of tri-Service personnel, supported by bands, marching from ancient Stirling Castle, making its way through the streets of the city down to the events field below the Castle. Joining the colourful parade will be veterans of all ages, association Standards, and members of the Cadet Forces from across the United Kingdom.

A Drumhead Service will follow in the events field, concluded by a gun salute from 105 Regiment Royal Artillery. But the excitement does not end there. Throughout the afternoon exciting military demonstrations will feature daring fast-ropes of elite Royal

Marines from Sea King helicopters with close air support from the Royal Air Force and an Army Apache Helicopter. There will also be a demonstration of a ground assault with casualty evacuations. Combining the skills of high-octane flying and fast-roping, it promises to be a thrilling spectacle.

Visitors can view the live and static displays, including aircraft on site, Military Working Dogs demonstrations, Royal Navy, Army and RAF marquees and a veterans village and a model of super-carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, the brand new Royal Navy ship soon to be officially named by HM The Queen at Rosyth.

As well as the ground displays, visitors will be treated to parachute drops from the Red Devils – the Parachute Regiment Display Team, and the RAF Falcons. Drawing a close to the memorable day will be an impressive flypast of current and

historic aircraft in the skies above Stirling.

Stirling City Centre will be buzzing with family fun on the day with open air performances from musicians, comedians and entertainers throughout the afternoon and early evening, as well as a wide range of later music events in the City's many bars and cafes, to round off a jam-packed day.

Stirling Provost, Mike Robbins, said: "Stirling has very close historic links with Britain's Armed Forces so we are tremendously proud to be hosting this fabulous event. It will be a truly



[Crown Copyright/MOD 2014]

Provost Mike Robbins was joined by Commander 51st Infantry Brigade, Brigadier Paul Harkness; Naval Regional Commander Scotland, Captain Chris Smith; and Air Officer Scotland, Air Commodore Gerry Mayhew at the launch of Armed Forces Day.

spectacular day out for families – a real highlight of 2014. It is a superb chance for all of us to express our thanks to members of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force – past and present – for the remarkable work they do for the whole of the United Kingdom."

The national event in Stirling is just one of many Armed Forces Day events taking place across the UK on June 28. To find an event near you visit the events section of the Armed Forces Day website.

***"It is a superb chance for all of us to express our thanks to members of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force – past and present..."***

**Web** [www.armedforcesday.org.uk](http://www.armedforcesday.org.uk)  
[www.stirlingarmedforcesday.co.uk](http://www.stirlingarmedforcesday.co.uk)

**Facebook** [armed forces day](https://www.facebook.com/armedforcesday)

**Twitter** [@ArmedForcesDay](https://twitter.com/ArmedForcesDay)

# National support for veterans mental health

## New dedicated NHS veterans mental health teams treating thousands of veterans a year

**Ten new dedicated ‘veterans mental health teams’ have spent the last three years helping ex-Service personnel get mental healthcare quickly and easily.**

THE NHS-funded teams, set up in 2010, see around 3,500 people a year and make sure veterans (including Reservists when not mobilised) and their families get the right treatment - either from a GP, hospital, mental health service or other charities.

The ten teams are sited all over the country and include a range of health workers such as full-time doctors, nurses, psychiatrists and family relations professionals. They take self-referrals from veterans who are welcomed, assessed and work to develop a relevant treatment plan.

NHS England took over the running of health services for the Armed Forces last April and has been working with partners such as the MOD, charities and the Department of Health, to improve services available for veterans as well as raising

awareness of veteran mental health problems within the health and ex-Service communities.

With the development of this National Veterans Mental Health Network, more mental health professionals within the NHS who understand the nature of service life are now able to support veterans in accessing the care and support they need.

Kate Davies, OBE, NHS England’s Head of Public Health, Armed Forces and their Families and Health and Justice, said: “NHS England welcomes the opportunity to ensure no ex-Serviceman or woman is disadvantaged and we continue to develop veteran-specific services.

“This is part of our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. We are here, we are listening and we are working hard to improve these services; we want to help people access them as easily as possible – the right service in the right place at the right time.”

**“We are here, we are listening and we are working hard to improve these services ...”**

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have similar schemes set up to enhance access to mental health services, including funding for community outreach services. To access your local service; visit NHS Choices website.

Veterans who have had mental health issues post-Service are also able to get support through the Veterans and Reserves Mental Health Programme (VRMHP) based in Nottinghamshire (DCMH Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell, Nottingham, NG9 5HA - Helpline: 0800 032 6258 - Email: aphcsedcmhchl-vrmhp@mod.uk). This MOD service provides mental health assessments for those veterans and reservists deployed since 1982.

There are other access points available such as the Combat Stress National Telephone Helpline - 0800 138 1619. The free Veterans Mental Health App (search apple or android store for this title – see pages 12 and 13 for more details) includes help and guidance on key mental health conditions and also features videos of veterans telling their own stories about their mental health problems and journeys to recovery, also the Big White Wall to “talk and share” online.



The Big White Wall website is one of the services supporting the Armed Forces community

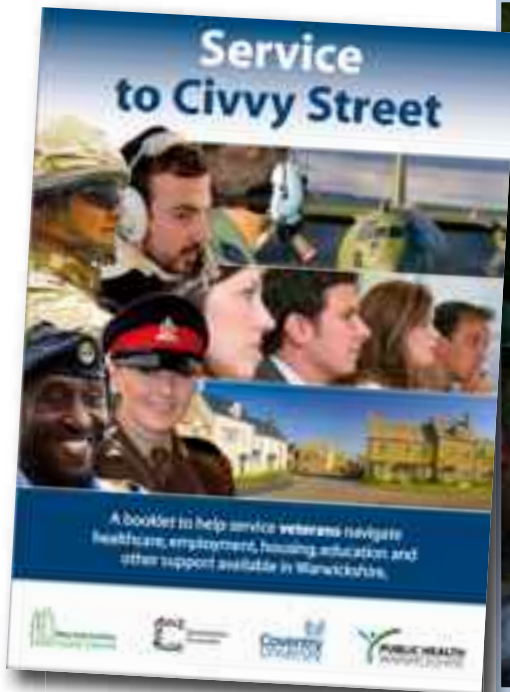
**Web**

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
[www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com)



# Veterans project wins national attention

Information campaign gains recognition



Cllr Izzi Seccombe, the chair of Warwickshire's Health and Wellbeing Board, speaking at the launch of the Veterans Contact Centre where the guides were first unveiled

**A Warwickshire County Council awareness campaign to help support veterans and their families may be replicated nationally.**

**PUBLIC HEALTH WARWICKSHIRE**, a part of Warwickshire County Council, recently launched a series of guides to support veterans and their families in the tough challenges they can often face in settling back into civilian life.

Funded for by the MOD, the guides and advice for veterans and their families can be found on the council's website. Printed copies of three information booklets are also being made available at many locations, such as doctors' surgeries.

Dr John Linnane, Warwickshire County Council's Director of Public Health, said: "It is testament to the amount of hard work put into this project by Public Health Warwickshire, working with Coventry University, that it has received national attention from the Ministry of Defence and consideration may be taken to

replicate this nationally.

"We hope by producing these booklets targeting veterans, their families, health and local authority professionals, we can go some way to supporting veterans and their families in managing the transition into civilian life in Warwickshire more smoothly. And of course this may also now be true nationally."

In Warwickshire there are more than 3,000 people drawing Service pensions, and between February 2010 and October 2012, 450 veterans have been supported by The Royal British Legion.

Cllr Bob Stevens, Warwickshire County Council's Portfolio Holder for Health and also President of Warwickshire Royal British Legion, said: "We are happy to work with any Local Authorities who might want to replicate the campaign in their local area."

Each of the booklets seeks to educate and inform different groups. The booklet aimed at veterans highlights the locally available support, providing

information covering post service access to healthcare, housing and education.

It includes information about what to expect in terms of the transition to civilian life, mental health awareness and guidance about healthy lifestyle. Information aimed at veterans families includes how best to deal with transition into civilian life and ways to support loved ones.

The guidance aimed at GPs, NHS staff and public sector workers addresses what the Armed Forces Covenant means for service delivery. It also includes information to raise staff awareness about life in the military, the common needs of the veterans' community, how veterans can contribute to society and some of the difficulties they may experience, for example possible reluctance to access support due to mental health problems, pride or not feeling deserved of help.

**Web** [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/veterans](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/veterans)

# The UK's first Veterans Commissioner role announced

Key role to build on and enhance support for Scottish veterans



Mr Brown meeting young veteran Daniel Simpson, who served in the Royal Tank Regiment, at the Scottish Veterans Residences on the day of the announcement

*“Understanding the veterans’ perspective, knowing where the problems are, and working alongside partners in the veterans sector to identify solutions, will be crucial. . .”*

“We are in the process of recruiting the Commissioner and I expect to make the appointment shortly. I will be looking to appoint an individual who can bring vision, courage, influence and innovation to the role; someone who will be credible with veterans and can work collaboratively with partners to drive improvements in standards of service.

“To reinforce this collaborative approach, the remit of the Commissioner has been shaped in consultation with the veterans community and to ensure that it has maximum impact and will complement their work.

“We owe an enormous debt to all those who have served in our Armed Forces - they deserve, and should receive the highest level of advice, support and care in return. I will look to the Scottish Veterans Commissioner to spearhead our ambition to deliver on this obligation and enhance support for veterans across Scotland.”

The advert for the post closed on May 5, the announcement on the successful applicant is due to be made in early summer, with the commissioner’s office expected to be up and running by the autumn.

[Twitter](#) @scotgovveterans

## Earlier this year, the Scottish Government unveiled plans for the UK's first Scottish Veterans Commissioner.

SCOTTISH VETERANS MINISTER Keith Brown explains the decision behind creating the new role . . .

“Veterans play an important role in making Scotland a more successful country. Thousands come to stay in Scotland and take up employment, contribute to their community or start businesses. As a group, veterans are innovative, hard-working, entrepreneurial and civically-minded members of our communities that we can all be proud of.

“Most make the transition to civilian life seamlessly and some require support.

“That’s why in January I revealed the Scottish Government would further strengthen its support for our veterans by creating a Scottish Veterans Commissioner, the first of its kind in the UK.

“This landmark development shows the Scottish Government is determined to go above and beyond

its broad commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and place veterans at the heart of policy development and delivery.

“It goes without saying that I place great importance on the role of Commissioner and have high expectations of the individual who will take up that position. Not only should they act as a figurehead for veterans in Scotland, identifying and challenging the barriers that prevent ex-Servicemen and women from realising their full potential, but also build collaboration and make connections between sectors and services.

“In order to do that, the Commissioner must understand the wider public sector landscape and hear directly from veterans themselves. Understanding the veterans’ perspective, knowing where the problems are, and working alongside partners in the veterans’ sector to identify solutions, will be crucial to the success of this office and that will require creativity and leadership.

# Countdown to first Invictus Games begins

Unique opportunity for the public to support 'wounded warriors'



HRH Prince Harry meets Service Personnel and veterans hoping to join the British Team

**Tickets are now on sale for the Invictus Games, the international sports event launched by Prince Harry that will see 'wounded warriors' compete in London from 10-14 September.**

40,000 TICKETS are available at [www.invictusgames.org](http://www.invictusgames.org) for the chance to cheer on wounded, injured and sick Servicemen and women at venues made famous by the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Invictus Games, presented by Jaguar Land Rover, are billed as a unique opportunity for the public to support those who have made a personal sacrifice for others but focus on what they can achieve, post-injury.

Organisers released the competition schedule, allowing people to start planning their Invictus Games experience. They also confirmed a further 100 competitors will be taking part and that Georgia has joined the list of nations invited to bring a team to London.

More than 400 competitors will now compete in nine adaptive sports including: Archery, Athletics, Road Cycling, Sitting Volleyball, Swimming, Wheelchair Basketball and Wheelchair Rugby, so popular at the London 2012 Paralympic Games. Indoor Rowing

and Powerlifting also feature along with a driving challenge organised by Presenting Partner, Jaguar Land Rover. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park will host events in the iconic London Aquatics Centre, Copper Box Arena, Lee Valley VeloPark and Here East, with athletics running at Lee Valley Athletics Centre.

The British team will include some 100 competitors, serving and veteran, from the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force. They will be joined by participants from 13 other countries which have served alongside each other. Teams have been invited from Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Georgia, Iraq, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand and the USA.

Captain David Henson, who hopes to compete in September, commented: "Competitive sport has made all the difference to my personal recovery and rehabilitation." Prince Harry said: "I have witnessed first-hand how the power of sport can positively impact the lives of wounded, injured and sick Servicemen and women in their journey of recovery. The Invictus Games will focus on what they can achieve post injury and celebrate

their fighting spirit, through an inclusive sporting competition that recognises the sacrifice they have made"

The events in September will mark the beginning of a legacy programme to support accessibility of adaptive sport and further employment opportunities for transitioning Servicemen and women leaving the Armed Forces. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is also supporting this important cause by matching the Royal Foundation donation with £1 million from the LIBOR fines.

Competitors and live audiences can look forward to enjoying the occasion in venues made famous by the London 2012 Games and the event will also be broadcast by the BBC.

*"The Invictus Games will focus on what they can achieve post injury and celebrate their fighting spirit"*



HRH Prince Harry tries out Sitting Volleyball

**Web** [www.invictusgames.org](http://www.invictusgames.org)

**Facebook** Invictus Games

**Twitter** @invictuslondon  
#invictusgames

**YouTube** InvictusLondon

# Mental health support goes mobile

## Veterans Mental Health Awareness App launched

Following the success of their innovative **Joining Forces** mental health awareness app for Service personnel and in response to demand from veterans, **South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare Foundation Trust** has now launched the **Veterans Mental Health App**.

THE free Veterans Mental Health App (search the Apple or Android store for this title) includes help and guidance on key mental health conditions and also features videos of veterans telling their own stories about their mental health problems and journeys to recovery. The App's innovative functions have been designed specifically for veterans, providing tailored information on key mental health problems including anxiety, post traumatic stress and depression, as well as highlighting where to access help.



Since its launch on Apple and Android in January 2014, the free App, which is unique in the mental health field, has already had a positive impact. One veteran from the West Midlands said: "You know, it really helped me to know I am not alone . . . the videos were inspirational." To date, the total downloads for both apps have been approximately 5,000.

needed. We took some of the feedback and suggestions to make this app better, particularly by adding video clips of veterans' stories. These are moving but more importantly give messages of hope"

The Trust is the lead for a network of NHS Trust providers for eight acute mental health inpatient services for HM Armed Forces Service personnel.



The App provides tailored information on mental help

*"... it really helped me to know I am not alone . . ."*

Martin Evans, Head of Communications for the Trust and a veteran himself, project-managed the original **Joining Forces** app and the new version for veterans, said: "When we launched our successful **Joining Forces** App, the feedback was hugely positive and it was soon clear that something similar for veterans was

### Where to find the App:

Apple store for veterans app:  
<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/veterans-mental-health/id720725550?mt=8>

Android: store for veterans app:  
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.sssftnhs.veteransmentalhealth>

SSSHFT Web site:  
<http://www.southstaffsandshropshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/apps/veteransmentalhealth>

### Web

[www.mentalhealthtoday.co.uk/joining\\_forces\\_network\\_reawarded\\_military\\_mental\\_health\\_contract.aspx](http://www.mentalhealthtoday.co.uk/joining_forces_network_reawarded_military_mental_health_contract.aspx)

# Big White Wall launches new app

## Service extends its online mental wellbeing services



**In April, award-winning online mental wellbeing service Big White Wall (BWW) announced the launch of a new app that will extend their services to smart phone and tablet users.**

THE APP, funded by The Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) and Department of Health, means BWW can be used via smartphone and tablet. This will enable new and existing Armed Forces members of the Big White Wall community to access help and support on the go, at any time when they need it. The need for an app is clear as a third of BWW members are already logging in via mobile and tablet, and this number is growing all the time.

Since it was established in 2007 the Big White Wall has built a community of 18,000 members. The HM Armed Forces, veterans and their families began using the service in 2011, and since then more than 5,000 from the Armed Forces community have used BWW. A significant proportion of the BWW community is therefore from the Forces community.

Health Minister, Dr Dan Poulter said: "Veterans have put their lives on the line in the Service of our country, and we have a duty to do everything we can to provide them with the very

best physical and mental health care. That is why we are continuing to invest in physical and psychological services that help our veterans and their families.

"The Big White Wall app will mean that veterans and their families can have wider access to the support they deserve whenever they need it.

"We have invested £50,000 in development of the App. This is in addition to the wider investment in Big White Wall services for the Armed Forces Community which currently stands at approx. £500,000 over these past three years."

Jen Hyatt, CEO Big White Wall said: "We are delighted to be able to extend BWW's 24/7 service to all mobile devices, and will be in a position to help more people get the help and support they need, at a time and through the platform they choose. A large number of our members from the Armed Forces Community will directly benefit."

One Big White Wall member said: "I feel that the support given by BWW is fantastic. You are not judged and you can be yourself. Most of us are very good at hiding our feelings. This is the only place I have felt comfortable in expressing myself."



*"... This is the only place I have felt comfortable in expressing myself."*

The BWW service is expanding internationally and will include the US in 2014.

**The Big White Wall**  
Bigwhitewall.com is a digital mental health and wellbeing service that has been designated a High Impact Innovation by the NHS. It places people at the centre of their own care and delivers personalised pathways to recovery through a range of safe therapeutic services available via mobile, tablet and PC. BWW is professionally staffed 24/7, and free to 27 per cent of the UK adult population, including all Serving personnel, veterans, and their families.



<b>Web</b>	<a href="http://www.bigwhitewall.com">www.bigwhitewall.com</a>
<b>Facebook</b>	Big White Wall
<b>Twitter</b>	@bigwhitewall1

# Change Step gathers pace

LIBOR funding helps veterans' peer service expand



The Change Step Team

**Over the next two years veterans across Wales will benefit from a peer mentoring, welfare and advice service for those with a range of psychosocial problems who want to make positive changes to their lives.**

THE service has been made possible thanks to a grant of just under £1 million awarded by the UK Government's Armed Forces Covenant LIBOR Fund.

'Change Step', a peer mentoring service, delivered by veterans for veterans in north Wales since early 2013, will now be rolled out across Wales. Utilising the pan-Wales framework of the Drug and Alcohol Charities Wales (DACW) consortium, 'Change Step' peer mentors will work alongside the Cyngor Alcohol Information Service (CAIS) in north Wales, Kaleidoscope in Gwent, TEDS in Rhondda Cynon Taf, WCADA in south Wales, Cyswllt Contact in west Wales and Drugaid in mid west Wales.

CAIS Chief Executive Clive Wolfendale said: "Change Step is already proving its worth in north Wales and we can now engage energetically with partner charities to roll-out the service across the whole of Wales to help those veterans who

have given so much for their country but who now find themselves, for a variety of reasons, in distress."

Change Step is a CAIS-led and DACW managed peer-mentoring, welfare and advice service for military veterans. It supports those seeking or needing help for mental health and psychosocial problems; such as loneliness, anger, anxiety, confusion, distress, poor self-esteem and many other issues arising from trauma or extreme stress encountered during military or operational duty.

Change Step already works collaboratively with the NHS's All Wales Veterans Health and Wellbeing Service and The Royal British Legion and Combat Stress to ensure a comprehensive and focused referral and support service for Armed Forces veterans. It will also be working with the University of Chester's Enablement and Holistic Care Project for veterans.

As Change Step rolls out across Wales during 2014, peer mentor veterans – all trained in peer mentoring to a minimum of BTEC Level 2 – can apply to take up paid posts as peer mentors and go on to recruit a wider network of peer mentor volunteers, ensuring an

**"... Change Step works because veterans are helping their peers."**

increasingly comprehensive level of service delivery.

Brigadier Gerhard Wheeler CBE, military patron to Change Step, said: "I understand all too well the challenges of life in the military and the problems veterans may encounter when re-entering civilian life. Veterans have pride in having served in the military and many find it difficult to ask for help, which is why Change Step works because veterans are helping their peers. I am delighted to be supporting this extremely worthwhile and necessary venture as it expands across Wales."

Phone	0300 777 2259
Web	<a href="http://www.changestepwales.co.uk">www.changestepwales.co.uk</a>
email	<a href="mailto:ask@change-step.co.uk">ask@change-step.co.uk</a>
Twitter	@ChangeStepwales
Facebook	Change Step

# It started with a song

First World War commemoration charity single to help today's Armed Forces Community



Russell with members of the Welsh Guards who perform on the Homeground Anthem

**Russell Watson and Simon Weston OBE have joined forces to support a new Service charity Home Ground. Veterans WORLD met with them to find out more . . .**

RUSSELL WATSON, The People's Tenor has been chosen to become the Voice of Homeground, with a charity single (The Homeground Anthem) which was released in March 2014 to mark the First World War Centenary Year. The single also includes a reading by Simon of Wilfred Owen's Strange Meeting.

The proceeds from the single will go to three Service charities: The Haig Trust's 'Coming Home' campaign, the Falklands Veterans Foundation and the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal.

When you first meet Russell Watson and Simon Weston, you'd think that they had been friends for years, the conversation flows easily and there is a great sense of camaraderie. In reality, they met just over eight months ago, the classical singer and the Falklands veteran may have followed very different career paths but now they have come together with the same aim, to honour the centenary of the First

World War by making a difference to current Serving personnel and veterans.

For Russell, it's not just about being a celebrity face for the campaign; he wants to see this through to the end. He said: "The single is a commemoration of the First World War and we'll be raising funds for the three charities that will help Service personnel once they are leaving the services; especially those who are disabled.

*"It's about making things liveable, people shouldn't be existing, they should be living."*

"Things that are taken for granted, for example going to the bathroom, may be more difficult for someone who has lost a limb. It might be a case of widening a door or archway that will make a profound difference to someone's day-to-day life. It's really looking at making life easier and simple for those who need

it by helping 'tailor-make' homes for our heroes. Fundraising in many respects can be quite laborious but I get my satisfaction from seeing the end results, seeing someone in their home, that's like soul food to me. I want to see this through and see the evidence of our funding and meet the people who need support and the effect this money has had for them. I am in it for the long run. It's not about publicity; it's about the people affected."

The funds may help tailor an existing home or look to providing purpose-built homes depending on each individual's need. Simon explained: "There is so much to think about, It's about expanding rooms for wheelchair users to get easily around, it's about lowering counters for access . . . It's about making things liveable, people shouldn't be existing, they should be living."

Phone	0161 298 4481
Web	<a href="http://www.homegroundprojects.org.uk">www.homegroundprojects.org.uk</a>
Twitter	@HOMEGROUNDPROJ @russellthevoice

# Men In Sheds

Over 50's project helps veterans get creative



There's opportunity to learn

**Social isolation is one of society's most pertinent issues. For those who are single or widowed and particularly men who have retired or been made redundant this can be a real problem.**

AGE UK Cheshire has launched a project called 'Men in Sheds' to help combat this, based on a successful Australian project called 'Mens Sheds'. Steve Thrower, Senior Project Officer explains: "AGE UK Cheshire has opened four sheds in Northwich, Ellesmere Port, Crewe and Chester.



The Men in Sheds

The 'sheds' are a euphemism for a club and are actually an industrial unit where men can meet to undertake a variety of activities such as woodworking, metalworking, art and computers. We like to think of it as a youth club for the over 50's!

"What they all get from it is camaraderie . . . a place to go. Some are using skills they've used all their lives, at work and at play. Some have never picked up a saw, power tool or operated a lathe. It's a chance to learn new skills - or just pop along for a brew and a chat. Men find it far easier to chat around doing something, and with other men than they do in more formal surroundings.

"The guys have come together to form new friendships, men from all walks of life, they've even been known to meet outside of the shed socially."

The 'Sheds' have an important place in the local community by undertaking work for other charitable organisations, council groups and

*// The shed saved me. It's like a working men's club here. Except we do work! //*

churches and even the elderly residents in the community.

There are now around 100 'Sheds' in the UK and many more at the planning stage following the initiative taken by AGE UK Cheshire, helped by the formation of a UK men's Shed association offering help and support in setting up prospective new 'Sheds'.

AGE UK Cheshire is now looking at how the idea can be adapted to meet the needs of the veterans community; offering a range of activities and services with other forces charities.

## One of the 'men in sheds'

Alan\*, 52, went to the shed to help him recover from depression, which was not helped by being unemployed. Single, he was isolated and needed somewhere to go. The shed, he says, has been a tremendous help and benefit. He said: "I worked in IT before so didn't do anything practical with my hands. I retrained after redundancy but became very ill with depression. The shed saved me.

"It's like a working men's club here. Except we do work! Okay, some days we don't get a lot done. Some guys just come here to paint or have a chat. That's the beauty of it. You can make whatever use of it you like."

*\*name changed to protect privacy*

<b>Phone</b>	01606 305010
<b>email</b>	steve.thrower@ageukcheshire.org.uk
<b>Twitter</b>	@meninsheds
<b>Facebook</b>	Men in Sheds Age UK Cheshire



# Support for young ex-Servicemen and women

## Royal British Legion Scotland's work with younger veterans



A Karting event at the last RBLs Comradeship event

**“In the military sense comradeship means brotherhood, companionship and selfless commitment to a cause” says Kevin Gray, MM and Chief Executive of the Royal British Legion Scotland.**

THIS IS WHAT the Royal British Legion Scotland (RBLs) can offer to the thousands of young ex-Servicemen and women in Scotland who are trying to settle back into civilian life each year.

The charity, which has 170

branches across Scotland, runs Comradeship activities to help young ex-Servicemen and women meet each other and take part in fun activities.

Now, due to the success of these activities such as indoor archery, clay pigeon shooting, curling, karting and fishing – the charity is expanding its activities to other areas of Scotland enabling them to reach even more veterans; whether they left service yesterday or 50 years ago.

Already the charity has run

successful events Edinburgh, Perthshire and the Isle of Bute and plans to employ a Coordinator to bring the comradeship activities to veterans across the country.

As well as an opportunity to make friends and to have fun, the activities have another important purpose, Kevin says: “Taking part gives young veterans a chance to speak to others who have been through the transition process. By coming along to the activities, those in rehabilitation and transition can air concerns, ask questions and put their mind at ease. There is no one better placed to talk to about resettlement than a veteran who have been there and experienced what it is really like.”

Making a positive difference to the lives of veterans of all ages and backgrounds and their families is at the heart of the RBLs and this will be strengthened when the charity launches its new wellbeing service later this year.

The service will provide friendship, advice and advocacy to all veterans – young and old as well as directing veterans to key services providing support on issues such as housing and employment.

Kevin says: “The charity was created following World War One with the main aim of helping the huge number of military personnel coming home from war who needed all kinds of practical support. One hundred years later we are still assisting the ex-Service community in Scotland albeit in a slightly different way. We want our new wellbeing service to be the first point of call for all veterans when they leave Service.”

Veterans are encouraged to find out more about the comradeship activities or about what the RBLs has to offer.

**Phone** 0131 550 1583

**Web** [www.rblscotland.com](http://www.rblscotland.com)

**Twitter** @LegionScotland

**Facebook** The Royal British Legion Scotland

# Peer support helps veterans help each other

## New support group for veterans at H4H Northern Centre

**An Army chef, who was medically discharged with both physical and mental injuries after three tours of Bosnia, has praised a new peer support group for veterans.**

THE Veterans' Peer Support Group has been set up at the Help for Heroes-run Phoenix House Recovery Centre in Catterick, North Yorkshire.

It meets on a Tuesday evening every two weeks for wounded, injured or sick veterans to share their experiences and talk about any mental health issues they may be facing.

Andy Lake, 46, who lives in Catterick Garrison, was on the verge of a breakdown when he heard about Phoenix House, which offers support to those who have suffered life changing injuries and illnesses. He said the peer support group offers an opportunity to speak but also to listen to new ideas that might help with problems he is experiencing.

"It's about listening and learning from other people and expressing opinions that the outside world would not understand," he said.

"There's not really another group like this where you can sit and talk as veterans. We understand what others are saying and it's a relief just being able to share it and have someone say

they have been through the same thing."

Robin Joss, Psychological Wellbeing Advisor, who started the group, said peer support was a vital form of therapy for helping people recover from mental distress.

She said: "We open the group with a 'check-in' which allows everyone to know what emotional state they are in on arrival.

"The veterans set the agenda themselves and I leave them to discuss it before coming back for a 'check-out' to reflect on how they are feeling on leaving and if that is different to when they arrived."

Robin added that the veterans attending the group find it helpful to discuss mental health issues with people who have had similar experiences. She added: "They may not have been through the same thing but they have an understanding of the culture they are from, because the Armed Forces is a culture in itself. Peer support offers a different perspective from talking to mental health professionals."

The Veterans' Peer Support Group is available for anyone struggling to cope with a variety of issues, both physical and mental.



Andy Lake in the Phoenix House Art room, where he enjoys woodworking

**"Peer support offers a different perspective from talking to mental health professionals."**



Andy Lake chats to fellow veterans

**Phone** Support Hub Manager Lawrence Mannion on 01748 834148

**Web** [www.helpforheroes.org.uk](http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk)

**email** [lawrence.mannion@helpforheroes.org.uk](mailto:lawrence.mannion@helpforheroes.org.uk)

**Twitter** @PhoenixHouseRC

# Veterans invited to drop in

The Dundee and Angus Drop-in Club is now open



The Drop In Club aims to reduce social isolation of its members

**A new monthly drop-in club, providing members with an opportunity to establish rapport and friendship in the Dundee and Angus region, has been launched by Scottish War Blinded.**

SCOTTISH WAR BLINDED outreach worker Carole Martin, who initiated the setting up of the club, said: "While out doing home visits in the Dundee and Angus area, I came across many Scottish War Blinded members who were becoming isolated but interested in meeting with other veterans in a social setting. We also extended the invitation to member's partners and family as we tend to forget how a loved one's visual impairment can impact on their lives."

The club enjoyed a successful first meeting at Rosendael House in

January, where members from Dundee, Broughty Ferry, Monifieth, Carnoustie, Invergowrie and Forfar contributed to a wonderful, convivial atmosphere.

Members enjoyed light refreshments and a presentation from Max McLennan, manager of Rosendael House, which was gifted to Scottish Veterans' Residences by Jute baron John Normansell Kyd. Members found this particularly interesting as they remembered his jute mills in Dundee.

Members were encouraged to move around the room and mingle in a similar fashion to speed dating. This proved highly effective in breaking the ice, initiating conversation and learning about each other's lives.

Eddie Piper, an ex-Royal Navy Diver, who attended with his guide

“*Social activities are at the core of Scottish War Blinded's commitment to the positive health and wellbeing . . .*

dog Innis, said: "I really enjoyed today, it gave me a chance to meet with other veterans and I enjoyed talking about my Service life."

Ivy Walton who was in the ATS during the Second World War, serving in France and Germany, said:

"It was really great meeting everyone, it gets you out of the house and meeting people you would have never met before, I especially enjoyed meeting the other ladies who had served during the War."

Rosie McLaughlin, Scottish War Blinded Outreach Manager, commented: "Social activities are at the core of Scottish War Blinded's commitment to the positive health and wellbeing of its members by building strong and positive relationships with others, increasing levels of self-esteem and instilling a sense of support and camaraderie.

The drop-in club provides Scottish War Blinded members with an important opportunity to regularly engage with other visually impaired veterans in the Dundee and Angus area."

The drop-in club welcomes any veteran living with a visual impairment who is interested in learning more about Scottish Blinded services.

Phone	Carole Martin 01382 227101
Web	<a href="http://www.scottishwarblinded.org">www.scottishwarblinded.org</a>
email	<a href="mailto:carole.martin@scottishwarblinded.org">carole.martin@scottishwarblinded.org</a>
Facebook	Royal Blind
Twitter	@RoyalBlind

# Military care home receives Royal approval

A nursing home in Salford providing care for 50 Veterans received a Royal Visit



**“It’s so much more than a care home; it’s a place of pride.”**

HRH The Duke of York meets residents at Broughton House

**Broughton house, Home for ex-Servicemen and women, hosted His Royal Highness, the Duke of York KG, as part of his visit to the Manchester area. The Duke is the Patron of the Charity.**

BROUGHTON HOUSE is a nursing and residential care home that was created in 1916; one month after the Battle of the Somme began. Since then, it has cared for over 8,000 military and Merchant Navy veterans who have served their country.

The visit had been eagerly anticipated by residents living at the home, including former Royal Engineer soldier, Jack Pilkington, 80, who met the Duke as part of the residents group. Jack said, “I asked His Royal Highness when he last flew, as I am a qualified pilot as well. He was very kind and congratulated me on my recent physiotherapy successes, having been able to stand up for the first time in two years.”

Having spent the major part of the visit with the residents of Broughton House, the Duke was briefed on the future development plans for the charity from architect partner, Gary Bate, and the Trustee charged with developing plans, George Almond.

Chief Executive Officer, Chris Thomas, said: “We do not charge residents who can’t afford it to live at our home and it is our charitable aim to ensure that this remains the case.”

As well as meeting the rising cost of care, the old building is in need of upgrading. Broughton House is unique as it provides an environment for ex-Service personnel, with a NAAFI style bar and a military museum which has artefacts from all the major wars; including medals, letters and military uniforms.

Chris Thomas said: “It’s so much more than a care home; it’s a place of pride. Our home honours the sacrifices of veterans and gives residents a strong sense of identity and purpose. It was fantastic that the Duke of York could spare the time to hear about our plans as we approach our centenary year. We hope that, with his support, we will be able to announce plans soon that mean we can completely revitalise the care offer to veterans in Manchester and the North West.”

There are an estimated half a million veterans living in the North West, the majority over the age of 65.

**Phone** 0161 740 2737

**Web** [www.broughtonhouse.com](http://www.broughtonhouse.com)

**email** [deg@broughtonhouse.com](mailto:deg@broughtonhouse.com)

# Younger veterans key focus for new housing development

Scottish Veterans Residences secures LIBOR fund cash for new Glasgow development



(L to R): Philip Hammond, SVR Chairman Major General Mark Strudwick CBE and SVR CEO Phil Cox

**The charity Scottish Veterans Residences (SVR) has been awarded £233,488 from the Armed Forces Covenant LIBOR Fund to assist in the construction of support facilities for a new Glasgow-based housing development.**

THE £6.7 million, 51 flat project being built in the city's east end is due to open in the summer and will provide UK veterans with a combination of independent and supported accommodation.

The key focus of the new facility is to help younger veterans, many of whom will have served in Afghanistan and Iraq, who are struggling to make the transition into mainstream housing and civilian life. It will provide training, education, employment and recreation facilities for its residents. Working with local authorities and a number of charity organisations, SVR will also coordinate a range of additional services to help younger veterans.

The new development will feature a mix of one and two bedroom flats with dedicated on-site facilities including a gym, IT training area, large multi-purpose training room, audio visual room, consultation and treatment rooms, offices for support staff and three garden areas.

Employment and housing will be included in each resident's support plan with the aim of veterans becoming ready for work, accessing employment and ultimately moving into stable housing in the civilian community.

The residents will be encouraged to integrate into the local and veteran's community via the on-site support facilities where activities, training courses and workshops will be held to meet needs identified on support plans. There will also be focused training sessions to help veterans manage their own tenancies in an effort to prevent future homelessness.

*"... our expansion into Glasgow will be a positive step forward in helping alleviate the risk of homelessness for UK veterans."*

SVR currently runs supported housing services for veterans in Edinburgh and Dundee, helping around 200 ex-Service men and women every year.



Philip Hammond and SVR Deputy CEO George Corbett

Phil Cox, CEO of SVR said: "We're very pleased to have secured this LIBOR fund award which will help to ensure we can offer a full range of facilities for veteran residents at our Glasgow development when it opens later this year. While there are major problems still to be overcome, our expansion into Glasgow will be a positive step forward in helping alleviate the risk of homelessness for UK veterans."

<b>Web</b>	<a href="http://www.svronline.org">www.svronline.org</a>
<b>Twitter</b>	@ScotVetRes
<b>Facebook</b>	Scottish Veterans Residences (SVR)

# A living memorial

A legacy to Lord Kitchener continues in the present day



With his famous call to arms and pointed finger on that historic poster synonymous with the First World War, Lord Kitchener 'Britain's most

famous soldier' is also synonymous with a Charity on Lowestoft Seafroft in Suffolk.

FOLLOWING the untimely death of Lord Kitchener in July 1916, many projects began as memorials to his life. Reverend F.W Emms was one such person to embark on a memorial; raising funds to buy and equip a beautiful Grade II listed building overlooking the Lowestoft Seaside. His idea to provide seaside holidays for convalescent ex-Servicemen 'whose health has been wrecked by the hardships or privations of war'. And so, the Lord Kitchener Memorial Holiday Centre opened in 1919.

'Kitchener's,' as it's known today, continues its original goal; providing subsidised seaside holidays for ex-Service personnel and their spouses. Although, some things have changed, it's no longer 10 to a room with one shared bathroom. Today guests can enjoy one of the 10 twin en-suite rooms, in hotel-style surroundings which offer them comfortable and relaxing holidays.

Proud to be the only memorial of its kind in the world, Kitchener's is supported by its Patron Lady Emma Kitchener and her husband Lord Julian Fellowes of West Stafford and financial support is provided by the Army Benevolent Fund, the RAF Benevolent Fund and Seafarers UK, local donors and guests.

Steve and Lorraine Schofield are the Centre's live-in managers; Steve explained what the Centre has to offer: "We feel lucky to live and work in such a beautiful building that we want to ensure that everyone enjoys their stay with us and feels the same. The



The Centre is a great base to explore the beautiful East Coast

financial support the Charity receives helps keep the guest's room charges low. Stays are half-board and we offer a great range of home-cooked meals which we think is just one of the great reasons guests enjoy staying with us. There's also the great history of the Centre and our beautiful surroundings, we are literally just minutes from the beach."

Guests enjoy the friendly atmosphere and Steve and Lorraine's warm welcome and dedicated attention to their needs. The excellent food and the wonderful location on the sea front, just a few metres from the beach are also reasons why guests continue to book a stay.

Lorraine added "We are open during the key summer months and ready to welcome new guests to Kitchener's. We can also offer short breaks during the off-peak season, unlike in previous years. We are also trying to attract, younger guests to the centre . . . many are unaware it exists, or that it can be used as a base to explore the East Coast. If you know of any veterans who would benefit from a stay at Kitchener's, please give us call."

Normally the Centre is open from April to October, but when the tidal surge hit Lowestoft in December 2013, Kitchener's opened its doors to 10 men and women (whose homes had been destroyed from local sheltered accommodation).



Keeping true to Kitchener's roots, one gentleman was ex-Army who made the most of his new home by scouring the building and archives for information about his regiment.

**Phone** 01502 573564

**Web** [www.lordkitchenersmemorialholidaycentre.co.uk/](http://www.lordkitchenersmemorialholidaycentre.co.uk/)

**email** [enquiries@kitchenerslowestoft.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@kitchenerslowestoft.co.uk)

**Facebook** Lord Kitchener Memorial Holiday Centre

**Twitter** @kitchenershc

# Fun for Armed Forces Families

Covenant funding helps Trust provide subsidised holidays



“...we are relishing the opportunity to help and support as many families as we can through our programme of adventurous activity breaks at our three Centres’.

Fun for all the family

**The Calvert Trust has a fantastic offer for Armed Forces families; enjoy a fantastic weekend break including food, accommodation and adventurous activities for just £50 per person. Breaks are available at all of the Trust’s three centres, which are located in Exmoor, on Kielder Water and in the Lake District.**

THE offer is open to families of Serving personnel, Reserves and veterans who have a disabled Service person or veteran, partner or child in the family, for any weekend in 2014, including school holidays.

These special priced breaks are possible thanks to support from the MOD’s Armed Forces Covenant (LIBOR) Fund, who are funding places for 120 families this year. Any and every disability is eligible for this support, including physical disabilities, learning disabilities, ADHD, autism and challenging behaviour, visual or hearing

impairment and post-traumatic stress disorder.



Challenging disability through outdoor adventure

Lt Col (Retired) Tony Potter, CEO of Calvert Trust Exmoor and LIBOR project leader for The Calvert Trust; “We feel privileged that our project ‘Uniting Service families with disabilities’ has been selected by the MOD. The Calvert Trust already has a proven track record cooperating with many Armed Forces Charities; we are relishing the opportunity to help and support as many families as we can

through our programme of adventurous activity breaks at our three Centres’.

Exmoor and Kielder Centres are offering these breaks for any weekend in 2014; the Lake District Centre has specific dates available in July and August.

Alternatively, if anyone would like to be part of a specific ‘Forces only’ weekend, Calvert Trust Exmoor has set aside a week in August 2014 for this. If you are a serving, reserve or veteran member of the Armed Forces family and want to find out more or discuss availability, please contact the Trust.

<b>Phone</b>	Exmoor	01598 763221
	Kielder	01434 250232
	Lake District:	01768 772255
<b>Web</b>	<a href="http://www.calvert-trust.org.uk/unite">www.calvert-trust.org.uk/unite</a>	
<b>email</b>	<a href="mailto:email.holiday@calvert-trust.org.uk">email.holiday@calvert-trust.org.uk</a>	
<b>Twitter</b>	@CalvertTrustExmoor	
	@Calvert_Kielder	
	@CalvertLakes	
<b>YouTube</b>	<a href="http://www.youtube.com/user/CalvertTrustExmoorUK">www.youtube.com/user/CalvertTrustExmoorUK</a>	

# Creating a level playing field

## Karting for Injured Troops



On the starting grid

### **KartForce was set up to introduce injured troops and veterans to motorsport, starting with kart racing and progressing to team endurance car racing.**

THE charity's aim was to ensure drivers with severe injuries, such as double above knee amputees with missing fingers and thumbs, are able to compete against non-injured drivers on a totally level playing field.

Dave Player, Kartforce Founder explained: "To achieve this, we had to design a new set of hand controls that were quick and easy to install and remove from rental karts, yet low tech and low cost – and ensure drivers get full performance from the kart.

"As some of the lads had missing fingers and thumbs, a steering wheel was no good as you can't grip a steering wheel without a thumb and work paddles for throttle or brake. A handle-bar set-up doesn't require the

same amount of grip and makes steering much lighter.

"The brake is an hydraulic brake master cylinder from a motorbike – the larger the bore, the easier it is to operate. A 19mm bore – the same used on the top racing motorbikes – allows the brake to be worked with one finger.

"The throttle is simply a brake lever from a bicycle. By using high quality Teflon coated cables with a larger sleeve, and straightening out bends, this ensuring the least amount of friction, so throttling can be done with one or two fingers.

"One of our lads is a double above-knee amputee and only has his middle finger on his left hand – and he's one of our top drivers.

"We race in team endurance races from two hours to 24 hours and have had some really great results. We beat Team McLaren in their own race – we came 2nd and they came 5th."

### **Available nationally**

There are tracks all over the country that have the hand controls. Anyone can just call the track and ask them to fit the hand controls and enjoy karting like everyone else. Tracks provide 'Arrive and Drive' sessions as well as organise regular weekly and monthly races that anyone can compete in.

Dave added: "If anyone wants more information or help with hand controls or karting, get in touch."

### **Team Kilo Foxtrot**

Kartforce now has a first team of injured troops and veterans to compete in 24 Heures du Mans as six of the KartForce drivers have now progressed to team endurance racing in cars.

The team is made up of drivers with different injuries, the worst





Martyn Compton (far left) with his Kilo Foxtrot Team mates

## “An amputee British War hero has helped another generation of amputee war heroes . . .”

being two double above/knee amputees with missing fingers and thumbs.

Dave said: “Hand controls for race cars are normally designed around one driver who has two fully functional hands. We therefore had to design a new set of hand controls again.

“The aim, again, was to ensure drivers got full performance from the car so they can compete on equal terms. We needed a set of hand controls that allowed drivers to steer, throttle, brake and change gears, all virtually at the same time while keeping both hands on the steering wheel.

“Simple – a steering wheel with right hand throttle paddle, left hand brake paddle and gear up and gear down buttons (plus Press To Talk

radio button). As one lad has a missing left thumb and the other a missing right thumb, there are dual buttons on the left and right.

“This means they can be racing into a corner, throttling then applying the brake and changing gears, while steering around the corner and throttling out, changing gears again.”

These hand controls sound simple enough but have required a lot of specialist engineering to work out all the different components, and make them all work at high speeds and perfect accuracy.

Dave added: “We’re very grateful for the support provided by the Douglas Bader Foundation, who have supported this project with a grant. It’s extra special because Team Kilo Foxtrot will be racing in a Jaguar XF-S that was built in the same factory that built Spitfires.

“An amputee British War hero has helped another generation of amputee war heroes challenge adversity and that really means a lot to us.”

### Kartforce Ambassador Martyn Compton

Martyn has been involved with KartForce for three years and is one of

the ‘KartForce Originals’. From attending his first trial session, Martyn has raced in almost every race the Charity has competed in.

Martyn openly admits he was in a “very dark place” and had to drag himself out of his house to come to his first karting session. But he’s never looked back.

Karting has given Martyn more than just racing and socialising – it has re-awoken his keen competitive spirit. His driving skills have improved enormously and he’s more than earned the title of ‘Mr Consistent’ as he can put in the same lap times, lap after lap, regardless of the conditions.

KartForce were very proud to appoint Martyn as their first KartForce Ambassador.

He’s very keen to meet with companies and give talk about how his injuries affected him and how motorsport has helped him and other KartForce lads re-build and re-shape their lives.

**Phone** 01635 770601

**Web** [www.KartForce.org](http://www.KartForce.org)

**email** [dave@kartforce.org](mailto:dave@kartforce.org)

**Facebook** Karting for Injured Troops

**Twitter** @KartForce



## Introducing the regular Veterans UK News page...

Following the merger between Defence Business Services and its existing services with those of the former Service Personnel and Veterans Agency [see page 6].

The former SPVA Veterans Services Directorate', which delivers Armed Forces pensions, compensation schemes and welfare support has become 'Veterans UK', taking the name of the existing Veterans UK website and helpline services. This page will provide updates on the services being delivered to the veterans community.

## Research into pension eligibility



Veterans UK Pension staff have embarked on a Pension Regularisation Project. A Life Certificate Exercise was recently ran which was a 100 per cent check of entitled pension recipients: enabling Veterans UK to give National Audit

Office, among others, assurance that the pensions being paid are going to entitled ex-Service personnel.

During the exercise, staff discovered a number of unclaimed pensions that they believe should be in payment but have not been claimed. The project is now seeking to establish the identity and any possible reason why the pension hasn't been claimed.

Staff are also tackling a large number of pensions where correspondence has been marked as 'Gone Away'. Veterans UK are working with other Government Departments to share best practice as to how this is dealt with across Government.

Veterans are encouraged to contact the JPAC Enquiry Line on 0800 085 3600 to ensure their contact details are up to date or discuss entitlement to the Armed Forces Pension Schemes.



## Armed Forces Day 2014

The Media and Communications Team have been busy preparing for this year's Armed Forces Day (AFD) events. Information packs have been issued to a number of events being held across the UK. Any event organiser wishing to receive a pack can send an expression of interest to – [dbsfd-externalcomms@mod.uk](mailto:dbsfd-externalcomms@mod.uk)

Veterans UK staff will be attending some of the AFD events being held, details of where they can be found will be posted on the website – [www.veterans-uk.info](http://www.veterans-uk.info)



## Who Do You Think You Are

Staff from Veterans UK and MOD Medals Office will be attending The Who Do You Think You Are live event in Glasgow. The three-day event is being held on 29 – 31 August at the SECC in Glasgow. [www.whodoyouthinkyouarelive.com](http://www.whodoyouthinkyouarelive.com)

## First podcast goes live

The first Veterans UK podcast was launched in April and can be listened to via the Veterans UK website and iTunes library.

In Episode One of the Veterans UK podcasts; presenters Clare Ellis and Joanne Lowe discuss the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency merging and becoming part of the MOD's Defence Business Services from April 1, 2014. The merger makes Defence Business Services one of the largest shared service centres in Europe and is the result of a key recommendation from Lord Levene's 2011 Defence Reform Report.

## Change of name, not content

In line with the re-branding of the Veterans UK services, there has been a change of name for the related social media channels – the new Twitter feed is [@VeteransUK\\_MOD](https://twitter.com/VeteransUK_MOD) and search Facebook for the Veterans UK page.

Links to all Veterans UK social media channels and products can be found at [www.veterans-uk.info](http://www.veterans-uk.info)

# SORTED!

Seven charities, one focus

Photo courtesy of camillaliley photography



SORTED! aims to provide a clear path to employment support



Graham Liley SORTED!  
Development Manager

appropriate advice. Here the job seeker will be presented with a series of simple online questions designed to identify the best support path to meet their needs.

*“... meeting the specific needs of each job seeker with the right service provider is the key objective of SORTED!”*

#### A one stop shop

SORTED! is not another new charity or employment organisation; it exists around its firmly established members to rationalise the whole employability process. This will prevent its beneficiaries from falling between the cracks or losing focus when intervention becomes difficult.

Registered beneficiaries can always return to SORTED! to re-engage with their support at any time without having to repeat their story; saving valuable time and reducing inherent anxiety.

**With over 2,000 military charities in the UK it can often be difficult and confusing navigating through the relevant support providers to identify the most appropriate employment advice and assistance.**

GRAHAM LILEY, the SORTED! Development Manager, having retired from the Army after 34 years understands at first hand the difficulty of transition and the many challenges faced in journeying between two very different and often conflicting cultures.

The Regular Forces Employment Association (RFEA), Officers Association, Officers Association Scotland, Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI), Poppyscotland, Poppy Factory, and The Royal British Legion have collaboratively joined forces and formed a Consortium of charities under the innovative umbrella brand of 'SORTED!'. This new consortium has one clear goal: to collectively provide seamless employability support to the Armed Forces community which includes Serving personnel, veterans and reservists.

#### Tailored support

Each SORTED! charity has their own specific area of expertise providing uniquely tailored support to help and support its beneficiaries to get back into sustainable and fulfilling employment no matter what underlying difficulties or barriers exist.

SORTED! will route-map eligible job seekers to the most appropriate support and seamlessly cross-refer to other wider interventions to meet specific individual needs. Since its launch in September last year, SORTED! has already registered and referred over 500 jobseekers with over 67 per cent coming from within the veteran community.

#### The portal - front door to the best employment support

Expediently meeting the specific needs of each job seeker with the right service provider is the key objective of SORTED! This is achieved by an online portal with associated telephone support creating a central navigation tool to the most

**Phone** 0800 319 6845

**Web** [www.sorted.org.uk](http://www.sorted.org.uk)

**Twitter** @wearesorted



I'm supporting

# ARMED FORCES DAY

[armedforcesday.org.uk](http://armedforcesday.org.uk)



Saturday 28 June 2014

