

Veterans WORLD

Issue 41

Are you Pension Ready?



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Veterans WORLD

Veterans World is distributed to those who work in an advisory role.

December 2016

Issue 41

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The aim of *Veterans World* is to provide up to date information on services, support and advice for the Veterans community, in particular those who act in an advisory role.

We know, from engaging with our customers, charitable organisations and partners that the key issues for the Veterans community are:



Accommodation
& Housing



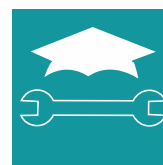
Working in
Partnership



Family Matters



Health &
Wellbeing



Education/
Training/
Employment

Articles in this and future issues of *Veterans World* will be about a service, initiative or event that is focussed around one of these themes. The icon and colours at the top of each page will continue the theme so that you can see at a glance the topic of the article.

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Ministry
of Defence



Veterans UK is the MOD's dedicated support organisation for service personnel, veterans and their families and **We're Social...**

Follow us on your favourite

SOCIAL
Media



and...

 **LIKE**  **SHARE**  **FOLLOW**

For more information check out GOV.UK
or for help and advice call the Veterans UK helpline on

0808 1914 2 18





At a Glance



Support for the Armed Forces

The Government has committed £102 million of banking fines over the next four years to support Armed Forces and Emergency Services charities and other related good causes. You can read the full list of projects funded by LIBOR on GOV.UK.



Covenant funding helps the Foreign & Commonwealth community

The Army Families Federation has received a grant through the Covenant Grants Fund to provide much-needed practical support to Foreign & Commonwealth (F&C) Army families dealing with Domestic Abuse (DA). This new support will allow them to help spouses directly with their application form to remain in the UK during a very stressful time and is available to any F&C spouse of a serving person in any location in the UK or overseas. Families must be referred by a relevant welfare contact or organisation. For more information visit the AFF website.



Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre (DNRC)

A £20 million boost to fundraising is being provided towards the construction of the defence element of the brand new Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre (DNRC) at Stanford Hall. The centre, a purpose-built, world-leading clinical rehabilitation site to offer medical services for injured members of the Forces, is set to become operational in 2018. For more information visit the DNRC website.



The Royal British Legion (RBL) to lead help for veterans

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has announced that the Covenant Fund will work with Royal British Legion (RBL) and other charities to set up a one-stop service to better support the UK's Armed Forces veterans community. The Veterans Gateway programme will help veterans find and access advice and support on a broad range of issues including housing, employability and health. The new service provides a 24/7 phone number, a dedicated website and a mobile app. The service will be formally launched in the first half of 2017. For more information visit: GOV.UK



Veterans UK leaflets now on GOV.UK

As part of the on-going Government commitment to saving tax-payers money Veterans UK is no longer providing printed copies of its leaflets, these informative and helpful leaflets are now hosted on the Veterans UK pages of GOV.UK.

The leaflets available are: A guide to Veterans Services, A guide to the Joint Compassionate and Casualty Centre, A guide to the Ministry of Defence Medal Office and A guide to the Veterans Welfare Service.



Forces Media Academy

Services Sound and Vision Corporation (SSVC) has been awarded a grant of £1.8 million over three years to set up and run a Forces Media Academy. It will offer digital and broadcast media skills to both service leavers and veterans. The academy will be based at SSVC's headquarters at Chalfont St Peter in Buckinghamshire and offer 15 places a year starting in autumn 2017. The course, to be taught by academic professionals, will lead to a level HNC qualification preparing candidates for roles in the UK's dynamic media and digital economy. All candidates will be offered work experience within SSVC, which runs a range of TV, digital, technology and radio services for British Forces and their families.



Veterans Today Blog

As part of the Ministry of Defence, Veterans UK provides key services to Serving Personnel, veterans and their families, including:

- Compensation for injury or illness caused by service in HM Forces (Armed Forces Compensation Scheme and War Pension Scheme)
- Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS)
- Veterans Welfare Service (VWS)

Veterans UK works in partnership with the wider MOD, other Government departments and other organisations who provide support and advice to the Veterans community.

The Veterans Today blog includes a range of stories from Veterans UK, their partners and stakeholders and from veterans themselves on the programmes, initiatives and support available to Serving Personnel and the veterans community.

Here are the earliest Veterans Today blog posts.

- Launch of the Veterans Today blog
- Veterans UK working together with Millie Award winners Pilgrim Bandits
- Eyes and ears that give a voice to Veterans
- Liverpool FC Foundation Military Veterans Programme - Barracks To Bootroom

Launch of the Veterans Today blog

Guest Author, 29 March 2016 — Armed Forces Compensation, Armed Forces Pensions, Veterans



As we launch the Veterans Today Blog, Jon Parkin, Head of Veterans UK, tells us about the organisation and the role it has played in the past, and continues to play today, in supporting our serving Armed Forces Personnel, Veterans and their families...

[Read more](#)

Jon Parkin, former Head of Veterans UK launched the Veterans Today blog with its inaugural post on 29 March 2016.

To follow the Veterans Today blog posts see Veterans UK held on GOV.UK



Remembrance

Defence Business Services and Veterans UK marked Armistice Day by observing a two minute silence. Remembrance services were held to honour those who gave their lives for peace and freedom in the two World Wars of the last century as well as those involved in the many other conflicts worldwide, including those still fighting today.





Co-locations providing 'Pop-In' support



The Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) is part of Veterans UK, the MOD's support organisation for service personnel, veterans and their families.

VWS caseworkers offer one-to-one professional help and guidance by telephone, or if needed, during a home visit.

The VWS are continually aiming to increase their support and accessibility to Veterans and in response to the Ashcroft Report and the changing needs of Veterans, VWS are working with third sector charitable partners to establish co-locations across the UK. They are pleased to announce the completion of three co-locations – In Andover with Defence Medical Welfare Services, at Leuchars Barracks with the Army and in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne with The Royal British Legion (TRBL).

Being co-located with both serving communities and prominent Veterans charities allows VWS to offer an increased service provision to those in need. The co-location within Newcastle has allowed VWS to run regular surgeries at the newly established Newcastle TRBL pop-in centre. This has enabled VWS Welfare Manager Alan Heron to increase the level of support available and the number of Veterans he is able to assist.

Alan said, "This continued collaborative working relationship between TRBL and VWS aims to ensure that every Veteran receives support tailored to their individual needs and I've seen first-hand how beneficial this can be."

After the change of RAF Leuchars to Leuchars Barracks, Brian Finch, the VWS Regional Welfare Manager, identified an opportunity to increase the VWS footprint within Scotland and the support made available to both those serving and the large Veteran community within the area. Working alongside the unit welfare staffing and HIVE supporting agencies would increase the knowledge and the opportunities available for those who required VWS assistance.

Co-location with Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS) at their Andover HQ has allowed VWS to cement their working relationships. By being placed in such a strategic location with nearby Army HQ, Tidworth Garrison and a short drive to Regional Command in Aldershot have allowed VWS to increase awareness and understanding of their role. By being co-located with DMWS it will lead to greater appreciation of each other's strengths and allow for greater collaborative working for those in need. DMWS has a UK footprint as well as VWS does and they continue to examine future opportunities to work together.

The VWS is committed to enhancing the quality of life for veterans and beneficiaries of Veterans UK pensions and compensation schemes, and all their dependants.

It also provides support to enable the seamless transition from service to civilian life, assist bereaved families or respond to life events that present welfare needs.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/veterans-welfare-service>

If you are supporting a veteran and need further advice, the VWS may be able to help. To locate the nearest centre call our Veterans UK helpline on 0808 1914 2 18.



Get on the road to being pension ready

Veterans UK is an MOD support organisation dedicated to serving personnel, veterans and their families. We administer the various Armed Forces Pension Schemes on behalf of the Ministry of Defence.

Whether you're a new recruit or starting to consider the road ahead to Civvy Street, now is the time to begin thinking about your Pension.

After all, what have you got to lose?

Well, maybe more than you think! We pay around £4.3 billion in pensions every year and some of this could be yours.

There are lots of things you can do to help us to help you get pension ready. Here are some tools to help:

Benefit Information Statement (BIS)

WE will provide a Benefit Information Statement (BIS) each year, around your birthday, giving you a snapshot of what pensions and benefits you have already earned to date.

YOU need to check your Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) record for accuracy and keep your JPA details up to date whenever you have a change of circumstances. The BIS can then help you make decisions about you and your family's future after service.

Pension Forecast

WE can provide one free pension forecast upon request each year based on your information held on JPA.

YOU need to check your JPA record for accuracy and keep your JPA details up to date whenever you have a change of circumstances. This will help us give you an accurate forecast.

Armed Forces Pensions Scheme (AFPS) Calculator

WE have provided a free Armed Forces Pension Calculator that is available on GOV.UK.

YOU can use this as many times as you want to find out how any potential change in your circumstances may affect your pension.

Help us help you provide for you and your family's future financial security by making sure **your** pay and **your** pension is paid at the right amount, at the right time.

We want to pay you the pension you've earned, but we can't do this unless you apply for it. So keep in touch and **help us help you** get your Armed Forces Pension right.



You've earned it - you apply for it - we'll pay it!

just starting out?

It's never too early to start thinking about your pension. **Help us help you** get your pension right by keeping JPA up to date as you navigate through your service career.

Keep a look out for your BIS that you will receive every year around the month of your birthday.

You've earned it, you apply for it, we'll pay it.

£320m

in unclaimed Armed Forces pensions - is some of this yours?

well underway?

Wherever you are in your service career, a change in your circumstances can affect your pension. Accurate pension information and forecasts are crucial to accessing financial services both during and after your service.

Help us help you get your pension right by checking to ensure the details on your pension forecast are up to date. It's important that any details that are incorrect are put right.

You've earned it, you apply for it, we'll pay it.

nearly there?

Your pension forms part of yours and your family's financial security (Part of the Armed forces Offer.) Your pension forecast can help you to secure a mortgage or other financial services. **Help us help you** get your pension right by keeping all your pension paperwork in a safe place and by telling us if anything changes.

You've earned it, you apply for it, we'll pay it.

already on Civvy Street?

Are you a veteran? Remember to keep us updated with any change of circumstances and don't forget to apply for your pension when it's time. In the meantime you can request one free pension forecast per year. Search GOV.UK for Form 14.

Help us help you get your pension right by keeping your information up to date and applying for your Armed Forces pension at the right time.

You've earned it, you apply for it, we'll pay it.



Whether you're currently serving or you're a veteran, any changes in your circumstances can have an impact on your pension.

So make sure that if you're in-Service, you update JPA, and if you're a Veteran, contact the Joint Personnel Administration Centre (JPAC) to update us on 0800 085 3600.

Big White Wall: Adjusting For the Future



Adjustment is a key theme in the veteran vocabulary. Adjusting to Civvy Street can be a traumatic experience in itself: re-familiarising to family life, managing time, finding employment and missing comrades can all play havoc with emotions as well as a sense of purpose.

The Ministry of Defence published its annual report on mental health in June 2016, and noted that Adjustment Disorders were the most prevalent mental disorder among UK Armed Forces personnel in 2015/16, accounting for around 35 per cent of all mental disorders in the Armed Forces.

At Big White Wall, and with the support of the Ministry of Defence and Help for Heroes, a free service is provided that has proven to be of huge benefit to the mental health of the Armed Forces community. Not only do the serving personnel gain from the service, but so do the reservists, veterans and family members aged 16 and above.

What makes Big White Wall so important to our Armed Forces members is the focus on anonymity and 24/7 online access to peer support. Being anonymous means you can say exactly what you feel, without fear of stigma. If you find it difficult expressing your feelings in words, you can create an artwork on a 'brick' which can be shared with the community. Safety is another aspect that members appreciate, as the peer community is always monitored by fully accredited counsellors called 'Wall Guides'. In fact, 56 per cent of Armed Forces members reported that they had shared an issue or feelings on Big White Wall for the first time.

A member of Big White Wall and an Army veteran, who had served in Northern Ireland, Bosnia and the Gulf, has stated how he had found adjustment to civilian life so difficult after 14 years' service:

"I didn't realise I had a problem at all when I first came out of the Army, but I became socially withdrawn and systematically pushed people away. It put a massive strain on my marriage and we split several times."

This member eventually found help through a combination of talking with his GP, and his local NHS Healthy Minds when it was suggested he join Big White Wall to assist with his therapy.

He continues, "I truly believe without this help and understanding I probably would've walked away from treatment again. The Wall along with my therapist helped me to look at myself in the way I needed to, so I could be honest with myself and my therapist. I may not be here today if it wasn't for Big White Wall."

While PTSD takes up most of the headlines in the media when it comes to veterans' mental healthcare, at Big White Wall there is no hierarchy. Research shows that the majority of veterans actually suffer from disorders like anxiety, stress and depression, and with veterans making up 42 per cent of our members coming from the Armed Forces, Big White Wall has a proven track record in helping with that all-important theme of adjustment.

"The Wall along with my therapist helped me to look at myself in the way I needed to, so I could be honest with myself and my therapist."

"I may not be here today if it wasn't for Big White Wall."



Listening - Talking - Helping



The Aged Veterans Counselling service is a nationwide project that provides free counselling to UK Armed Forces veterans born before 1 January 1950. The service is also available to their carers and relatives. It can help with a variety of issues including depression, anxiety, loneliness, bereavement or anything that is causing a sense of isolation, loss or social exclusion.

Launched in June 2016, the project has been funded by the MOD's Aged Veterans Fund and has been established by a consortium of military welfare charities under the direction of Blind Veterans UK. The service is administered by a professional counselling and employee assistance organisation, Wellbeing Solutions Management (WSM), in partnership with Doctorcall, a healthcare provider.

The Aged Veterans Counselling service can help with a variety of issues; from offering a friendly chat to working through a more complex problem.

They can help with:

- **Loneliness**
Many of us can feel lonely from time to time. Family may live a long way away, and old friends may have passed away. Talking about it can help a person feel much better.
- **Depression**
Depression can affect anyone at anytime. Counselling can help someone overcome depression and can help with coping strategies for a person that is feeling down.
- **Bereavement**
Coping with the loss of loved ones and close friends is never easy. Grieving is normal, but sometimes it can take a long time to move on. Counselling can help a

person move beyond the sense of emptiness after losing someone close.

- **Anxiety**
Feeling scared, unsure and nervous are all common problems from time to time. Counselling can help with gaining self-confidence and enabling a person to face their anxieties head on.
- **Relationships**
Relationships need to be maintained and nurtured. Counselling can help to improve relationships with partners, colleagues, family and friends.

How does it work?

You can apply for free counselling support by visiting the Aged Veterans Counselling website or by calling 0300 0120 247. Alternatively, if you're a member of veterans' charity, you can contact their welfare team and ask them to apply for counselling on your behalf.

Once your application has been received, you will be contacted to make arrangements for your counselling.

If you find it hard to travel, a counsellor can visit you in your own home. Alternatively, you can see a counsellor at a location close to where you live.

Following your first counselling session, you will then normally be offered a course of five additional counselling sessions, usually at regular times each week to suit you.

To find out more about the counselling service, please contact:

Tel: 0300 0120 247 (Intl: + 44 (0) 20 7708 5000)
Email: enquiries@agedveteranscounselling.org.uk
Web: www.agedveteranscounselling.org.uk

for all
**SERVING
PERSONNEL**
and
VETERANS

LIVING and **WORKING** in **North Wales**

OVER 60 EXHIBITORS INCLUDING:-

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BUSINESS AND COMMERCE

THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

EDUCATION

EMPLOYMENT

HEALTH

HOUSING

WELFARE



**Ministry
of Defence**

Thursday 9 February 2017

**Glyndwr University Sports Hall,
Wrexham**

1200 - 1400 hrs

Further information and register at: **160X-Transition-GroupMailbox@mod.uk**

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Veterans World now includes regular features on:



Accommodation & Housing



special housing and accommodation projects for veterans



Healthcare



special healthcare programmes for veterans from the NHS, charities and other providers



Working in Partnership



sharing best practice to better support our veterans community



Education, Training and Employment



leaving the forces and helping veterans find work and improve their skills



Family Matters



support for families including those bereaved by service