

# Northern Ireland



**VETERANS  
HANDBOOK**

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## INTRODUCTION

National awareness of the bespoke needs of the Service community has increased in recent times and is now articulated in the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant and will be the subject of a forthcoming Veterans' Strategy. In reality there is much practical support available to both serving personnel and their families and veterans and their dependants. However, access to such support is often obscured by lack of detailed information or shrouded by information overload, to the extent that an individual in need may have trouble identifying exactly where best to turn for help.

This Handbook is intended to assist the whole Service community by clearly spelling out "who does what for whom" in NI and by identifying local contact details. It is intended to be a reference document and to act as a sign-post to local agencies which, once contacted, can then follow up with support intervention as required. Stakeholders and gate-keepers are urged to use it if a member of the Service community in need comes to their attention.

The Handbook is as comprehensive as possible and identifies the major support organisations available to the Service community in Northern Ireland, and especially to veterans and their dependants. All organisations listed are represented on a NI Veterans' Support Committee which seeks to promote cooperation of effort, efficiency and effectiveness amongst the support providers, notably the major ex-Service charities.

Any suggestions for addition or amendment to the Handbook will be welcomed by this committee and should be forwarded to the Veterans Support Office Northern Ireland (NIVSO) which provides its administration and can be contacted on; **028 9521 6784**



The Armed Forces Covenant is the Nation's commitment to Veterans. It is a pledge that ensures that Veterans and their families have access to a wide variety of support and are treated fairly. The Veterans' Support Office (VSO) was established to ensure that Veterans living in Northern Ireland do not experience disadvantage. The work of the VSO supports Veterans and the families, carers and widows or widowers of Veterans.

The VSO was established to develop the capacity to deliver the Armed Forces Covenant in Northern Ireland. This is achieved by developing strong working links between Devolved Government Departments, Local Government Veterans' Champions and the voluntary and charitable sector. This ensures that Veterans living in Northern Ireland do not experience disadvantage as a result of their Service in the Armed Forces and have the same access to services and support as any other citizen.

### **The VSO has 5 main tasks:**

- To be a trusted point of contact for Veterans whose needs are not being met.
- To be a single point of contact for all organisations providing services for Veterans.
- To develop a coherent and coordinated approach to support Veterans.
- To increase the quantity and scope of services available by promoting and guiding access to Armed Forces Covenant Trust Funding.
- To achieve and monitor outcomes in all the above and communicate these outcomes appropriately.

#### **1. A trusted point of contact for Veterans**

Veterans living in Northern Ireland may contact the VSO directly if they have a problem in accessing services or support. The VSO is uniquely positioned to address these issues through links with Devolved Government Departments, Local Government Veterans' Champions and the voluntary and charitable sector organisations who are responsible for delivering services to support Veterans in Northern Ireland. The VSO will contact the appropriate organisation or organisations to help, and will monitor the outcomes and follow up as needed.

#### **2. A single point of contact for all organisations**

The VSO has fostered strong relationships with a number of organisations and other key stakeholders in Veteran services to ensure that they support the development and delivery of the Covenant. The provision of advice, information, guidance, oversight and training to organisations will bring improvements to individuals' abilities to access services and will broaden the scope of support in Northern Ireland

### **3. A coherent and coordinated approach**

The VSO plays a key role in building coherence and co-ordination among services in Northern Ireland through our facilitation of the Northern Ireland Veterans' Support Committee (NIVSC). The NIVSC has been set up in Northern Ireland, under Ministerial guidance, to improve cooperation between those organisations who are permanently based in Northern Ireland and are committed to delivering practical support to Veterans. The committee is also designed to act as a pool of expertise which can be consulted with a view to providing a consensus on Veterans' issues in Northern Ireland for policy makers and interested parties. The VSO provides the coordination and national 'voice' for the NIVSC.

### **4. Promoting and guiding access to Armed Forces Covenant Trust Funding**

In addition to working closely with a range of existing Veteran support services in Northern Ireland, the VSO also plays a role in the development of new local services by encouraging and facilitating funding applications to the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund. [www.covenantfund.org.uk](http://www.covenantfund.org.uk) There are a number of large health and wellbeing programmes within the fund, which the VSO promotes and works to facilitate collaborative bids from Northern Ireland based organisations. However, the fund also offers a local grants programme which awards payments of up to £20,000 for smaller projects that support community integration or local delivery of services to Veterans. The VSO can offer advice and guidance on applications to the fund.

### **5. Achieve, monitor and communicate outcomes**

Outcomes will be achieved through liaison with the appropriate charity or service provider or by making bespoke arrangements for individual veterans. Outcomes will be recorded and this in turn will inform best practice and the development of protocols, which will be shared widely amongst members of the NIVSC and other service providers. Noteworthy outcomes and events will be shared on this website. Ultimately all outcomes will, in some way, inform future policy and strategy.

#### **Address**

NIVSO, 25 Windsor Park, Belfast, BT9 6FR.

#### **Telephone**

+44 (0) 2895 216784

+44 (0) 7534 656823

**Web Site** <https://nivso.org.uk/>

**Who we are** The Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) is part of Veterans UK which, in turn, is part of the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

**What we do** The Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) gives support to veterans, and their dependants. The focus of the service is to provide assistance following a change in situation that may have resulted in a welfare need, such as:

- ✎ Leaving the services.
- ✎ Bereavement
- ✎ Changes in disablement.
- ✎ Changes affecting income or finances.
- ✎ Changes affecting housing.

### Who we can assist

- ✎ Veterans (anyone who has served in HM Armed Forces, regular or reserves including National Servicemen), their families and dependants.
- ✎ Anyone who is eligible, (injured in Service) for or in receipt of, compensation from the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) or the War Pensions Scheme (WPS).
- ✎ Service personnel who are to be Medically Discharged or have a welfare requirement on discharge.
- ✎ Bereaved families of service personnel.

**How we can help** Help and guidance can be given through either telephone contact or a dedicated visiting service through a national network of Welfare Managers.

### Support can include

- ✎ Identifying when someone is eligible to claim or apply for a benefit, compensation or other service.
- ✎ Help with completing application forms.
- ✎ Help when making contact with other organisations.

Initial contact should be made by telephone to the Veterans Welfare Centre. Once contact has been made, a Welfare Manager will be allocated to become the individual's caseworker. The Welfare Manager will either make further contact by telephone or if appropriate a home visit will be arranged. The Welfare Manager will:

- ✎ Ask about the situation and identify any welfare needs.

- ✚ Using this information, identify what type of assistance is needed and available from different sources.
- ✚ Provide advice and practical help towards meeting the needs identified.

### Things we can do include

- ✚ Help with applying for WPS and AFCS.
- ✚ Help with applying for any Armed Forces Pension which there may be entitlement to.
- ✚ Give information and advice about benefits through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and help with applications for them.
- ✚ Make referrals to Social Services, Local Authorities, ex-Service organisations or other voluntary organisations to apply for the services they provide.

**Our Partners** The VWS work alongside in-Service welfare providers and closely with local authorities, voluntary organisations, service charities and Social Security Agency within N.I. This ensures that those leaving the services and existing veterans and their families receive all the information and assistance they need to access the appropriate services and benefits.

**How to contact us** Initial contact should be by telephone and, if appropriate, we can arrange a home visit. NI (and the Republic of Ireland) is covered by a Veterans Welfare Centre in Glasgow.

UK National Helpline: **0808 191 4218**

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

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk)

Local Telephone: **0141 224 2709**

Local Email: [Veterans-uk-vws-scot-ni@mod.uk](mailto:Veterans-uk-vws-scot-ni@mod.uk)

# Veterans Advisory & Pensions Committees (VA&PC)



## VETERANS ADVISORY AND PENSIONS COMMITTEE

The Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee exist to serve and support ex-servicemen and women, their widows or widowers and their immediate family members. So whenever or wherever you have served, whether in the Second World War or Afghanistan, we are here to help. We are an independent voice and can act as a bridge to:

- Advise and guide you if you are unsure of your rights or where to turn in the complex world of government pensions and other allowances.
- Listen to complaints when things go wrong and, where we can, help to sort them out.
- Assist you in obtaining help from the appropriate ex-service charity or government department.

If you would like to be put in touch with your local VAPC, please contact

### **Veterans UK**

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

Free helpline telephone: UK only 0808 1914 2 18

Free helpline telephone: overseas +44 1253 866 043





cobseo  
**The Confederation  
of Service Charities**

Cobseo is an organisation that exists for the interests of the Armed Forces community in order to:

- ☞ Represent and support the needs and opinions of member organisations to all levels of government and other organisations.
- ☞ Identify, communicate and act on issues of common interest on behalf of member organisations.
- ☞ Exchange and coordinate information between member organisations.
- ☞ Act as a single point of contact for external inquiries.

### **How we work**

Cobseo's membership consists of over 180 Service and ex-Service organisations, including regimental associations. It does not have individual members and is not a case-working organisation.

Contact: Via NIVSO on **028 9521 6784**



The Legion is there for all members of the UK Armed Forces community, not just serving members of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force, but also ex-Service men and women (veterans), their carers and families. Millions of people in the UK and overseas are eligible to call on the Legion for help and half of those helped by the Legion are below retirement age. We provide practical care, advice and support to the Armed Forces family all year round. Welfare is at the heart of everything we do.

Our Pop-In Advice & Information centre is situated at 51-53 Fountain Street, in Belfast City centre. Open from Monday to Friday, 10:00am to 4:00pm, the Pop-In provides a welcoming modern facility where staff and volunteers are available to meet with callers. The Area Office for Ireland (covering NI and the Republic) is at the same address in Belfast. We currently operate an Outreach service in Portrush, Larne and Bangor and Dublin.

Our Contact Centre operates seven days a week, from 08:00am to 08:00pm. The UK Freephone number for the Contact Centre is 0808 802 8080. For callers from the Republic of Ireland, the Freephone number is 1800 992 294.

For more information, visit our website [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk). Our website offers a live web chat facility and access to our extensive Knowledge Base.

Why not 'pop in' and see us:

**The Royal British Legion**  
**51-53 Fountain Street**  
**Belfast BT1 5EB**



**Lifelong support for our Forces and their families**

SSAFA is a national charity operated on a regional basis. All our Branch members are highly trained volunteers, giving their time freely.

SSAFA helps serving and ex-service men or women and their wives, husbands, partners and dependant family members, who need friendship, advice or assistance, from the day their service starts and for the rest of their lives. This help continues for widows and widowers, after divorce, and for people separated from established partnerships and for dependant children. We do not sit in judgement, we simply help people to sort out problems – with their agreement and as fast as possible.

We are available, at the end of the telephone, by email or by letter, to do everything possible to relieve distress or to solve a problem. We will discuss the matter with you and agree the action to be taken. You can come to us with any problem or request – we don't limit the type of problem or the type of help that might be possible. And we will see it through with you to the end – we won't abandon you during the process.

Telephone: **028 9032 7740**

Mail: 21 Talbot Street, Belfast BT1 2LD

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

E-mail: [Nireland.Branch@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:Nireland.Branch@ssafa.org.uk)



ABF The Soldiers' Charity, giving lifetime support to serving and former soldiers and their families. Includes making grants to individuals and specialist charities that help ex-soldiers and their families.

Support offered includes:

**Financial:** Financial assistance to relieve hardship, grants for living costs, emergency needs, debt relief. Provision of annuities and Educational Bursaries.

**Accommodation:** Care home fees. Home adaptations. Furnishing and equipment.

**Personal:** Mobility assistance. Funding holiday breaks.

ABF The Soldiers Charity  
Mountbarrow House  
6 – 20 Elizabeth Street  
LONDON  
SW1W 9RB

Tel: **+44 (0) 845 241 4820**

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

## The Ulster Defence Regiment and The Royal Irish Regiment (Home Service) Aftercare Service



**Bespoke support to veterans resident in Northern Ireland who formerly served in the Ulster Defence Regiment and the Home Service element of The Royal Irish Regiment during Operation BANNER;** plus any personnel discharged as Wounded, Injured or Sick via the Personnel Recovery process.

Based at four centres throughout the Province, it consists of caseworkers and support staff who provide outreach to the veterans' community, advising, case-managing and sign-posting to other trusted agencies which assist those in need. It offers holistic resolution to each case via:

**Welfare** – via domiciliary visits, ranging from simple befriending to full-blown intervention in issues of bereavement, debt, housing, benefits and pensions and including assistance in application for recompense; in conjunction with Veterans UK.

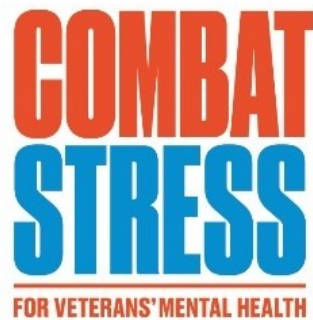
**Medical** - building trusted pathways to the wider Health and Social Care Services via a client's General Practitioner and also able to offer immediate referral to psychological therapies and physiotherapy for conditions caused by or made worse by military service.

**Vocational** – sign-posting to Regular Forces Employment Agency (RFEA) provides career and employment advice.

**Benevolence** – assisting in supporting cases of proven financial need. Successful liaison is routinely undertaken with many service charities.

Expansion of the service to assist all other veterans resident in Northern Ireland is still being considered.

The Aftercare Service can be contacted initially on **028 9042 0145** or through its website: [www.aftercareservice.org](http://www.aftercareservice.org)



We are the UK's leading charity for veterans' mental health. For over a century we've helped former servicemen and women deal with trauma-related mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.

For some of those who have served, life as we know it can be shattered without our help. Mental health problems can tear families apart, destroy relationships and devastate lives.

But our help can transform lives. We provide our unique mental health treatment to veterans from every service and every conflict. Our specialist team help veterans find the right support to tackle the past and take on the future.

When a veteran asks for our help, we develop a programme of treatment and support to meet their individual needs. This might include one-to-one sessions with a member of our specialist team in the community or visiting one of our treatment centres for an outpatient appointment or therapy programme. We also have a Peer Support Service. Led by veterans for veterans, it's a chance to talk and share experiences, receive support, give support and socialise with others who have also served.

Talk to us if you or someone you know is experiencing any of the following:

- Feeling cut off from life
- Loss of temper more often
- Having unwanted terrible thoughts
- Finding it hard to sleep
- Feeling on edge and easily irritable
- Having nightmares or flashbacks
- Feeling extremely alert – always on the look out for danger
- Having panic attacks

To find out more about how we can help, visit [combatstress.org.uk](http://combatstress.org.uk) or call our Belfast office on **028 9026 9999**. Veterans and their families can also call our 24-hour Helpline for free, confidential mental health advice.

Call: 0800 138 1619

Email: [helpline@combatstress.org.uk](mailto:helpline@combatstress.org.uk)

Text: 07537 404 719\* \*Standard charges may apply for texts, please check with your provider.



115 New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0QT  
T: 020 8590 1124 F: 020 8599 2932 E: [info@blesma.org](mailto:info@blesma.org)  
[www.blesma.org](http://www.blesma.org)

Blesma is dedicated to assisting serving and ex-Service men and women who have suffered life-changing limb loss or the loss of use of a limb, an eye or loss of sight whether **during or after** their military Service. Blesma provides lifelong support to its Members, and following the death of a Member, the widow/widower have membership in their own right and are provided with the same lifelong support; in essence caring for the carer.

Our mission is to assist limbless veterans to lead independent and fulfilling lives and Blesma will work tirelessly to ensure Members are not failed, forgotten or left to fend for themselves.

### **Our Expertise**

- Providing advice and assistance on war pensions, compensation and benefits.
- Delivering unique individual welfare support and advice.
- Providing financial assistance to Members to aid their independence and wellbeing.
- Working with the NHS on prosthetic issues.
- Advocating on behalf of our Members on issues that concern them.
- Offering support to elderly Members to help them maintain independence, enabling them to remain in their own homes whenever possible,
- Providing a national annual programme of amputee-supporting-amputee activities.
- Providing regional activities and events within Northern Ireland.

### **Northern Ireland contacts**

#### **Blesma Support Officer Scotland, Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland**

Steve Burton: 07766 258461 [bsosniroi@blesma.org](mailto:bsosniroi@blesma.org)

The role of the Blesma Support Officer is to provide practical and emotional support to Members. He is trained in providing wide ranging support and advice from benefits, War Pension, AFCS, financial grants, independent advocacy to prosthetics and mobility aids; the Blesma Support Officer is out on the ground delivering that support. The Blesma Support Officer is also engaged in executive level meetings in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

#### **Blesma Outreach Officer Northern Ireland**

Fiona Morrison: 07741 744617 [outreachni@blesma.org](mailto:outreachni@blesma.org)

The role of the Blesma Outreach Officer is to support Members and enhance Blesma's profile within Northern Ireland. The Outreach Officer is out on the ground engaging with Members and local communities, representing Blesma at events and meetings and running local activities and events to ensure Members stay connected with each other.



# Rebuilding lives after sight loss

Blind Veterans UK is the national charity for ex-Service men and women with severe sight loss. Founded in 1915 and previously known as St Dunstan's, Blind Veterans UK has supported more than 35,000 Armed Forces and National Service veterans to rebuild their lives after sight loss. We help veterans to learn vital life skills by giving them the means they need to be safe in their own homes. We do this by giving veterans free rehabilitation, training and the support they need to live independent lives.

Blind Veterans UK has a network of community support teams all over the UK who give blind veterans the rehabilitation and training they need closer to them, either in their own home or in their local area.

In Northern Ireland we have a locally based Community Support Worker providing the service to blind and visually impaired veterans.

We organise activities and events such as social outings and reunions which gives our veterans the opportunity to be part of a community with a shared experience.

We also provide services to carers and family members, whether in the form of information and advice, or by simply giving them the opportunity to take a break.

## **Contacting Blind Veterans UK**

If you, or someone you know, believes they are entitled to receive Blind Veterans UK's free lifelong support you can call us free on **0800 389 7979**.

More information about receiving Blind Veterans UK's support, including the criteria required can be found [here](#).





We can provide Immediate Financial Support via our Quick Reaction Fund which helps by giving swift financial support to those with life-changing injuries, life-changing illnesses and their families.

The Help for Heroes Band of Brothers offers life-long support and opportunities to those suffering from life-changing injury or illness. The Help for Heroes Band of Sisters provides supports, recognition and fellowship to those who care for our heroes.

Help for Heroes strives to achieve the best for the men and women of Great Britain's Armed Forces, both serving and veteran. We are proud to work with other Service charities to make sure that the wounded, injured and sick get the support they deserve.

**You can contact us by:**

Post: write to us at Help for Heroes 14 Parkers Close Downton Business Centre Downton Salisbury Wiltshire SP5 3RB

Tel: 01980 846 459 (opening hours 9am to 5pm)

**Do you need our support?**

For financial support please email us on [grants@helpforheroes.org.uk](mailto:grants@helpforheroes.org.uk)

To join our Band of Brothers or Band of Sisters please email

[bandofbrothers@helpforheroes.org.uk](mailto:bandofbrothers@helpforheroes.org.uk) / [bandofsisters@helpforheroes.org.uk](mailto:bandofsisters@helpforheroes.org.uk)



# Decorum NI

*Remembering the Past – Building the Future*

The main aim of Decorum NI is to promote, advocate and address the needs of former security force personnel (Armed forces, Police, Prison Service) and their families who have suffered as a result of the violence perpetrated over the period of Operation BANNER between 14<sup>th</sup> August 1969 and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2007.

Services include:

- 🌀 Counselling
- 🌀 Befriending
- 🌀 Shared heritage trips
- 🌀 Welfare Advice/Signposting
- 🌀 Social Interaction
- 🌀 Safe Harbour/Hub for meeting
- 🌀 Advocacy, Emotional and Practical Support, Comradeship and Friendship
- 🌀 Education/Training
- 🌀 Provision of social activities
- 🌀 Commemoration & Remembrance Activities
- 🌀 Lobbying
- 🌀 Creative Writing
- 🌀 Legacy Work
- 🌀 Debating Forum
- 🌀 Youth Engagement
- 🌀 Storytelling
- 🌀 Research
- 🌀 Exhibition
- 🌀 International Study Visits
- 🌀 Volunteering Opportunities

Decorum NI  
26 Balloo Avenue  
Bangor  
Co Down  
BT19 7QT

**Telephone No** 02891457565 **Web** [www.decorumni.co.uk](http://www.decorumni.co.uk) **email** [info@decorumni.co.uk](mailto:info@decorumni.co.uk)



# ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Established to further the efficiency and well-being of the Service, preserve its traditions and encourage recruiting, the Royal Naval Association provides the following support:

**Financial:** Helps members access all forms of benefits, compensation and pensions. Medium size almonising charity fund serving and ex Naval Forces.

**Personal:** Network of 400 branches and 40 clubs offering comradeship and support; welfare help and those looking for jobs.

## **Nationally the Association can be contacted at**

Royal Naval Association  
Room 209 Semaphore Tower  
PP70 HM Naval Base  
PORTSMOUTH  
PO1 3LT

Tel: +44 (0) 2392 729 747

[www.rnabelfast.com](http://www.rnabelfast.com)

## **Locally the Association can be contacted at**

Royal Naval Association  
79-81 Great Victoria Street  
Belfast BT2 7AF  
Northern Ireland

Telephone + 44 (0) 289 032 0487

Web Site [www.rnabelfast.co.uk/](http://www.rnabelfast.co.uk/)



RAFA, The Royal Air Forces Association (or RAF Association), is a membership organisation and registered charity that provides welfare support to the RAF family.

Receiving no government contributions, our work is completely funded by the generosity of our members and through vital donations from our supporters in the general public and from businesses.

We are proud to have helped and to continue to help the whole Royal Air Force family, providing friendship, help and support to current and former members of the Royal Air Force and their dependants.

We help those who have served for at least a day in the RAF from its beginnings through to the present day. The RAF Association currently helps any serving and ex-RAF personnel and their families in times of need. The Association exists in the recognition that RAF personnel and their immediate families dedicate their lives to their country, and to ensure that such a sacrifice does not result in suffering, poverty or loneliness.

Through the assistance of our generous members and volunteers, we are proud to be helping thousands of truly amazing people. As a signposting organisation we also offer financial assistance, respite breaks, short welfare breaks, war pension advice, home and hospital visits.

For further information please contact our Belfast office on **028 9032 5718** or email [nireland@rafa.org.uk](mailto:nireland@rafa.org.uk)



# THE NOT FORGOTTEN ASSOCIATION

A TRI-SERVICE CHARITY FOUNDED IN 1920

The Not Forgotten Association in Northern Ireland established in 1930 is a small tri-service charity which provides help and support to serving and ex-service men and women who are wounded injured or sick. We do this through a varied and tailored programme of recreational, leisure and adventure activities. We also provide television licenses, through our main charity, The Not Forgotten, based in London, to eligible beneficiaries, whether they are living in their own home, a care home or a personnel recovery centre.

For younger serving and ex-serving men and women our adventure activities offer the opportunity to enjoy challenges they may otherwise not have. We also ensure that our activities remain relevant to veterans of all ages and from conflicts of the last 70 years.

As a small charity we do have have the resources to undertake a formal fundraising programme. We are therefore enormously grateful to the charities, trust groups, associations and individuals who generously support us through their activities, grants and legacies.

For those who may be feeling vulnerable, isolated or depressed our events and activities can bring a much needed boost and something they can look forward to.

The Not Forgotten Association Northern Ireland were granted the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2019.

The Not Forgotten Association Northern Ireland can be contacted through its website, as follows:- <https://thenotforgottenni.org/>



**Patron: Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal**  
**President: His Grace The Duke of Abercorn KG**

***Providing entertainment and recreation for the serving wounded and the ex-service community with disabilities***

**Charity Number: NIC100602**



We provide life-long, life-changing support, jobs and training opportunities to service leavers, reservists, veterans and their families.

Founded in 1885 and operating across the UK, we have the specialist knowledge and understanding to bridge the gap between military life and civilian employment.

We are strongly linked to local employment markets and all our advice is based on our knowledge of industries that are growing where you live and the big recruiters in the area. We can provide access to our in-house jobsite, RightJob where we advertise vacancies from local employers.

We exist to provide life-long, life-changing support, jobs and training opportunities to service leavers and veterans irrespective of circumstances, rank, length of service, or reason for leaving.

**To register for employment support please visit our website at [www.rfea.org.uk](http://www.rfea.org.uk) or alternatively please telephone **0121 262 3058**.**

**Northern Ireland contact details:**

028 94 456 220

078 522 877 82



## ***AA Veterans Support***

***Together we can make a difference in the lives  
of Veterans and their Families across Northern Ireland***

**Charity number - NIC100908**

### **About Us**

AA Veterans Support is a Northern Ireland based charity set up to provide help and support for Veterans and their families across Northern Ireland. It is our aim to provide the necessary support services for those Veterans or their family members that may need our help. We believe that our Forces and their families deserve our lifelong support. We aim to provide Practical, Training, Emotional and Financial support to anyone who is serving or has ever served and their families. Whenever they may need us, we'll do whatever we can to help.

### **Who We Help**

Anyone who has ever served in the Army, Royal Navy or RAF

- ☞ The Families / Dependants of the Armed Forces residing or looking to reside in Northern Ireland
- ☞ The Dependants of veterans residing in Northern Ireland
- ☞ Members of the reserve forces and their dependants
- ☞ National Servicemen residing in Northern Ireland

### **What we offer**

- ☞ We offer a range of services to meet client needs including - Counselling • Advice & Guidance • Training • Benefits • Housing • Furnishing & Equipment • Pensions • Respite • and more....

### **Contact Us**

AA Veterans Support  
Unit C3 Edenderry Industrial Estate  
326 Crumlin Rd  
Belfast  
BT14 7EE  
Telephone No 028 9074 7071

Email [info@aavsni.com](mailto:info@aavsni.com)



### **Mid Ulster Victims Empowerment (MUVE)**

MUVE was set up in 2012 to help support, advise and improve the wellbeing of Innocent Victims, their families and individuals affected by the Troubles. Our members include those bereaved, physically and psychologically affected by the Troubles. The majority of our membership is drawn from ex-services [men and women] who have served the community in any capacity e.g. Ulster Defence Regiment, CGC, RUC GC, NI Prison Service, Emergency Services etc.

MUVE has now established itself strongly as a victims support group with a membership of over 600.

#### **Services provided:**

- Welfare / Benefits Clinics
- Counselling
- Complimentary therapies
- Advocacy / legacy work
- Health & well-being services, accessing the Victims & Survivors Service frameworks for support
- Coffee mornings / luncheons
- Recreational Activities, - arts and craft classes, yoga, fishing and walking groups
- Respite trips and breaks
- Transgenerational programmes, for example activity weekends
- Remembrance events
- Storytelling
- Social events – dances, BBQ's, etc.
- Lobbying and representing member's views. For example, NIO Victims Pensions Scheme, etc.
- Volunteering opportunities
- Signposting to other service related organisations, for example Veterans UK, UDR Aftercare Service, Combat Stress, etc.

MUVE has been building vital partnerships with other innocent victims' groups and the wider Service community over this past number so that our veterans get the support that they and their families deserve.

MUVE Project  
34 Fairhill Road  
Cookstown  
BT80 8AG

Email: [muveproject@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:muveproject@yahoo.co.uk)  
Tel: 028 8676 3349  
Mob: 07702 902823





# War Widows' Association of Great Britain

*"Through the Generations - Moving Forward Together"*

The War Widows' Association is essentially a pressure group and exists to improve the conditions of War Widows and their dependants in Great Britain.

Its work encompasses those who have suffered bereavement as a result of World War II and all conflicts since then including Iraq and Afghanistan. The WWA also represents those who have suffered the loss of their partner and in peacetime, when the death was attributable to their service life.

There is no office as such in NI but the Regional Organiser can be reached via:

## **War Widows' Association**

c/o 199 Borough High Street  
London  
SE1 1AA

Tel: 0845 2412 189

Email: [info@warwidows.org.uk](mailto:info@warwidows.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. 1002656



**MAPS**  
Military and Police Support  
of West Tyrone



## **Military and Police Support of West Tyrone (MAPS)**

MAPS is based in a hub in Omagh for those who served in the Military, Police and Prison Service during Operation Banner. The organisation is run by volunteers all of whom have served giving us the empathy to deal with veterans who turn to us for help.

Our ethos is simple, to provide a place of refuge for veterans to encourage them to come from obscurity and receive the advice they so richly deserve. In the 8 years since its formation, MAPS has built up a formidable team of signposting partners putting in practice its own mini gateway dealing with everything from applying for a veteran's badge to seeking mental health consultations.

MAPS offer a popular drop in service, in house advice, complementary therapies, an award-winning befriending service, respite, coffee mornings and activities. The organisation recently opened a veterans' garden project which has grown from a field to paradise for those who work in it and visit alike.

The MAPS office is open Monday to Friday, 10 am to 4 pm.

Address: 53 Market Street, Omagh, Co. Tyrone

Email: [mapsofwesttyrone@btinternet.com](mailto:mapsofwesttyrone@btinternet.com)

Telephone: 02882245459

## Local Council Veterans Champions

Each of Northern Ireland's eleven local Councils has a legally-appointed Veterans' Champion to help deal with issues raised by the ex-Service community and by individuals in need.

The Veterans' Champions are all Councillors who are firmly engaged with the NI Veterans' Support Office and so link to national policy and operational strategy but also have wide networks of support and influence within their own Council areas. They act as stakeholders for all the other support agencies and are also front-line gatekeepers when veterans in need cannot find any other alternative resolution to their issues.

To contact them and seek advice or guidance, use the link to your own Council area and ask for the Veterans' Champion.



### **Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council**

Phone: [028 9034 0000](tel:02890340000)

Email: [info@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](mailto:info@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)

Website: [Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council](http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)



### **Ards and North Down Borough Council**

Phone: [0300 013 3333](tel:03000133333)

Email: [enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

Website: [Ards and North Down Borough Council](http://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)



### **Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council**

Phone: [0300 0300 900](tel:03000300900) / [028 3831 2400](tel:02838312400)

Email: [info@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](mailto:info@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)

Website: [Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council](http://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)



**Belfast  
City Council**

### **Belfast City Council**

Phone: [028 9032 0202](tel:02890320202)

Email: [generalenquiries@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:generalenquiries@belfastcity.gov.uk)

Website: [Belfast City Council](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk)



**Causeway  
Coast & Glens  
Borough Council**

### **Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council**

Phone: [028 7034 7034](tel:02870347034)

Email: [info@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:info@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)

Website: [Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council](http://www.causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)



Derry City & Strabane  
District Council  
Comhairle  
Chathair Dhoire &  
Cheantar an tSraitha Báin  
Derry Cittie & Strábane  
Destrict Council

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**Derry City and Strabane District Council**

Phone: [028 7125 3253](tel:02871253253)

Email: [info@derrystrabane.com](mailto:info@derrystrabane.com)

Website: [Derry City and Strabane District Council](http://www.derrystrabane.com)

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Fermanagh & Omagh  
District Council  
Comhairle Ceantair  
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

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**Fermanagh and Omagh District Council - Enniskillen Office**

Phone: [0300 303 1777](tel:03003031777)

Email: [info@fermanaghomagh.com](mailto:info@fermanaghomagh.com)

Website: [Fermanagh and Omagh District Council](http://www.fermanaghomagh.com)

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Lisburn &  
Castlereagh  
City Council

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**Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council**

Phone: [028 9250 9250](tel:02892509250)

Email: [enquiries@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk)

Website: [Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council](http://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk)

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Mid & East  
Antrim  
Borough Council

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**Mid and East Antrim Borough Council**

Phone: [0300 124 5000](tel:03001245000)

Email: [enquiries@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@midandeastantrim.gov.uk)

Website: [Mid and East Antrim Borough Council](http://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk)

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Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

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**Mid Ulster District Council – Dungannon**

Phone: [0300 013 2132](tel:03000132132)

Email: [info@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:info@midulstercouncil.org)

Website: [Mid Ulster District Council](http://www.midulstercouncil.org)

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Comhairle Ceantair  
an Iúir, Mhúrn  
agus an Dúin  
**Newry, Mourne  
and Down**  
District Council

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**Newry, Mourne and Down District Council**

Phone: Council - [0300 013 2233](tel:03000132233)

Email: [info@nmandd.org](mailto:info@nmandd.org)

Website: [Newry, Mourne and Down District Council](http://www.nmandd.org)

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# Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

In 1919, just one year after the Royal Air Force was founded, there was an urgent need to support those who had served in the First World War. Lord Trenchard set up the RAF Benevolent Fund with donations from the public to help ex-servicemen and their families get their lives back on track. Our vision then as it is now is that no member of the RAF Family will ever face adversity alone. We are the RAF's oldest friend - loyal, generous and always there.

The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund supports current and former members of the RAF, their partners and families, providing practical, emotional and financial support, whenever they need us. We are committed to getting them through the toughest times, whatever life may send their way. We'll consider any request for assistance, however big or small, providing a tailor-made approach to each individual situation.

We are unique in providing a range of support for serving RAF and their dependants, from support with childcare and relationship difficulties to help with retraining, injury, disability, illness and bereavement.

For former serving RAF members and their partners, we offer financial grants to aid day-to-day living, cover one-off unexpected costs for practical items like a new fridge or replace a broken boiler, right through to renovating homes to help people live independently.

We can provide respite care, bereavement support or arrange telephone groups to help those isolated or lonely. We work closely with our partners and organisations to provide direct and targeted assistance to the RAF Family, while caseworking organisations, including SSAFA and RAFA, act as our 'eyes and ears' on the ground, having direct contact with those who need our assistance.

The RAF Family is spread all over the country and you and your organisation are vital in helping us to spread the word about our work.

As part of our Centenary Campaign, we have ambitious plans to reach out to more members of the RAF Family and encourage those who have not yet sought our help to come forward, in particular older veterans and surviving spouses, who may not be aware of the support available to them.

For more information about the RAF Benevolent Fund and its work visit:

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

Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund,  
67 Portland Place, London, W1B 1AR  
**0800 160 2942**



## BROOKE HOUSE

HEALTH & WELLBEING CENTRE

The Brooke House Health and Wellbeing Centre seeks to support and improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of retired Royal Ulster Constabulary Officers, Military veterans, and their families, who have been physically injured, psychologically impacted and/or bereaved as a result of their service.

### Eligibility criteria for Veterans

Brooke House is currently supported through two funding streams which set the eligibility criteria. Clients must fall into at least one of the following categories:

#### LIBOR funding

Veterans of the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force post-2008 and their families, who reside in Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland

#### Tackling Serious Stress funding

Veterans of the British Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and their families or carers who reside in Counties Fermanagh, Armagh, and Tyrone

### Who can refer?

Clients can self-refer or be referred by Statutory Services, the Community and Voluntary Sector or Armed Forces Charities and Associations.

Brooke House services may not be suitable for clients who are considered at high risk of harming themselves and/or others or who have been diagnosed with a Psychotic or Personality Disorder – a discussion with the team may help clarify this.

### What is the process?

Once a referral is received and eligibility confirmed the client will receive an acknowledgement letter within 5 days asking them to call in to the service to arrange an appointment for screening by one of the Health and Wellbeing Coordinators. Following this, they will be referred and/or signposted to appropriate services based on need and following discussion with the client.

### Support services include:

- Structured Residential Programme
- Psychological Support
- Physiotherapy
- Alternative and Complementary Therapy
- Nature-based therapy
- Physical Activity

**For more information on Brooke House Health & Wellbeing Centre please contact us**

**Tel: 028 8953 1223 Email: [info@brookehouse.co.uk](mailto:info@brookehouse.co.uk)**

**Web: <http://www.brookehouse.co.uk>**



## **38 (Irish) Brigade**

Headquarters 38 (Irish) Bde is situated in Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn and is responsible for providing the personnel support infrastructure, which we call the 'Firm Base', for all serving Regular and Reserve military personnel and their families living and working in Northern Ireland. Around 8000 members of the Army leave each year and 38 (Irish) Bde has an obligation to ensure that those soldiers and their families, who elect to resettle in Northern Ireland, make the Transition to civilian life as successfully as possible. The aim is to produce a settled veteran, who makes a positive contribution to local society and acts as an advocate for the Army.

An individual can start the transition process up to 2 years before leaving. Some people may previously have known this as 'resettlement' but it is now much more than that. All aspects of that journey are considered, focused on the following 5 pillars: Education, Employment, Housing, Health and Welfare (E2H2W). During the process any areas of potential concern will be highlighted early and can be addressed prior to discharge either with the assistance of the unit welfare and resettlement staff or by signposting to external agencies.

38 (Irish) Bde provides practical assistance to all service leavers and their families, who are wishing to resettle within Northern Ireland via biannual Transition Fairs. The aim is to ensure that the service leaver is given all the relevant information needed, based upon the 5 Pillars of Transition, to make an informed choice allowing for the smooth transition into civilian life.

For further information on Transition or resettlement in general contact the SO2 Transition at 38 (Irish) Bde on:

**Tel 02892 263906**

Or

Email [38X-Pers-Transition-SO2@mod.uk](mailto:38X-Pers-Transition-SO2@mod.uk)

## NOTES