

SOURCES OF SUPPORT AND INFORMATION FOR THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY

Charities and other Veteran organisations for information and advice

Armed Forces Covenant in the Community: Local Authorities

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-community-covenant>

Every Local Authority has now developed an Armed Forces Covenant in the Community. The aim of the Covenant in the Community (formerly the Community Covenant) is to encourage local communities to support the armed forces community in their area and promote understanding and awareness among the public of issues affecting the armed forces community. Each area will be different, but most will provide information to the Armed Forces community on local services and support.

Visit [community-covenants-by-region](#) to find information on Community Covenants near you

Armed forces charities: Portal

www.armedforcescharities.org.uk

This website contains details of over 2,200 armed forces charities registered in the UK, including charities that cater for the needs of serving and ex-serving personnel and their families, armed forces museums and heritage organisations as well as cadet units and organisations. The site is relevant for anyone with an interest in armed forces charities, and anyone seeking to find out how much and what type of support is available for potential beneficiaries.

Cobseo: the Confederation of Service Charities

<https://www.cobseo.org.uk/>

Cobseo represent and support the needs and opinions of its member organisations, individually and collectively at central & local government levels and with other national and international agencies. Cobseo aim to cooperate and collaborate with others in order to provide the best possible level of support to our beneficiaries.

Cobseo have a searchable database and act as a as a point of contact for external agencies to the members of Cobseo. The directory can be found at

<https://www.cobseo.org.uk/members/directory/>

Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-advisory-and-pensions-committees-x13/about#contact-us>

0808 1914 218

VA&PC advise and liaise with veterans, their families and relevant organisations on their needs, issues and concerns. VA&PC assist, raise awareness, act as advocates and provide governance to the veterans' community, and champion the rights of veterans and their families where there is injustice, inequality or a lack of fairness.

Veterans UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk>

0808 1914 2 18

Veterans UK is part of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and was created to help ex-service personnel get appropriate support from government, local authorities, independent bodies and the charity sector.

Veterans' Contact Point (VCP) or equivalent local charity

<http://www.veteranscontactpoint.co.uk/>

02476343793

The VCP is a local support group created and run by veterans for veterans and their families. It is based in Nuneaton and supports the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire area. Volunteers at the VCP can provide information, advice and referrals to a wide range of specialist organisations and service charities.

Not all areas will have an equivalent of the VCP, but some do. Similar agencies exist in Glasgow, Liverpool and elsewhere. There may also be Veteran run support groups operating through Social Media.

Charities as an initial point of contact for welfare and other needs**Citizen's Advice Bureaux**

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/armed-forces-and-veterans/benefits-and-concessions-for-the-armed-forces-veterans-and-their-families/>

03444 111 444

The CAB aim to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives. The CAB provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. The CAB have specific advice pages for the Armed Forces community

Help for Heroes

<http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/>

0845 6731760

Help for Heroes provides a range of support and services for wounded, injured and sick serving (Regular and Reserves) and ex-serving personnel who have suffered illness or injuries in the service of the Nation. H4H does this through services such as:

- H4H Recovery Centres in Tidworth (Wiltshire), Catterick, Colchester and Plymouth
- H4H Hidden Wounds (psychological wounds)
- H4H Welfare support
- H4H grants to individuals and other charitable agencies
- H4H Fellowships of 'Band of Brothers' and 'Band of Sisters'

[The Royal British Legion](#)

0808 802 8080

The Royal British Legion provides practical support to serving men and women, veterans (ex-service of all ages) and their families. It provides help with finances, living independently, mental well-being, care homes, finding employment or starting a business, respite breaks and more!

[SSAFA The Forces Charity](#)

0845 241 7141

SSAFA help serving personnel, veterans and their families across the UK with welfare advice and support, health and social care support and specialised support for bereaved families and those who are wounded, injured or sick.

Support re physical injuries

BLESMA: The Limbless Veterans

<https://blesma.org/>

020 8590 1124

BLESMA, The Limbless Veterans, is dedicated to assisting serving and ex-Service men and women who have suffered life-changing limb loss or the use of a limb, an eye or loss of sight. BLESMA support these men and women in their communities throughout the UK.

BLESMA work for their Members when the conflicts that have affected their lives are no longer the focal point in the nation's media. Modern medicine transforms the physical injury, but it is a complicated process to treat the emotional trauma and related lifelong problems.

Blind Veterans UK

<http://www.blindveterans.org.uk/>

020 7723 5021

Blind Veterans UK believe that no one who has served our country should battle blindness alone. Blind Veterans UK provide vision impaired Armed Forces and National Service veterans with the person-centred services and tailored support they need to discover life beyond sight loss. Blind Veterans UK's work ranges from helping veterans relearn vital life skills and providing them with the tools they need to be independent in their own homes, to offering new learning, training and recreation opportunities and providing long-term nursing, residential and respite care.

Help for Heroes

<http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/>

0845 6731760

Help for Heroes has Recovery Centres in Tidworth (Wiltshire), Catterick, Colchester and Plymouth. These Recovery Centres offer the next stage of care after clinical treatment. The Recovery Centres aim to 'inspire, enable and support' the injured or ill to piece their lives back together. They do this through lifeskills courses, education and training for employment, welfare support and physical activity.

Support re mental health issues

There are a variety of military and non-military related charities providing help on mental health issues.

[The Big White Wall](#)

The Big White Wall is an online mental health support service for veterans and those currently serving, their families and carers as well as other communities. It's an online support group which aims to reduce the stigma of mental ill health.

This is a free and anonymous service for serving and ex-service personnel. All they need to do is register.

[CALM: The Campaign Against Living Miserably](#)

0800 585858

The Campaign Against Living Miserably, or CALM, is a registered charity, which exists to prevent male suicide in the UK. They offer support to men of any age, who are down or in crisis, through their helpline and website.

[Combat Stress](#)

0800 138 1619

01372 587000

Combat Stress is the UK's leading veterans' mental health charity. They currently help more than 4,400 veterans to rebuild their lives. They look after veterans with a wide range of mental health issues, offering two integrated services:

- short-stay clinical treatment at one of their specialist centres in Ayrshire, Shropshire or Surrey
- Community outreach, to bring clinical care and welfare support to veterans in their local areas.

Treatment and support services are always free of charge, and are proven to work.

Help for Heroes: Hidden Wounds

<http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/hidden-wounds/>

0845 6731760

The Help for Heroes psychological wellbeing service, H4H Hidden Wounds, can help Veterans and Armed Forces families living with anxiety, depression, stress, anger or alcohol. It is here to help individuals find ways of dealing with frustration and to help them to start enjoying everyday life again. Free and confidential support is delivered by Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners (PWPs) by phone, Skype or face to face.

NHS Mental Health services

NHS Mental Health Services are provided throughout England, Scotland and Wales. These include IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Services), which provide a frontline and access to other

mental health services and support. Many areas have developed Veterans specific support mechanisms. For example there is the 'Ex-Armed Forces' project provided by Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Partnership Trust. See:

<http://www.covwarkpt.nhs.uk/veterans/Pages/default.aspx>

The Samaritans

<http://www.samaritans.org/>

116123

The Samaritans Vision is that fewer people die by suicide. The Samaritans work to alleviate emotional distress and reduce the incidence of suicide feelings and suicidal behaviour. They do this by being available 24 hours a day to provide emotional support for people who are struggling to cope, including those who have had thoughts of suicide.

Support re housing and homelessness

The CAB, Royal British Legion and SSAFA all provide gateway information and support re housing and homelessness. In addition to these organisations there are:

Haig Housing Association

<http://www.haighousing.org.uk/>

020 8685 5777

The object of Haig Housing is to provide housing assistance to ex-Service people and/or their dependants. This is achieved by letting general needs homes at affordable rents to the ex-Service community and providing tailored housing solutions to suit specific and individual needs of severely wounded and disabled Service and ex-Service people. Haig Housing also offers a wide range of housing advice to the Service community and is the Strategic Housing Partner of Help for Heroes.

Local Authority housing support

<https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council>

Housing Regulations now require Housing Authorities to ensure they do **not** discriminate against the following with regards to a 'local connection':

- serving and ex-service personnel, where the application is made within 5 years of discharge
- bereaved partners and spouses of service personnel leaving Service Families Accommodation and
- current or former Reservist personnel who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service

Former member of the armed forces who are homeless or threatened with homelessness may qualify for help from a local council. The council has to help the individual with both emergency and longer-term accommodation if they are accepted as homeless and in priority need. The council must consider if it has to help the individual using both general rules that apply to everyone and special rules that apply to people who were in the forces.

Soldiers off the Streets

<http://www.soldiersoffthestreet.org/>

01745 356 622 or 07773 493 088

Soldiers off the Streets provide practical support for homeless ex-service personnel, in particular but not exclusively by the provision of clothing, food and rehabilitation, including advice on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, alcoholism, drug abuse, housing and employment.

SPACES: Single Persons Accommodation Centre for Ex-services

www.spaces.org.uk

01748 833797 or 01748 872940 or 01748 830191

SPACES help to secure appropriate accommodation for individuals when leaving the Armed Forces to reduce the risk of homelessness or rough sleeping, no matter where the individual is located across the UK. SPACES has exclusive referral rights to The Beacon and Mike Jackson House. Both schemes offer supported housing for up to 18 months with dedicated support staff, facilities and activities to support transition to Civvy Street.

Stoll (Housing Association)

www.stoll.org.uk

020 7385 2110

Stoll is a leading Veterans' charity and Housing Association that has been helping ex-Service personnel since 1916. Stoll provides safe, high quality housing and access to services that enable vulnerable and disabled Veterans in need of support to live fulfilling, independent lives.

Support re Money advice and financial issues

The CAB, Royal British Legion and SSAFA all provide gateway information and support re financial issues. In addition to these organisations there are:

[Defence Discount Service](#)

The Defence Discount Service gives members of the armed forces community discounts both online and on the high street. The membership card is a physical card that members of the armed forces community can take into shops, restaurants and venues to get a discount.

Joining Forces Credit Union

<http://joiningforcescu.co.uk/>

The MoD has made it possible for three of the UK's leading credit unions to join forces and make simple savings accounts and loans available to the armed forces and their families. These are:

- <http://planesavercu.co.uk/MOD/> (0208 607 5020)
- <http://serveandprotectcu.co.uk/> (0845 266 1113)
- <http://creditunion.co.uk/Military.htm> (020 7787 0770)

Moneyforce

www.Moneyforce.org.uk

A joint initiative between Standard Life Charitable Trust, The Royal British Legion and the Ministry of Defence, the MoneyForce website aims to assist all Service personnel, their partners, families and

dependants, to be better equipped to manage their money and financial affairs.

Whether they're dealing with debt, interested in investments or puzzled about payday loans, MoneyForce will arm them with all the information they need to get MoneyFit.

Turn2Us

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/Your-Situation/Member-of-the-Armed-Forces-Veteran>

Turn to Us provide a Benefits Calculator, a Grant Search and information about various Armed Forces pension and compensation schemes as well as a 'Find an Adviser' service.

Support re Employment

British Forces Resettlement Services

<https://www.bfrss.org.uk/>

0116 254 5477

British Forces Resettlement Services (BFRS) is a Social Enterprise created to help the Armed Forces Community with their transition into civilian life. BFRS know that resettlement is more than just the brief time around leaving the services, and that it isn't just personnel from the regular forces who are affected. This is why BFRS services are open to service leavers, reserve forces, veterans, civilian MOD employees, as well as partners and families, and it doesn't matter how long, or how long ago, you served.

The main aim of BFRS is to bring the Armed Forces Community together with employers and training providers who recognise their unique skill sets, as well as support services who can help them further. This is achieved through two main channels:

- Career Events - BFRS holds events throughout the UK which bring the Forces Community together with employers, training providers and support services.
- BFRS website – Our members have access to our online Jobs and Courses Boards, bringing together vacancies and training opportunities from a wide array of companies looking to make use of the skills of the Armed Forces Community. All members also have a customisable job seekers profile.

BFRS are not part of the MoD or CTP, but work alongside both, and have strong connections within the Military. Individuals can make use of their services at the same time as others, or if not eligible for assistance from CTP.

Career Transitions Partnership

<https://www.ctp.org.uk/>

The Career Transition Partnership (CTP) is the Ministry of Defence working with Right Management. Leave the Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force or the Royal Marines at any rank and you can benefit from resettlement support, career transition advice and training opportunities. CTP are the official provider of Armed Forces resettlement. Ex-service men and women can be entitled to support from

the CTP for up to 2 years post discharge.

CivvyStreet

info@civvystreet.org

0800 169 4073

CivvyStreet is the Royal British Legion's programme for service personnel transitioning to civilian life. It provides support and mentoring for all those recently leaving, or about to leave the forces who are looking for employment and a chance to redeploy the skills learned while serving.

Job Centre Plus

0800 055 6688

All former service personnel have access to the full range of Jobcentre Plus services. As well as this, a person who has served in the armed forces for any day within the last three years can be considered for early access to the Work Programme.

Partners of currently serving and ex-service personnel have access to the full range of Jobcentre Plus services. They can also be considered for early access to the Work Programme from three months into their claim for Jobseeker's Allowance.

LifeWorks

lifeworks@rbli.co.uk

0800 319 6844

Lifeworks is a fully funded five day course provided by the Royal British Legion which equips ex-armed forces personnel with the tools to get into and maintain a civilian job that is appropriate for them.

Regular Forces Employment Agency

<http://www.rfea.org.uk/>

RFEA help Service leavers and ex-Forces personnel find and remain in appropriate, rewarding employment for the rest of their working lives. RFEA and the Officers' Association work, through a sub-contract, with the CTP

The Warrior Programme

<http://www.warriorprogramme.org.uk/>

+44 (0)56 0204 3180

The Warrior Programme is a 3 day motivation and training programme with 12 month structured support and signposting.

The Warrior Programme runs residential programmes in London, SW and NW for Veterans and adult Family Members of Veterans. The programme is ideally suited to individuals who are: not fulfilling their potential, stuck, frustrated, angry, guilty, unsure, lacking in confidence, struggling with the transition post operations, in civvy street or returning to 'normality'.

The 3 day coaching programme teaches participants practical, effective tools, techniques and coaching strategies to improve performance and motivation and overcome the above.

Support re Families

Families can be supported through both military and civilian agencies.

Army Families Federation

<http://www.aff.org.uk/>

07557 977290

The Army Families Federation (AFF) is the independent voice of army families and works hard to improve the quality of life for army families around the world - on any aspect that is affected by the army lifestyle. AFF is independent of the army and offers confidential advice. AFF will deal with your enquiry without revealing your identity.

Naval Families Federation

<http://nff.org.uk/>

023 9265 4374

The Naval Families Federation (NFF) was established in 2003. NFF offer Royal Naval and Royal Marines' families an independent voice and representation. Similar to the AFF and RAF FF the NFF also provide support and guidance on the issues affecting daily life that occur due to being part of a Naval Service family, including: accommodation, pay & allowances, education & childcare, access to healthcare, community/family support and more.

RAF Families Association

<http://www.raf-ff.org.uk/>

01780 781650

The RAF Families Federation is funded by the RAF but is an independent organisation. The RAF FF represent all Royal Air Force personnel, Regular, Reserve, single, married or in a partnership, together with your families. The RAF FF provides a voice for the issues and concerns they have about life in the RAF. RAF FF also have direct access to senior RAF and MOD staffs as well as Government Ministers.

Family Information Services

Provided by Local Authorities

Most Local Authorities provide a Family Information Service. The Family Information Service (FIS) offers free help and advice on all aspects of family life to parents, carers, young people and anyone working with families in the LA area. The FIS holds information on a range of subjects but, if they can't help directly, will put you in touch with someone who can.

<https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council>

Scotty's Little Soldiers

<http://www.scottyslittlesoldiers.co.uk/>

01553 763000

Scotty's Little Soldiers is a charity dedicated to supporting bereaved British Forces children. The charity provides opportunities for the children to smile again by offering holidays at its Scotty Lodges, gifts at difficult times of the year, special experiences and an amazing Christmas party.

As well as these fun activities the charity also provides access to professional bereavement counselling and a range of grants to help with the children's personal development. These grants can cover the cost of music lessons, swimming clubs, after school activities, driving lessons and even

University tuition fees.

The charity now supports hundreds of bereaved British Forces' children across the UK, many of whom are still very young and will rely on the activities offered by Scotty's for years to come.

Winston's Wish: the charity for bereaved children

<http://www.winstonswish.org.uk/death-through-military/>

08452 03 04 05

Winston's Wish was set up in 1992 to meet the needs of bereaved children, young people and their families.

The death of a parent or sibling is one of the most fundamental losses a child will ever face. Winston's Wish believe that bereaved children need support to make sense of death and rebuild their lives. They have a specific page and support for bereaved children of Armed Forces personnel.