

Veterans News and Communications Hub

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The Hub enables forces-friendly organisations across all sectors to showcase the continued value of the UK's highly skilled veteran community.

This collaborative project is delivered by Defence Relationship Management and Cobseo (The Confederation of Service Charities). The Hub enables forces-friendly organisations across all sectors to showcase the continued value of the UK's highly-skilled veteran community.

Latest news

Afghan Veterans Community responds to a call for mental health support

The UK Afghanistan Veterans Community (AVC) has announced the launch of 'Operation Safe Circle', designed to create a positive mental health culture where veterans lead the way - empowering each other through peer support, shared experience and unwavering community. This is being delivered by March On Stress, a leading supplier of mental health training, and supported through a grant from Boeing, who come together with AVC to form a new community partnership in 2026. Veterans are being encouraged to express their interest.

More details can be found in the AVC - Insights Report

For more information on the course, email info@ukafghanveterans.org

Female Veterans Transformation Programme (FVTP) enters the training and education phase

The Female Veterans Toolkit was launched in November 2025. It is an accessible resource for all organisations.

The FVTP are now progressing into the training and education phase of the programme and are offering 3 types of free education and training on how to use the toolkit and understand the needs of female veterans.

- **Lunch & Learns:** these hour-long online sessions are designed for all organisations who want to understand how to better support women from the Armed Forces community. The next lunch and learns are 20 April, 27 April, 14 May, 19 May, and 28 May.

Sign up for the Female Veterans Toolkit Lunch And Learn

- **Bespoke Training:** designed for services who want more in-depth support to improve their services for female veterans. These sessions can be face-to-face or in a webinar format, lasting anywhere from 45 minutes to half a day.
- **Train the Trainer:** This is for organisations/professionals who want to help grow the wider understanding and recognition of female veterans across the sectors. FVTP will offer people the opportunity to learn how to deliver their content and provide them with the resources to

grow and sustain this area of work.

All sessions will help to:

- Better understand where female veterans' experiences and risk factors can differ from male veterans and civilian women.
- Navigate the new Toolkit confidently and use it effectively in practice.
- Reflect on organisational (or individual) practice, with or without the support of our self-assessment tool.
- Help continue to build wider awareness and knowledge of the specific needs of female veterans

Read more about the Female Veterans Toolkit

Wounded, Injured, and sick veterans to sail with Turn to Starboard from Falmouth on Monday 17 March, carrying Invictus Games Flag on 2,000-mile UK expedition

Two traditionally-rigged tall ships, Spirit of Falmouth and Pellew, crewed by a rotating team of 70 wounded, injured and sick (WIS) veterans and serving personnel, will sail into Falmouth on Monday 17 March as part of the Full Circle Expedition.

The voyage is coordinated by local veteran sailing charity Turn to Starboard and delivered in partnership with Invictus Games Birmingham 2027.

Read more about Full Circle

First VALOUR-recognised centres announced

The first 14 organisations to be funded to develop VALOUR-recognised centres have been confirmed.

A second round of funding will be announced Spring 2026, with a further opportunity for organisations to be able to apply to become part of the VALOUR network.

The first 14 organisations are:

- Northern Ireland: Brooke House
- Scotland: SSAFA
- Wales: Bulldogs Boxing and Community Activities
- North East England: Northumberland County Council and East Durham Veterans Trust
- North West England: Armed Forces Community HQ and Veterans in Communities
- Yorkshire and the Humber: Hull 4 Heroes
- West Midlands: Telford & Wrekin Council
- East Midlands: Derbyshire Addictions Advice Service
- South East England: Veterans Outreach Support and Royal British Veterans Enterprise

- South West England: Alabaré and Improving Lives Plymouth

Read more:

- First government-funded veteran centres launched
- Projects we've supported - Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust

The UK Armed Forces' flagship Esports competition is back

British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS) has announced the return of the BFBS Pro League, launching Season Two on 2 April, following the success of last year's historic inaugural competition for the UK Armed Forces community.

Following the breakthrough first season that attracted more than 700 players from across the British Armed Forces community, the BFBS Pro League returns with an expanded Esports line-up, adding F1 25 and League of Legends for 2026. This year's Grand Final will be featuring Rocket League, with players battling through a series of tournaments before the action culminates on Sunday 27 September at the Royal Air Force Museum, London.

Read more about the Esport competition

What is a veteran?

Veterans are defined as anyone who has served for at least one day in His Majesty's Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve) or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations. There are currently 2.4 million veterans in Great Britain.

There are 2.4 million veterans in Great Britain. 40% of veterans are 16-64 years old. The percentage of working age veterans is set to increase to 44% by 2028. 60% of veterans are over 65. 75% of veterans own their home or have a mortgage. It is estimated that 3% to 6% of those sleeping rough have served in the Armed Forces. 75% are healthy, 17% have fair health and 8% have bad health. Want to learn more? Tune in to our 'being forces friendly' podcast'.

Listen to our team of veterans talk about their experiences: transitioning from the UK Armed Forces and what the word 'veteran' means to them.

Veterans' employment

Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA)

The Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA) is part of the MOD, leading on the government's policy on veterans. The OVA work with devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, local governments, charities and businesses to provide support to veterans when they need it. They offer programs and resources to help veterans get into better employment and continue making great contributions to society after leaving the armed forces.

OP ASCEND - careers after Service

Veterans in the UK now have access to OP ASCEND, which aims to improve the career support available to veterans, regardless of when they left Service.

Sign up to Op ASCEND

Veterans Strategy

This strategy sets the government's new vision for veterans. In doing so we are clear about the security and growth challenges we face - and our plans to respond to them as set out in the Strategic Defence Review. This strategy challenges the whole of society to think differently about those who have served in the armed forces, their offer and their potential.

Veterans Strategy - GOV.UK

The Reed Group

Reed logo.

The Reed Group has created an internal Armed Forces Veterans and Reservists Group (AFVR) community.

The AFVR Group's benefits include:

- offering employees a support group of people with similar experiences
- recreating a sense of camaraderie that they may be missing from their time in the forces
- offering an optional buddy system for mentoring new staff, especially when this is a member's first civilian job
- sharing Armed Forces events, news and experiences

Joanna Chapman, Reed Group business development manager, has said:

This shows our commitment to supporting Armed Forces personnel and ensuring they are not disadvantaged by their Service. We work continuously to create new and improve existing policies and initiatives that support those who have served and those who continue to serve, including guidance documents for our recruiting staff and job application support for those applying to work for Reed.

Their working group will also hold group-wide talks to raise awareness for employing the Armed Forces Community, the benefits they bring to employers, and how they can be supported. Reed opens group talks to external stakeholders to host and bring their expertise, and they welcome anyone who would be interested in attending. If you would like to participate, email the Reed Armed Forces Community at ArmedForces.Community@reed.com.

The Forces Employment Charity

Forces Employment Charity logo.

The Forces Employment Charity stands by ex-Forces personnel through a range of programmes and practical support. Supporting anyone who has served at least one day in His Majesty's Regular Armed Forces, or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations. Support is delivered by experienced advisors, many of whom also served. The Forces Employment Charity advisors are committed to helping veterans succeed through their working lives.

The Forces Employment Charity programmes provide a range of practical tools and advice to help veterans use their military skills to stand out from the crowd.

The support provided includes:

- advice on career choices
- researching the job market
- job matching
- advice on training
- recommendations for courses and education
- support with writing a CV
- advice on interview techniques
- expert industry knowledge and updates
- events and employment fairs

For more information visit [The Forces Employment Charity](#).

Forces-friendly employers

More than 12,000 organisations have committed to improving the lives of Service people and their families.

Since 2011, the Armed Forces Covenant has been a promise that, as a society, we will acknowledge that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces and their families should be treated with fairness and respect.

[Read more about Forces-friendly employers](#)

Veterans and small businesses

Veterans: A Force for Business

X-Forces Enterprise (XFE) and the Federation of Small Business (FSB) have collaborated extensively over the last few years, beginning with an insightful report into the business landscape for Service leavers: *A Force For Business*.

The report highlights the contribution of the UK's veteran population to the small business sector, with 6% of small business owned by veterans in Great Britain. However the report shows that there is scope for this to be increased, greater numbers of veterans starting, growing or working in Great Britain's millions of small businesses would see benefits for individuals, businesses and communities.

info graphic with stats for service leavers, it shows there are 925,000 veterans of working age in the UK in 2016, and that 6% of small businesses are owned by veterans.

Veterans' support

Support for veterans and their families - OVA directory

The Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA) and Ministry of Defence (MOD) have launched Support for veterans and their families, replacing the Veterans Gateway.

The services include support with physical and mental health, finance, employment, housing and social care.

Armed Forces & Veterans' Breakfast Clubs

Armed Forces & Veterans' Breakfast Clubs logo.

The Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Clubs (AFVBC) is now the single largest veterans organisation in the UK, and membership growing weekly.

With over 400 clubs nationally and 15 overseas, the AFVBC seeks to end social isolation for veterans. The clubs bring people with a connection to the UK Armed Forces together and offers a chance to reminisce, share stories and interact with a community that is missed by most when leaving the Armed Forces.

The AFVBC is also conducting five pilot programmes in HM prisons across the UK, building a Armed Forces community within HM prisons. These pilot programmes help with social interaction, rehabilitation and a support structure for veterans who are currently within the criminal justice system.

Find your local AFVBC

Royal British Legion (RBL)

Royal British Legion logo.

As the country's largest armed forces charity, the Royal British Legion offers a large range of support to the community. They offer support after just one day of Service and continually through life, long after Service is over.

The Royal British Legion's online knowledge base can help you find out what support the charity offers and what you could be eligible for as someone who has served.

Find out more about the Royal British Legion

Forces Pension Society

Forces Pension Society logo.

The Forces Pension Society is an independent, not-for-profit membership funded organisation. They act as a pension watchdog for the whole armed forces community and raise awareness about the complexities and benefits of their Armed Forces Pension. The Society empowers its members to make better, well-informed choices about their Armed Forces Pension, and provide members of the Armed Forces Pension Schemes and their partners with personalised pension guidance.

They also work in collaboration with government to ensure the appropriate delivery of your pension, and run a series of roadshows and other educational sessions to better prepare the Armed Forces community on all pension matters.

2025 Unclaimed Pensions campaign

Blind Veterans UK

Blind Veterans UK logo. Copyright: Blind Veterans UK

Blind Veterans UK is the national charity for ex-Service men and women with severe sight loss.

The charity helps blind veterans to learn vital life skills and gives them the rehabilitation, training and support they need to live independent lives.

Veterans and the devolved nations

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Veterans Commissioner (NIVCO) crest.

The Veterans Commissioner provides an independent voice on behalf of veterans and their families living in Northern Ireland on a range of issues, including health, housing, welfare and social interaction.

More information about Northern Ireland's Veterans Commissioner

Northern Ireland Veterans Newsletter

The latest edition of the Northern Ireland Veterans Newsletter is available. It highlights activities and progress across the Armed Forces community in the recent months.

This issue covers the passing of the Armed Forces Covenant motion in the Northern Ireland Assembly and what this means for veterans, serving personnel and their families going forward. It also showcases the continued development of the Thrive Together Veterans Hubs, updates from our podcast series, and a number of inspiring individual endeavours taking place across the region.

Scotland

The Scottish Veterans Commissioner works to improve outcomes and opportunities for veterans and their families in Scotland. This involves influencing policymakers to address any changes required in devolved public services.

More information on the Scottish Veterans Commissioner

The Scottish Government and its Veterans Unit support the veterans and their families in Scotland. Support for the armed forces community - mygov.scot

Follow the Veterans Unit on X

Defence Gardens Scheme Cultivate and Connect workshops

The Defence Gardens Scheme (DGS) has announced the delivery of six Cultivate and Connect workshops at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE), alongside additional sessions being delivered at the Erskine Veterans Centre in Forres between April 2026 and Feb 2027. This expanded programme represents a significant opportunity to combine the therapeutic benefits of nature with the specialist horticultural expertise of DGS and its partners, creating a high-quality wellbeing offer for veterans and their families across Scotland.

Read more about the Defence Gardens Scheme

Wales

The Welsh Government, public sector bodies, the tri-Services, employers and the charitable sector work in partnership provide information and support for Armed Forces personnel, veterans and their families in Wales.

New definition of Service Children

Wales is committed to upholding the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, ensuring that those who serve and their families face no disadvantage in accessing public services. To this extent, the Welsh Government has updated their definition of Service Children:

- [Welsh version](#)
- [English version](#)

Grants and funding

Funding and grants are available for organisations wishing to support the Armed Forces; however, they will not be available for individual support. If you require specific and individual assistance, please get in touch, and we will advise you on the best course of action.

Armed Covenant Fund Trust

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (The Trust) logo.

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (The Trust) funds projects that support the delivery of the nation's covenant promise to our serving personnel, veterans and their families.

The Trust is a charity and is classified as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB). It administers the Armed Forces Covenant Fund, worth £10 million each year.

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund has 4 aims:

1. Providing non-core healthcare services for veterans
2. Removing barriers to family life
3. Supporting serving personnel and veterans who need help
4. Integrating military and civilian communities and allowing the armed forces community to participate as citizens

[Find out about available funding opportunities](#)

[Find out about organisations that have been awarded grant funding](#)

Veterans Foundation

Veterans' Foundation Logo. Copyright: Veterans' Foundation.

The Veterans' Foundation was set up in 2016 to raise funds to help improve the lives of all within the armed forces community who need it. The funds raised are then donated to charities and

organisations that have a real impact on those currently serving, veterans, and their families. These organisations support a range of needs, including mental health, physical therapy and rehabilitation, homelessness and education and training and more.

Charities and charitable organisations find it increasingly difficult to raise the funds they need to continue their vital and often life-changing work and rely on The Veterans' Foundation for grants to support them. That was why retired Major General David Shaw set up The Veterans' Foundation in 2016 and why it has grown to be one of the UK's leading military charities.

Its main fundraising initiative is the Veterans' Lottery - the largest single-cause lottery in the UK - which has granted more than £30 million to charitable organisations that support the armed forces community.

Veteran education

High Ground

HighGround logo.

High Ground helps Service leavers, reservists and veterans assess their military skills and experience and how these apply to the land-based sector. It also offers many opportunities for employment and self-employment.

High Ground offers Virtual Rural Weeks: The virtual week consists of 8 sessions delivered online over a period of three days, giving attendees a general overview of the sector and a chance to ask questions of presenters as well. The sessions tend to include: agriculture, arboriculture, forestry, rural estate management, landscape gardening, self-employment and environmental conservation.

Dates for 2026 virtual rural week:

- Tuesday 26 to Thursday 28 May
- Tuesday 15 to Thursday 17 September
- Tuesday 10 to Thursday 12 November

Register for the virtual rural week

Families and children

Education support is available for veterans and serving families through the following programmes:

- Armed Forces Education Trust - for children and young adults whose education has been compromised as a result of a parents' past or current Service.
- Reading Force - uses reading to bring forces children and families closer together.
- Forces Children Scotland - provides general support for children and young people from Armed Forces families in Scotland.
- Scotty's Little Soldiers - Scotty's Little Soldiers is a charity dedicated to supporting children and young people from 0 to 25 years who have experienced the death of a parent who served

in the British Armed Forces. When a young person joins Scotty's, they become a member and are supported until their 25th birthday. Whether it be one-to-one bereavement support, a respite break with the family, an opportunity to meet others in a similar situation, or access to extracurricular activities, Scotty's is always there for its members to ensure they don't feel alone.

Scotty's Little Soldier logo.

Service Charity Sector: Insight and Engagement

The Confederation of Service Charities logo.

Cobseo (The Confederation of Service Charities), through its membership of Service charities represents the whole serving and Veterans Community. Visit the Cobseo website where you will find the most up to date news, funding opportunities, help and transition guidance for Veterans and their families.

Veterans Awards

Companies and organisations across the UK are celebrated for their support to the Armed Forces community.

The Veterans Awards

The Veterans Awards are open to all Armed Forces veterans, serving reservists and organisations and companies that support or employ people from the Armed Forces community.

Soldiering On Awards

The Soldiering On Awards recognise outstanding achievement in the Armed Forces community.

Soldiering On Awards opens for nominations

The Soldiering On Awards have opened nominations for 2025, marking 15 years of celebrating the remarkable achievements of the armed forces community.

Since its inception the Soldiering On Awards has showcased the resilience, innovation, and commitment of those who serve or support our armed forces community.

Heropreneurs Awards

The Heropreneurs Awards celebrate the achievements of the military and veteran community in a commercial environment.

Contact us

Enquiries

If you have a question about support and services available to veterans, please contact us.

Newsletter

Sign up to our monthly newsletter to stay updated on veterans' news, giving you direct information from around the veteran eco system.

To add your updates to the Veterans News and Communication Hub please contact: CO-COMMS@RFCA.MOD.UK.

Related content

- New Employer Engagement Handbook
- Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA)
- Defence Relationship Management
- Cobseo - the Confederation of Service Charities
- The Strategy for our Veterans
- Veterans Fact Sheet 2020
- An employers' guide to hiring Veterans
- Supporting veterans' transition to civilian life through employment
- Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club
- Northern Ireland Veterans Commissioner
- Scottish Veterans Commissioner
- Wales - Armed Forces and Veterans

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/veterans-news-and-communications-hub>