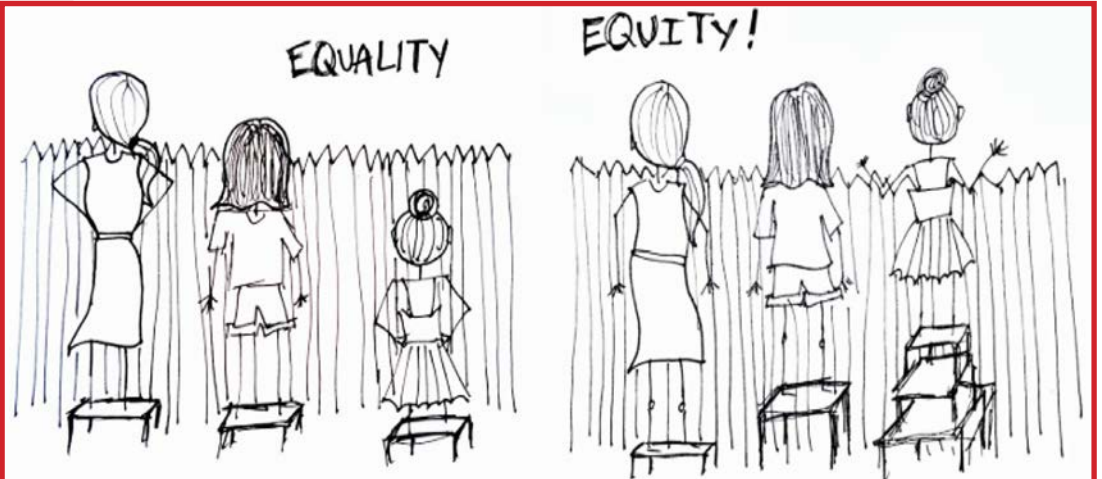


Armed Forces Covenant across Gwent

The Covenant is a promise from the nation ensuring that those who serve and have served in the Armed Forces and their families are treated fairly.

The Armed Forces Covenant is supported at a local level by a partnership agreement between statutory, military and voluntary sector agencies who work together to honour and implement the national Armed Forces Covenant.



The Covenant at a local level aims to:

- Encourage communities to support the Armed Forces community in their areas and to nurture public understanding and awareness among the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community
- Recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces community, including an individual's commitment when serving to potentially be placed in harm's way
- Encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces community into local life
- Encourage the Armed Forces community to help and support the wider community, by participating in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement.

Armed Forces Covenant Training Package

The vast majority of the 2.8 million ex-Servicemen and women living in Britain today have successfully adapted to civilian life, putting the skills and experience they acquired while serving in the Armed Forces to good use. However, a significant minority can be in need of support either at the point of discharge or many years afterwards.

This e-learning has been developed by WPGA. It explains the commitment of the Armed Forces Covenant and how it can be honoured and implemented in the Community. It will help you understand and apply the principles of the Covenant at a local level. It also provides sources of further information and support.

www.covenantwales.wales/e-learning/

If you would like bespoke training for your department please contact:

Lisa Rawlings - Regional Armed Forces Covenant Officer
email: rawlil@caerphilly.gov.uk tel: **01443 864447**

For information of the support that is available for the Armed Forces Community of Gwent the directory is available online:

[www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyDocs/Council-and-democracy/Armed-forces/Armed-Forces-Directory-\(1\).aspx](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyDocs/Council-and-democracy/Armed-forces/Armed-Forces-Directory-(1).aspx)

For a hard copy please email:
armedforces@caerphilly.gov.uk



Updates from your local authority

Blaenau Gwent

Wreath for Uncle George

Carol's Uncle George (George Deveraux Templer) was working in Malaya at the outbreak of World War 2. He enlisted as a Sapper in the Jahore Volunteer Engineers and was captured by the Japanese at the Fall of Singapore. He was subsequently sent to work on the Burma Railway where he died on 21 August 1943. He is buried in Thanbyuzayat CWG Cemetery in Myanmar (Burma).



With VJ Day approaching we wanted a suitable Wreath to lay at Tredegar's Cenotaph and having received our Memorial Pin I thought that it would make an ideal Wreath Centre. I approached Sylvia Bullen-Bell to see if it was possible to obtain a copy of the art work of the pin and was very grateful to be sent a copy of the original.

After a bit of work I was able to enlarge the artwork to the correct size to fit the centre of the Royal British Legion 'C' Type wreath with a solid back plate.

The 'C' Type Wreath is easily taken apart by pulling off the back plate and the new centre, after laminating was glued to the back plate.



As Chairman of Tredegar Branch RBL, we had arranged a short, socially distanced Memorial Service with our Town Council, Reverend Elizabeth Jones and the RAF Air Cadet's Adult Staff at Tredegar's Cenotaph in Bedwellty Park where Carol and I were able to lay the wreath on behalf of the members of the Templer Family.



Coronavirus (COVID-19) Latest information – as at Oct 20

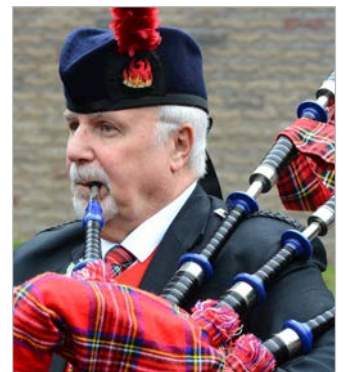
Local intervention measures continue to apply in Blaenau Gwent. For more information go to - <https://gov.wales/blaenau-gwent-county-borough-lockdown-frequently-asked-questions> Local lockdown rules were recently amended in recognition of the emotional toll Coronavirus is having on people who live alone. Adults living alone, including single parents, in areas under local restrictions are able to form a temporary bubble with another household in their local area.

The change is designed to help protect people living alone from the risk of experiencing loneliness and isolation and will enable to them to meet other people indoors – something, which is ordinarily not allowed unless someone has a reasonable excuse anywhere across Wales.\

Caerphilly

Whilst VE Day marked the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, many thousands of Armed Forces personnel were still involved in bitter fighting in the Far East.

Victory over Japan would come at a heavy price, and Victory over Japan Day (VJ Day) marks the day Japan surrendered on the 15 August 1945, which in effect ended the Second World War.



Members of Risca Branch Royal British Legion laid a wreath in commemoration.



VJ Day Ceremony in Rumney



Denzil Connick from Blackwood Armed Forces veteran

LEAVING the armed forces can be a daunting prospect for any serving personnel, as they will have to adjust to the civilian world.

But they do not have to face it alone, as there are many volunteers out there ready and waiting to help armed forces personnel and veterans with whatever they are needing.

Denzil Connick, 63 from Blackwood, has been volunteering for the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) in its Caerphilly county division for the past 26 years.

Mr Connick has a military background as he explains: "I served with 3rd Battalion the Parachute Regiment. I was wounded in the Falklands and medically discharged. SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, supported me when I was discharged, which was a great help to me personally.

“ I was so inspired by my own personal experience as a beneficiary that I decided to help others in need by volunteering for SSAFA. ”

Mr Connick began volunteering in 1994 and is a caseworker for SSAFA Caerphilly county division. Caseworkers visit clients to work out what type of help they need and find the right support for the client and ensure they are able to access it. That can be anything from funds for special equipment to help live with disabilities, adapting a property to allow a client to remain at home, or funds for a rental deposit, but this is not an exhaustive list.

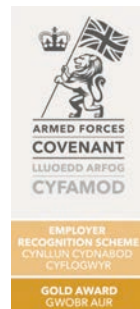
SSAFA also signposts clients to local specialist services for professional advice on varied subjects including benefits, housing, mental health and finding work.

Story by Elizabeth Birt – South Wales Argus

Monmouthshire

Monmouthshire County Council has received a Gold award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. The new accolade represents the council’s continued promise that those who serve or have served, and their families, are treated fairly.

The new status follows a successful bid to move from a Silver Award to a Gold Award. The council has been recognised for proactively demonstrating forces-friendly credentials as part of recruiting and selection processes. The Gold status also means, as an employer, MCC has demonstrated it has actively ensured that their workforce is aware of their positive policies towards issues facing people who are or have served.



The award comes just months after the council reaffirmed its commitment to working with the armed forces community by signing the Armed Forces Covenant. The covenant was signed together with the five Town Councils (Abergavenny, Monmouth, Usk, Caldicot and Chepstow), making Monmouthshire the only local authority in the UK to have the principal authority and all town councils signing the covenant in unison.

As part of the ongoing work to support armed forces communities, colleagues have also been working with schools to raise awareness of Service Children and the potential educational difficulties they may experience by establishing a support network for the armed forces and their families. This includes a Gwent-wide directory of services has been produced in order to provide the Armed Forces Community with a resource which combines all relevant information in one place.

Monmouthshire has an active Armed Forces Forum which meets twice a year and is comprised of statutory services, third-sector organisations, charities and other relevant partners to look at matters impacting the Armed Forces community. The Armed Forces Covenant Fund has £10M a year to fund projects that support the Armed Forces community, which Monmouthshire County Council are happy to work in partnership to deliver.

The themes for the projects include:

- Removing barriers to family life
- Extra support after service for those that need help
- Measures to integrate military and civilian communities and allow the Armed Forces Community to participate as citizens
- Non-core healthcare services for veterans

Councillor Laura Jones, Monmouthshire County Council’s Armed Forces Champion said: "I’m absolutely delighted we’ve achieved a Gold Award for The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. Our continued dedication to supporting our Armed Forces Community and making sure they are treated fairly remains a key priority for us. These individuals put their lives on the line to ensure we are able to live in a safe and fair society, and it’s our duty to ensure we honour them in the same way." More information about the work and projects to support armed forces colleagues in Monmouthshire can be found at:

www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/armed-forces/

Newport

Business Grant administered by Newport City Council has helped a local Veteran expand.

His new venture, Ollywood, employs mainly ex-Forces staff who design and create imaginative, eye-catching installations and furniture for clients around the UK. Such is the demand that Oli plans to take on five full time staff in the next three years, employing ex-Forces and creative people where possible, and working with local colleges to create apprenticeships. Ollywood launched a year ago with the help of a £1,500 Business Support Grant funded by Tata Steel subsidiary UKSE and administered by NewportCity Council.

"The grant was very helpful and enabled us to buy IT equipment and tools. We really appreciate the support we received," said Oli.

The business recently moved to larger premises on the Evtol Trading Estate in Newport to cater for growing demand. As well as commercial work Ollywood has developed and created a range of bespoke, niche furniture which is proving increasingly popular. The three-year target for turnover is £2m, and Oli is confident that this can be achieved. The range of domestic and commercial clients such as The Army, Savills, Chepstow Racecourse, award-winning marketing agencies and major retail centres, is increasing, and strong relationships and collaborations are building with exhibition and design companies.



Designs on growth: from left Martin Palmer Tata Steel subsidiary UKSE, Oli Williams of Ollywood and Leader of Newport City Council Cllr Jane Mudd

Newport City Council is delighted to be a Finalist in the Employer of the Year category of the Welsh Veterans Awards, recognising the work it has done to support members of the Armed Forces Community within the workforce. We look forward to the Awards in March 2021.



Torfaen

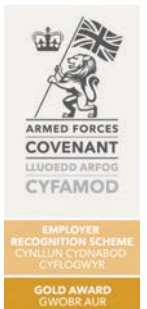
Torfaen council has been named as one of this years' winners of the Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards for demonstrating outstanding support for the armed forces community.

The Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards continues to grow in strength year on year, and this year there were only nine Welsh employers among the 127 awarded Gold. To win an award, organisations must demonstrate that they provide ten extra paid days leave for Reservists and have supportive HR policies in place for Veterans, Reserves, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and Spouses and Partners of those serving in the Armed Forces.

The council has played a key role in establishing and maintaining an Armed Forces Covenant for the county. The Covenant is a pledge, taken by public and private sector organisations, that together they acknowledge and understand that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy and society that they serve with their lives.

Councillor Anthony Hunt, Leader of the council, said: "As an employer, the council recognises the wide range of transferable skills that ex-service personnel can bring to the workplace. We actively strive to make our policies forces-friendly and we advocate that our partners, local businesses and suppliers do the same."

"I am delighted and immensely proud that the council has been awarded the Ministry of Defence's highest employer award in recognition of our commitment to the armed forces community." Councillor Alan Jones, the council's Armed Forces Champion, said: "I am thrilled we won a Gold Award because we work hard to respect and give recognition to the Armed Forces. We are committed to doing what we can in the council to help reservists and their families, and make sure they have access to the full range of support they are entitled to."



Members of the Blaenavon Town Council and Royal British Legion commemorating VJ Day 75.

War Memorial for Croesyceiliog & Llanyrafon

For sometime the Community Council has wanted to create a Remembrance area at its Woodland Road site in Croesyceiliog. The Council took a decision to commit monies to the project pre-lockdown but the project was then delayed by Covid19. It is with considerable pride that the Community Council has announced that its memorial is now complete & a service of dedication will be planned in due course.



AFF

We're here for you

As we all know, life has been a little different for everyone recently.

Here at AFF we have been working hard to carry on providing help and support for Army families around the world.

Life as we know it may have been put on hold, but Army life definitely hasn't stopped. AFF Wales Co-ordinator Sadie has continued to keep in contact with a lot of families and worked hard to help keep spirits high. She has held virtual bingo, virtual coffee mornings, delivered Army&You magazines to families and been there to offer help and support for those serving and their families.

We will help with any issues you have as an Army family. You may have come to a dead-end through your own efforts and are not satisfied with the answers you have been given or perhaps you want to highlight an issue.

Some of the main areas we deal with are:

- Housing
- Health and additional needs
- Education and childcare
- Employment and training
- Foreign and commonwealth
- Army reserve
- Family life
- Deployments
- Money matters

If you would like to get in contact with AFF you can reach Sadie at wales@aff.org.uk or 07527492868



New Regional School Liaison Officer for Service children in East Wales

We are welcoming Caitlin Woodland to her recent appointment as the Regional School Liaison Officer (RSLOs) for Service children in East Wales.

In collaboration with 160th (Welsh) Brigade, Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) Cymru has introduced new RSLOs in Wales, funded from the Armed Forces Covenant – Removing Barriers to Family Life Fund. Each of the RSLOs will cover 5/6 local authorities and will be hosted by four lead local authorities (Isle of Anglesey, Newport, Pembrokeshire and the Vale of Glamorgan). Caitlin is being hosted by Newport City Council and will be covering the local authorities Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and Powys. The RSLOs will be working closely with SSCE Cymru to support schools and local authorities to understand the needs of Service children and identify ways they can provide support.

Caitlin is a fully qualified primary school teacher and has experience teaching in Key Stage 2 and Foundation Phase classrooms in South East Wales, as well as an international school in Prague. Caitlin also recently worked for the University of South Wales' Schools and Colleges Liaison Team. In that role, she was responsible for students in secondary schools and colleges in the Gwent region, delivering and organising activities and events for under-represented groups. Alongside this role, Caitlin completed a Masters in Leadership and Management in Education. Caitlin is thrilled to be a part of the SSCE Cymru team and to be supporting their important mission in helping Service children and their families have the best experiences in Welsh education.

For more information, you can contact SSCE Cymru or Caitlin.

email: SSCE@wлга.gov.uk

www.SSCECymru.co.uk



RSLO East Wales

Caitlin Woodland

07929 861170

Caitlin.woodland@newport.gov.uk

Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly,
Monmouthshire, Newport,
Torfaen and Powys



Pictured left to right:

Nia Williams - RSLO North Wales,

Annabel Harries - RSLO South Wales,

Colonel Nick Lock - Deputy Commander, HQ 160th (Welsh) Brigade,

Caitlin Woodland - RSLO East Wales,

Millie Taylor - SSCE Cymru Programme Manager,

Andrew Williams - SO2 Military Civilian Integration, HQ 160th (Welsh) Brigade.

Welsh Government UPDATE

Remembrance 2020

The Remembrance period is vitally important to us all, in order that we can honour the service and sacrifice of the Armed Forces community.

The Welsh Government fully appreciates that Local Authorities, town and community councils, along with charities and the Military, will be planning Remembrance activity for November 2020 and we want to ensure organisers have as much information available to them in order to plan Remembrance activity safely.

Given the current situation with Covid 19, it is clear that Remembrance this year will look somewhat different to previous years and will have to take account of the current situation, reflecting the regulations in place at the time to limit the spread of the virus. The Welsh Government will be marking the occasion, albeit in amended format, with participation at the opening of the Wales Festival of Remembrance (online) led by the Royal British Legion, and the National Service of Remembrance which will take place in a limited capacity and subject to guidance at the time. On the 7th November there will also be participation in the Memorial service for ethnic minority servicemen & women in partnership with Black History Wales / Race Council Cymru.



In order that organisers can adhere to guidelines and safely plan Acts of Remembrance, we are sharing the **current national and local guidance for Wales** regarding Covid 19. As this is a fast moving situation, we will circulate updates as they happen and **would urge organisers to regularly check and monitor announcements regarding permitted activity relevant to the area**. It is not possible to predict where we will be in November as you will appreciate but we hope the following guidance will help plan activity.

Rules for outdoor gatherings and places of worship, are included in the FAQs and we hope these will help the planning of Acts of Remembrance e.g. At War memorials.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Coronavirus

If you are organising Acts of Remembrance this year, please refer to the current Welsh Government Covid 19 guidance including local and national guidance:

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

<https://gov.wales/local-lockdown>

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-regulations-guidance>

Welsh Government Armed Forces Annual report

The report provides an overview of delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant and support in Wales and is laid in the Welsh Parliament.

It will be published on the 30th September and will be available on the Welsh Government website <https://gov.wales/>

Veterans Scoping Exercise

The Welsh Government and partners continue to take forward the recommendations from the Veterans scoping review (report published January 2020 and available here: <https://gov.wales/veterans-and-armed-forces-scoping-exercise-strategy-report>)

Action groups have been established covering Employment, information and awareness/finance and Transition. Activity to date includes: further promotion of the Forces Families Jobs website; work to develop updated training resource; plans for an Employment event in 2021; work to examine a Wales Resettlement guide, Wales specific support information being circulated direct to MOD for distribution to Serving personnel / those in transition.

Armed Forces Expert group

The group met virtually for the first time on 16th September. Attendees heard from the Tri Service leads in Wales regarding the role of the Armed forces in the pandemic response.

All attendees paid tribute to the work of the Armed Forces and the joint working between health boards, Welsh Government, local authorities and all partners was recognised. The Families Federations provided an overview of current priorities including the 'Living in our Shoes' report. Forces in Mind Trust updated on current research work and the MOD gave an update on Covenant legislation. A standing paper highlighting the work of the AFLOs was circulated including their work towards the shared Key performance indicators. The minutes will be available here in November:

<https://gov.wales/expert-group-needs-armed-forces-community-wales>

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-firebreak-frequently-asked-questions#section-53846>

Coronavirus

During these challenging times, the Welsh Government would like to highlight the support available for individuals and organisations.

Please see the links below Covering support from the Welsh Government, UK Government, Armed Forces Covenant trust, Volunteering Wales, Business Wales and the WCVA:

Welsh Government – Coronavirus webpage:

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

https://llyw.cymru/coronafeirws?_ga=2.217111253.2133943910.1585556202-1165475327.1570627919

Welsh Government - Support for the Third Sector:

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-support-for-the-third-sector>

<https://llyw.cymru/coronafeirws-covid-19-cymorth-ir-trydydd-sector>

Armed Forces Covenant Trust – Covid 19 funding:

<https://www.covenantfund.org.uk/covid-19-response/>

Gwirfoddoli Cymru / Volunteering Wales:

<https://volunteering-wales.net/vk/volunteers/index-covid.htm>

UK Coronavirus Job retention scheme:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-announces-workers-support-package>

Funding Wales:

<https://funding.cymru/pages/coronavirus-latest/>

Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA):

<https://wcva.cymru/coronavirus-statement/>

Business Wales:

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice>

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/financial-support-and-grants>

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/covid-19-grants>

Coronavirus regulations – FAQs:

https://llyw.cymru/rheoliadau-coronafeirws-canol-lawiau?_ga=2.62663532.1967293491.1600772643-1165475327.1570627919

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-regulations-guidance>

Local lockdown information:

https://llyw.cymru/cyfnod-clo-lleol?_ga=2.63662959.1967293491.1600772643-1165475327.1570627919

<https://gov.wales/local-lockdown>

Guidance on leaving your home and seeing other people:

https://llyw.cymru/canllawiau-ar-adael-eich-cartref-gweld-pobl-eraill-coronafeirws?_ga=2.84521945.1771770827.1600963895-599435944.1574850030

<https://gov.wales/guidance-leaving-your-home-and-seeing-other-people-coronavirus>

Coronavirus and the law:

https://llyw.cymru/cyfnod-clo-lleol?_ga=2.63662959.1967293491.1600772643-1165475327.1570627919

<https://gov.wales/local-lockdown>

Veterans Welfare Service in Gwent

Service to clients continues in these difficult times. Clients can contact the Service via Email Veterans-UK-VWS-Wales-Mid@mod.gov.uk and they will receive a prompt response from the Veterans Welfare Centre Kidderminster who will refer to a local Welfare Manager. Additionally support continues nationally as detailed below.

Update from Veterans UK regarding Veterans Welfare Service Support, Defence Transition Services and Integrated Personal Commissioning For Veterans.

To protect our staff and the veterans, Service leavers and families we support Veterans UK have decided to suspend, except in the most exceptional circumstances, all face-to-face meetings with clients.

However, urgent advice, information and support is still available via our helpline service **0808 1914 2 18** and, for less urgent enquiries, via email to Veterans-UK@mod.gov.uk

Please quote your name, national insurance or reference number and contact details and we will be in touch as quickly as we can. Further information about all our services can be found on Gov.uk.

Get involved...

Sign the Covenant

Businesses, charitable organisations and public sector organisations of all sizes who wish to support Gwent's Armed Forces Community can join ... in signing the Covenant.

Each organisation can tailor their own pledge to offer the support they want to provide, each pledge can be unique. Options range from ensuring employment policies support veterans, reservists, and forces' families, offering discounts for services/products through the Defence Discount service and supporting Armed Forces Day every June.



To find out more visit

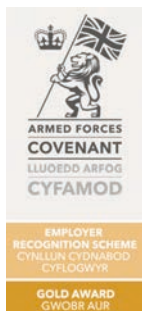
www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk

Defence employer recognition scheme

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same.

The scheme encompasses bronze, silver and gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant.

The ERS is designed primarily to recognise private sector support although public sector organisations such as the emergency services, local authorities, NHS trusts and executive agencies are also eligible to be recognised.



Veterans' Gateway

The first point of contact for veterans seeking support

We put veterans and their families in touch with the organisations best placed to help with the information, advice and support they need – from healthcare and housing to employability, finances, personal relationships and more.

There is a huge network of organisations supporting the Armed Forces community, so finding the right one for your needs can be tricky. We make it quick and easy by being your first point of contact for whatever support you need, whether you are based in the UK or abroad.

Many of our team are veterans themselves so they understand the issues that people face after leaving the Armed Forces. They work with people on a one-to-one basis, connecting them with the right support as soon as possible.

The 24-hour online chat, phone, and text message service brings the Armed Forces support community together in a single place – delivered by a Royal British Legion-led consortium with Poppy-Scotland, Combat Stress, Connect Assist, The Ministry of Defence and SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity.

The service centre, based in Nantgarw near Cardiff, is manned partly by veterans to help ensure that callers can speak to someone who can understand their experience.



VETERANS' GATEWAY

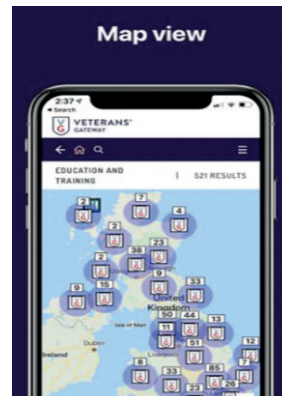
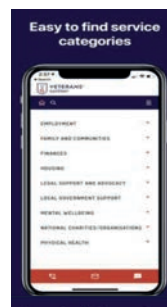
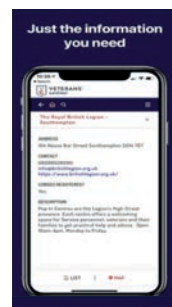
The Veterans Gateway can be contacted by:

- Calling **0808 802 1212** ■ Texting **81212**
- Visiting www.veteransgateway.org.uk

NEWS: The Veterans' Gateway App

The Veterans' Gateway App has now launched which helps veterans find support organisations in their area using their smartphone or tablet. Click here to download the App & access support from finances to employment

<https://bit.ly/2yWFBqV>



Gwent Armed Forces
Champions



Blaenau Gwent Cllr Brian Thomas
Caerphilly Cllr Alan Higgs
Monmouth Cllr Laura Jones

Newport Cllr Mark Spencer
Torfaen Cllr Alan Jones

5 Reasons to employ Veterans in your business...

- 1** Veterans are highly qualified.
- 2** Veterans have valuable attitudes and are adaptable.
- 3** Veterans are skilled workers.
- 4** Veterans make highly effective employees.
- 5** Employing veterans is good for business and society.



Defence Transition Services (DTS)



Defence Transition Services (DTS) is run by the MOD's Veterans UK. It exists to provide information and support for those service leavers and their families who are most likely to face challenges as they leave the armed forces and adjust to civilian life.

DTS deliver a full range of transition support for you, as a service leaver or family member, working directly with you to provide tailored information and guidance. DTS will facilitate access to the support you need, whether that be from other government departments, local authorities, the NHS or trusted charities.

How we help you

If you are a service leaver, who is recognised by their unit as someone who may need extra support on leaving the armed forces, beyond that which is already provided by Defence and the Royal Navy, Army or Royal Air Force, you can be referred to DTS. As a service leaver or family member, you can also self refer to DTS. DTS clients may also be referred to us by Defence contractors, such as the Career Transition Partner (CTP) or by third parties, such as charities or local authorities who have been approached for help.

DTS works with you on a one to one basis, building a trusted relationship in order to fully understand your needs, coordinate the right sources of information and simplify your access to the support you need.

For more information including referral forms please visit:
www.gov.uk/guidance/help-and-support-for-service-leavers-and-their-families

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION WALES IMPACT DATA

OCT 2018 - SEPT 2019

**HANDY VANS
SERVICE CONDUCTED**

Responded to
1229
INCIDENTS
across Wales
91%
were resolved.

826
WELFARE GRANTS
DELIVERED TO CLIENTS
TO THE VALUE OF
£588,003

Benefits Debt Money
Advice Service worked with
135 Clients securing a gain of
£1,500,396

714
VISITS

CARRYING OUT A TOTAL
OF 2,376 JOBS

83
OF OUR MOST
COMPLEX CLIENTS

3 EXTERNAL
GRANTS
awarded to organisations working
with armed forces community across
Wales with a total value of
£99,536

109 CLIENTS
WORKING WITH
INDEPENDENT
LIVING TEAM

8,936 FOOTFALL
at offices and outreach across Wales

176
BRANCHES
WORKING WITH
8589 MEMBERS

War Pensions Team supported
101 CLIENTS
at Tribunals across Wales

This year, Annual Poppy Appeal Raised
£2,229,207

ADMIRAL NURSES
service worked with
175 FAMILIES

54
was the average age
of those we supported
with direct grants

81%
CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION
response rate to post
grant survey



Every year the Legion creates a Remembrance theme as a way of shaping and communicating the different Remembrance activities taking place. N.B. A theme is not the same as a campaign!



The global, national and local impacts of Covid-19 have, though for very different reasons, given rise to many similarities in emotion, feeling and experience between many people today and the Second World War generation whose service and sacrifice 75 years ago bought the Second World War to an end.

While there may not have been any social distancing 75 years ago, familial dislocation, personal loss, isolation, the feeling of being forgotten and a fear of what was to come next, are just some of the ways that we can connect Then and Now.

In doing so we commemorate and remember the millions of British, Commonwealth and Allied men and women whose service and sacrifice secured peace and freedom 75 years ago, and the thousands of men and women today, Armed Forces and key workers, whose service and sacrifice continues to protect us today.

How do we Remember?

While there are historic national and community forms of Remembrance, the Legion does not specify how, where or when people should Remember. The only exception being we ask the nation to be part of the annual two minute silence.



To encourage Remembrance, the Remembrance team has a number of distinct projects:

- Teaching Remembrance
- The Remembrance Glade
- Community/Neighbourhood Engagement

Teaching Remembrance

There are over 60 educational and learning products for key stages 1-5 on the Teaching Remembrance hub rbl.org.uk/teachingremembrance (make this a link)

Assets include:

- Lessons Plans – including First World War plans as it remains on the curriculum
- School Assemblies
- Book clubs
- Whole school activities
- All products are available in Welsh

Additional Resources:

- New Guide and Cadet Remembrance learning activities available
- Remembrance activities available for Scouts for Remembrancetide 2020, with full learning activities to be developed in 2021
- Over 20 films from Second World War veterans available here <https://vimeo.com/showcase/veterans> for you to share and use



The Remembrance Glade

- New Remembrance Glade opened at the NMA in September
 - The Glade represents 21st Century Remembrance; inclusive and personal
 - Glade activity packs will be available in October on the Remembrance website
 - The Glade offers an example of a Remembrance activity people can do at home by creating their own Remembrance space
 - It provides a place of peace and tranquillity where individuals, families, school children and others can come to reflect on what Remembrance means to them
- Find out more at rbl.org.uk/remembrance



Community/ Neighbourhood Engagement

Under current Covid-19 restrictions we have to think differently about our Remembrance engagement and activities. Any new engagement and outreach will be extremely difficult and it may well be necessary to wait until conditions improve before any engagement takes place.

However as the Legion is still at the heart of Remembrance commemorations nationally, we have produced a set of suggested activities that ensure adherence to Covid-19 rules and to provide options for those wishing to undertake Remembrance activities that require relatively little cost or work.

- Have a small Remembrance service in your garden and if you can create a small Remembrance space in your garden by for example planting plants that have a connection to Remembrance
Have a small Remembrance service in your garden and if you can create a small Remembrance space in your garden by for example planting plants that have a connection to Remembrance
- Use zoom/Facebook live event or another appropriate online meeting resource to host an online Remembrance service / activity
- Set-up a community Remembrance forum to discuss different residents' Remembrance stories
- Create an online exhibition of Remembrance related photos from local residents that schools or others could use to discuss local Remembrance activities
- If there is anything else that Remembrance can support you with then please contact the team remembrance@britishlegion.org.uk

Ways to support the 2020 Poppy Appeal

There are more ways than ever that you can support the Poppy Appeal. Your donations help us to provide invaluable support to the Armed Forces community.

Visit your local Supermarket

Supermarkets including Sainsbury's, Tesco, Morrisons, Aldi and Asda stores as well as online retailers including Amazon and eBay, and Lloyds Bank and Santander are supporting this year's Poppy Appeal. There are a variety of cashless donation options at each location with Morrisons and Sainsbury's also offering people the opportunity to add a donation to their shopping bill.

Donate online

From 6 October, when you donate online you'll receive a link to a printable poppy which you can print off and place in your window to show others you're supporting the Poppy Appeal.

Find out more: <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/ways-to-give/donate>

Text to donate

- To donate £2 text **POPPY2 to 70545**
- To donate £5 text **POPPY5 to 70545**
- To donate £10 text **POPPY10 to 70545**

Find out more (inc T&Cs): <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/ways-to-give/donate>

My Poppy Run

Our park run events usually take place in October and November, but these are unable to take place this year due to social distancing measures. Join us instead for My Poppy Run, our virtual event, and support your Poppy Appeal in 2020. Choose to run, jog or walk, maybe take your four-legged friend along too.

Find out more: <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/events/my-poppy-run>

Image: My Poppy Run

Poppy Shop

The Poppy Shop has an extensive range of products, from iconic poppy pins and jewellery, to clothing, stationery, homeware and everything in between. 100% of the profits from the Poppy Shop go towards funding the Legion's ongoing work in supporting the Armed Forces community, serving and ex-serving personnel and their families.

By shopping online at the Poppy Shop this Poppy Appeal, you're helping us to provide vital services and support, from expert guidance and advice, to recovery and rehabilitation.

Find out more: <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/ways-to-give/shop/poppy-shop>

Image: Poppy Shop

Poppies in the Post

Every year, our volunteers distribute over 40 million poppies to help our vital work in supporting the Armed Forces community. Due to COVID-19 this year, many of our volunteers are unable to help. That's why we are asking kind supporters like you to help distribute poppies to your friends and neighbours so that we can continue to support our Armed Forces community in their time of need, ensuring their unique contribution is never forgotten.

Request 20 poppies free of charge by completing the form below. You can then give them to your friends and family and ask them for a donation to support our Armed Forces community.

Along with the poppies, you will also receive information on how you and those you share your poppies with can give as well as how to distribute the poppy safely and ensure everyone can wear the poppy with pride.

Find out more: <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/ways-to-give/poppies-in-the-post>

Printable Poppy

This Poppy Appeal, we want to ensure that everyone can still get their poppy, so we've developed an A4 poster of the iconic Remembrance Poppy that you can download, print, and display at home, perhaps in your front window.



Along with the poppies, you will also receive information on how you and those you share your poppies with can give as well as how to distribute the poppy safely and ensure everyone can wear the poppy with pride.

Download a full colour poster or one that you (or someone you know) can enjoy colouring in: <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/ways-to-give/donate>

THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUND TRUST

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust Makes Grants To Support The Armed Forces Community.

We manage the grant programmes funded by the Covenant Fund. We also run wider funding programmes that support the Armed Forces Community.

The people who benefit from our grants are from the Armed Forces Community. This includes serving personnel, families, veterans and families of veterans.

In some of our programmes, the wider community around a base or in an area with an Armed Forces population can also benefit; as we will support projects on one of our programmes that will help to encourage good relations between Armed Forces and civilian communities.

The NAAFI Fund

The NAAFI Fund makes grants to UK Armed Forces bases, located in the UK or overseas, for projects that improve the quality of life for serving personnel and serving families living on or near a Forces base or station.

Closes 23rd November 2020

Positive Pathways Programme

Part of the Veterans' Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, the Positive Pathways programme funded projects that develop and run activities supporting the mental health and wellbeing of ex Forces.

Closes 12 noon 30th November 2020

Armed forces Covenant Fund: Force for change programme

Using feedback from our open consultation, we have designed a new local grant programme, awarding grants up to £20,000 to projects supporting Armed Forces communities to become less isolated and engage more in their local area.

Closes 30th November 2020

Tackling Loneliness Programme

The Tackling Loneliness programme will address social isolation by targeting specific groups within the Armed Forces community who are traditionally harder to reach.

Closes 30th November 2020

One is Too Many

Part of the Veterans' Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, the One is Too Many programme will award grants of up to £300,000 to two-year projects that aim to reduce suicide risks within vulnerable veterans in a coordinated and targeted way.

Closes noon 14th December 2020

For more information: ww.covenantfund.org.uk/

Welsh Veterans Awards 2020

August 5th saw the Production Company Leek and Potato film our amazing shortlisted finalists from within the iconic and historic Cardiff Castle!

It was a true honour for our team to meet our shortlisted Finalists for the Welsh Veterans Awards in support of the ABF The Soldiers' Charity Wales. During the morning the all shortlisted nominees were issued with their finalist certificates by Nia- Wyn Evans (Hugh James) Pete Davies (ABF The Soldiers' Charity) Samuel T Reddy (Leavers to Leaders) and Sonya Morton Firth (The Sonya Morton Firth Show).

All our team can't wait to hear about your inspiring journeys on the evening itself – March 3rd 2021 at the Village Hotel Cardiff Sponsored by Sinclair Audi Bridgend. Huge thanks

to all the amazing team at the firing line museum and Cardiff Castle for facilitating the filming and the fantastic production company Leek and Potato Productions.

All our team are so excited to celebrate your success! Remember it's you who act as role models for future service leavers!



HAFAL

The Joining Forces Team from hafal, part of the Strategic Partnership Programme has recently been supporting various veteran's charities and other charities working with veterans, to access a pot of money from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust called the Positive Pathways Project.



This money is to provide activities that support veterans with mental health issues and the activities had to fall in to one of four categories:

- **Sports**
- **Arts / Culture activities -**
Such as painting, music or theatre
- **Getting outside -**
For example gardening activities
- **Heritage projects -**
such as conservation or archaeology.

I am pleased to announce out of the eleven from Wales that put forward bids to the final round of funding six were successful!

This gives us a total of thirteen successful projects across Wales that the team will now be working with closely and supporting:

- The Woodlands Recovery Centre
- Cardiff City FC Foundation 'Bluebirds Veterans Project'
- Care & Repair Veterans Community Hub
- Wintergreen UK 'Veterans in Mind Project'
- Swansea City AFC Community Trust with Ospreys in the Community 'In the Squad'
- Bulldogs Armed Forces Veterans
- 65 Degrees North 'Project '20'
- Cais 'Activities for Veterans Wellbeing Wales'
- Age Cymru Ceredigion 'The Wales Veterans Archive'
- Woody's Lodge 'Our Green Grass of Home'
- The VC Gallery 'Art of Memories'
- Alabare Christian Care and Support 'Awyr Lack / Fresh Air'
- Re-Live 'Coming Home to the Arts'

For more information on these projects and the areas they cover, please contact Finola Pickwell at: Finola.pickwell@hafal.org or Tel: 07970 435817

COMBAT STRESS

Self help for mental health - Online resources

'Self Help For Mental Health' Resources for veterans, now live on the Combat Stress website.

There are a range of self-help video and interactive resources, at the moment focussing on low mood, managing anger and alcohol/substance use. Topics going live in the next week or so are PTSD, anxiety, sleep, grief, physical health, resilience and supporting family members.

Below is the direct link in to the materials, you can also navigate from the CS home-page, by clicking the 'Self Help COVID-19' button in the top navigation menu.

<https://www.combatstress.org.uk/mental-health-support-during-covid-19>

Royal Air Force Association

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - GWENT

Could you give a little time to be a friendly face to someone in your community?

Volunteer Befrienders wanted, flexible around you, to make friendly visits to RAF veterans.

COULD YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO SOMEONE'S LIFE? PLEASE GET IN TOUCH.

Contact: volunteers@rafa.org.uk or 0800 018 2361

Find out more about our work at www.rafa.org.uk

ROYAL AIR FORCES Association
The charity that supports the RAF family



There are some amazing charities working closely with the Armed Forces Community. Here's just some of them....

■ Woody's Lodge

COVID-19 and the current environment and restrictions everyone is dealing with is challenging for everyone never mind those individuals who are already having to deal with difficult times but then having isolation restrictions thrust upon makes for very difficult times. To help combat this, Woody's Lodge has been making sure we reach out to our vulnerable personnel, we have been conducting twice weekly virtual social meetings on Zoom, and trying to maintain some resemblance of order to allow Woody's Lodge to sustain our support and assistance to those who require it. Staff have worked tirelessly from home to fulfil our continued commitments to our patrons.

Along with trying to keep business as usual Woody's Lodge has been looking to the future and with the assistance and support from numerous sources, we have been able to increase our staff. With a combination of new and existing staff we now have our "Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity" (RNRMC) Project Office. Our new RNRMC Project Officer Mark Hodgkinson (25 year Veteran of the Armed Forces) took up this position at the beginning of August, along with Keith Taylor our existing Activities officer and Kimberley Edmunds-Jones our Transport Officer, the project office has been able to reach out to veterans within South Wales to provide assistance where they can.



The first and quite crucial support the Project Office was able to deliver during the current environment was in providing some crucial electronic tablet devices to veterans, which will enable them to maintain better contact with friends, family and other veterans from their associations. These tablets were purchased with the assistance of the RNRMC and have provided those who have received them another means of maintaining social interactions during lockdown.

The Project Office will continue to work closely with other organisations to try and improve support to Royal Navy and Royal Marine personnel (Veterans and Serving) within South Wales, as well as continuing to assist in the support of Woody's Lodge many other veterans of the Armed Forces and Emergency Services. Although the countries uncertain and constantly changing COVID-19 situation continues, Woody's Lodge will continue to work hard, maintaining support to all our current and any new patrons in whatever capacity we can.

We wish all veterans the best of wishes and should you find yourself in any difficulty please do not hesitate to reach out to us here at Woody's Lodge. You can find all our information and contact details on our website

www.woodyslodge.org

Virtual Coffee Mornings

Held every Tuesday and Thursday 11 - 1pm

These will be running for the foreseeable over Zoom

A link via social media is sent the day before.



RM Veteran Colin Williams of Swansea (Centre) receiving a tablet courtesy of Woody's Lodge & RNRMC. Pictured with: Project Officer Mark Hodgkinson (Left) & Activities Officer Keith Taylor (right).



■ Help for Heroes

Help for heroes launches recovery college support for veterans.

Since the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic, Help for Heroes' Community Recovery Team, based in Treforest, has adapted their service delivery to ensure that wounded veterans and their loved ones are still able to access support across the region.

The mental health toolkit, The Field Guide to Self-Care, has been made available in Welsh and English on the charity's website and is accessible to anyone who is struggling with the challenges of our new way of life.

Case Managers and the Veterans' Clinical Liaison Nurse are delivering bespoke services on an individual basis, via video messaging and telephone, to ensure the health and welfare needs of our Armed Forces community are not forgotten.

Referrals can be made to Help for Heroes' Hidden Wounds service, for wounded veterans and their loved ones to access psychological support, on a case-by-case basis.

Help for Heroes has also introduced its virtual Recovery College, the first of its kind, designed specifically for wounded veterans and their families.

The Recovery College officially launched at Tedworth House Recovery Centre in September 2019 with a pilot course and the charity had planned to expand its delivery this autumn. But with Covid-19 putting a hold on that for now, the courses will be delivered virtually instead, and ten modules have been converted into online courses that veterans and their families can access on the Help for Heroes website. Course Development Lead Mike Lee has been instrumental in setting up the Recovery College. With a military background of over 30 years, he knows first-hand the challenges veterans face.

He said: "Recovery is about finding ways to live a secure, healthy and fulfilled life, despite the challenges of an ongoing injury or illness. When someone's military career comes to an end due to medical reasons, the future can seem overwhelming. This is why we created our Recovery College."



Mike has spent the past few months developing courses that achieve the college's aim; to give veterans the confidence and understanding to achieve their recovery goals.

He added: "All our courses help veterans take steps in their recovery journey that put them in control of their future. These are educational recovery courses, rather than vocational courses that lead to qualifications."

"We look forward to the day when we can run our courses face-to-face but due to the restrictions caused by coronavirus, this isn't possible yet. In the meantime, we've been working hard to deliver as many of the courses as we can virtually.

"The Recovery College is designed to help veterans to understand themselves better and the uniqueness of their personal recovery journey; to identify their next steps and equip them with the tools necessary to achieve their ambitions."



The Help for Heroes Recovery College is being introduced at a time when many of those we support need us more than ever. In the same way that all of us will need to adjust to a new normal, our veterans have the added complexity of continuing to deal with their physical and mental conditions under these difficult circumstances.

"The team and I are excited to see the difference it will make to the lives of our veterans and their families." Mike says.

What makes the Help for Heroes Recovery College unique is the fact that all courses have been co-produced, by recovery staff and veterans. The expertise of staff and the experiences of veterans allows for a blend of different ideas and perspectives within a course. It ensures the College remains student focused and Help for Heroes can listen, respond, and involve students in their own recovery by asking them to design course.

One veteran involved in the co-production process was Mark Hepworth, 42, who served in the Kings Royal Hussars for 23 years before medically discharged in 2017 with PTSD.

■ Help for Heroes

"During my service I was fortunate to serve in most operational theatres. Unfortunately, it was during these tours that I sustained my mental injuries. PTSD has massively impacted my family, friends and life. It is difficult to live with, it affects every aspect of life."

Soon after discharge, Mark was signposted to Help for Heroes and despite a lot of hesitation, he said this "was soon dispelled by the fantastic team at Tedworth House."

On co-producing some of the Recovery College courses, Mark said: "My military experience, my discharge and my own business have allowed me to offer some guidance and support to help make the recovery college a fantastic opportunity for service leavers and injured soldiers."

"The programme takes an injured service person/veteran and is structured to an individual's recovery plan. Recovery starts the moment a person takes hold of their injuries and therefore the structure of the recovery college can assist with a developing recovery journey."

My message to anyone who has suffered any form of injury is to be kind to yourself, take each and every day at a time and start with small recovery goals. The recovery college can help you with planning your recovery and the staff are amazing."

Mark said through his previous access to Help for Heroes support, he has felt armed with strategies and coping mechanisms to help manage his mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic. He feels the Recovery College will help those who may be struggling with the uncertainties which exist in today's world.

"Enrolling in the Recovery College will give people the opportunity to empower themselves, to take back a small element of control and stability and a more normal life. Injuries are life changing but don't have to totally life limiting."

"I am proud to have supported the production of the Recovery College, it is my desire to continue to support our veterans in whatever capacity that I can."



To access the online Recovery College courses, go to:

www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/recovery-college

Access the Field Guide to Self-Care at:
helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/mental-health-and-wellbeing/a-field-guide-to-self-care/

Contact the Community Recovery team by emailing: wales.supporthub@helpforheroes.org.uk

As a charity, Help for Heroes relies on public donations for 97% of income, but this has reduced hugely over recent months with all planned face-to-face fundraising events and activities since April either cancelled or postponed. To ensure we are there for the Armed Forces community in the future please support our fundraising at:

www.helpforheroes.org.uk/give-support/



**FOR HELP OR ADVICE
AT THIS TIME, GET IN
TOUCH WITH OUR TEAM**
wales.supporthub@helpforheroes.org.uk
#StrongerTogether

HELP for HEROES
SUPPORT FOR OUR WOUNDED

■ Hire a Hero

Hire a Hero along with 8 other business in Wales have been awarded the prestigious Gold Award, Business News Wales have released an article which includes all the businesses and organisations that have been awarded the Gold.

<https://businessnewswales.com/nine-welsh-employers-recognised-for-supporting-the-armed-forces/>

We are so very proud that we have achieved the Gold Award.



■ All Call Signs

All Call Signs is a peer support network for veterans and service personnel living with mental ill health. Our Case-worker & Beacon platforms support hundreds of at risk members of the armed forces community each year and our marketing channels help millions more in improving their mental health and gaining access to support services.



VETERAN'S MENTAL HEALTH IS IMPORTANT. WE FIGHT EVERY DAY TO IMPROVE YOUR ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTHCARE:

At All Call Signs our goal is to use technology and the power of community to improve the mental health of servicemen, women & veterans. Our hope is that this will manifest in a healthier, happier life for individuals suffering with mental health issues and will reduce the number of self-harm incidents and suicides in the military community. The RAP process is a technology-led attack against PTSD, depression & anxiety.

■ RFEA - The Forces Employment Charity

Thousands of veterans are celebrating securing meaningful employment in civilian roles, thanks to the Ex-Forces Programme, delivered by RFEA – The Forces Employment Charity. The unique Ex-Forces Programme is available to all service leavers, reservists and veterans, irrespective of circumstances, rank, length of service or reason for leaving and offers regionally based, comprehensive career advice and job opportunities. The programme has recently received a significant boost from ABF The Soldiers' Charity, of £267,000, which will enable RFEA to continue its ongoing support to the veteran community, which last year helped 19,758 ex-Military personnel.

Mark Lightowler, a former Army Captain, secured a lucrative Operations Manager role after seeking help from RFEA. He says:

"From the very first call I had from RFEA it was so very refreshing to hear and to speak to someone who spoke 'the language' and understood the needs and challenges of veterans looking for work in a civilian world. My Advisor is a very personable individual who offered sound advice, however, by far the most important attribute that RFEA demonstrated was taking the time to care, to really care.

"My Advisor phoned and/or emailed regularly with updates, details of employment seminars or with inspiring, uplifting and very welcome words of encouragement. He helped by giving some guidance on my CV construction so that it delivered the desired impact and tone with potential employers, by forwarding me job opportunities that were geared towards my skills and qualifications and by helping me identify employers that had signed the Armed Forces Covenant and were, therefore, more open to receiving applications from ex-Forces.

"Prior to starting my new job I had been off work for 6 months following a serious motorcycling accident. This meant that I was facing some financial difficulties and I don't mind admitting my mental health was also taking a knock. When I received my job offer these difficulties melted away in an instant. It was a big relief not only for me but also my wife and family too. Not only had my new job given me the opportunity to feel a of worth again, but the social interaction I now have with my peers and subordinates alike means that I look forward going into work daily. Furthermore, I enjoy the fact that I am making a positive difference both in terms of work and in the lives of those that work for me. It's a great feeling.

"I whole heartedly and unequivocally recommend the services of RFEA to all veterans looking for meaningful work and to employers who seek to enhance their workforce by recruiting some of the very best, loyal and trustworthy people our society has to offer – our veterans."

Alistair Halliday, RFEA's Chief Executive, adds: "The Ex-Forces Programme is there for all veterans and reservists who need help to find work once they have left the Armed Forces. This means that later in life, if veterans face redundancy, underemployment, or difficulties fitting into a new work culture, we can help them. Serving in the Armed Forces means shorter relevant industry experience and less understanding and practice at the recruitment process than the civilians veterans are competing with for jobs. Our programme provides an essential safety net beyond transition from the Armed Forces and we are so grateful to ABF The Soldiers' Charity for the continued support we have received to enable RFEA to carry out this essential work."

Brigadier (Ret'd) Robin Bacon, Chief of Staff, ABF The Soldiers' Charity adds: "Meaningful employment plays a major role in ensuring veterans and their immediate families can live a life of independence and dignity and we see RFEA's Ex-Forces Programme as playing a vital part in helping them achieve that. We are delighted to be able to contribute to such a worthwhile initiative that reaches so many.



■ Cardiff City FC Foundation

Cardiff City FC Stadium gave permission to access the stadium with social distancing to celebrate Armed Forces Day on 27th June 2020 with veterans from the CCFC Veterans Hub and members of the Royal Welsh Regiment Regimental Support Team. The flag was later placed on the terraces along with other fans and supports flags for when the club played home games in the empty stadium due to coronavirus.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Elaine Williams for all the support she has given to the CCFC Veterans Hub over the past two years who is now moving on to pastures new, good luck for the future.



Veterans Matchday Hub

The Hub provides a safe and relaxed environment for Veterans, current and ex-servicemen and women to get together to talk about football and share experiences, helping to combat loneliness and mental health issues.

Located at Block 111 in the Ninian Stand, the Hub is open to all current and ex-servicemen and women as soon as the gates open on a matchday.

They are now supporting veterans with health and wellbeing, with organised activities with a physical, historical or educational value. Including regular catch up at the stadium or online. The matchday hub has been put on hold at the moment due to COVID-19 but we are hoping to restart it again once restrictions are lifted. Also hoping to restart Health and Wellbeing support for veterans in Prison once this is over.



CHANGE STEP NEWID GAIM

VJ DAY BACKYARD SLEEPOUT

12th - 19th of August

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO TOOK PART







Whether you spent the whole week or a single night outdoors, we are grateful for all of the donations you helped raise for Change Step in honour of VJ Day's 75th anniversary.

We are also grateful to all those who donated!


You helped us raise over

£1,400!

We even went international...



With a video shoutout from author, Bomb Technician and Motivational Speaker, Chris Hunter, who got involved all the way from Iraq where he and his team are currently clearing improvised explosive devices left behind by ISIS.



8 November

REMEMBRANCE DAY

BTM Community Council agreed at their Full Council Meeting recently, that there will be no formal Parades or Services organised by the Community Council this year due to the ongoing Covid pandemic and regulations, which prohibit social gatherings.

It was further agreed to purchase three Wreaths from The Royal British Legion. These will be laid at a suitable and safe manner by a Representative of the Community Council.

All Members will mark the day by paying their own private respects, which will be dependent on regulations and personal circumstances on the day.



Lest we Forget

■ SSAFA

Soldiers, sailors, airmen and families association

The dramatic start of the lockdown greatly affected the way SSAFA Gwent carried out its work. At the drop of a hat we had to close our Branch and Newport Divisional Offices in Newport as well as Case Workers being unable to have face to face workers with clients. Branch members could only communicate via telephone or email. Despite a number of early problems, we as a branch have adapted to the situation and to keep our core role of case work going. Zoom, Microsoft TEAM and emails have now become the norm. One good point is that we have somehow managed to recruit more volunteers during lock down and amazingly SSAFA central Office has even got them trained up remotely on line. Covid 19 will of course change the way we have to work forever but I do feel in some ways this may be a good thing. Although SSAFA central Office have had to furlough some staff and have others working from home, we have continued to have excellent support and guidance. Cases referrals have come in at a steady pace and at the moment we have not been in a position where we have had to put someone on hold or refer to another agency. We do suspect that case work will increase in the future as job losses take hold.

All in all, a very trying time but SSAFA Gwent have risen to the challenge and adapted to a new way of operating. We do however look forward to getting back to some form of normality.

SSAFA Gwent is part of the national SSAFA armed forces charity which covers the whole of the UK. It helps Serving Personnel and Veterans, as well as their dependants who are in need. Nationally it has over 5000 voluntary caseworkers and last year it dealt with over 35,000 requests for assistance. This meant SSAFA was able to help over 82,000 members of the Armed Forces Community, serving and veterans.

SSAFA Gwent is made up of three Divisions covering the whole of the Gwent area. We presently have 25 case workers and we are always on the lookout for enthusiastic people who would like to join the team and work in a variety of posts such as case worker, helper, treasurer as well as fundraiser. Full training is given and all volunteers have full support at local and national levels. All expenses while carry out SSAFA work are refunded.

If you feel you are up to the challenge and would like to take part in this very rewarding work as well as learning new skills then please make contact with:

Alan Denman MVO MBE,
SSAFA Gwent, Raglan Barracks, Newport NP20 5XE
tel: 01633 246269 / 0207 403 8783
email: alan.denman@gwent.ssafa.org.uk

Be a force for our forces Be a SSAFA volunteer

At SSAFA you'll be joining a dedicated team on the frontline of volunteering. You'll be working closely with local veterans, serving personnel and their families to make a positive difference to their lives. You will be part of a team that directly helps our Armed Forces community. Roles available include secretary, treasurer, fundraiser caseworker along with many more.



Join us today and be part of something extraordinary.

Call **0800 0325612**

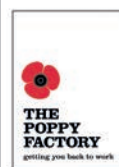
Email volunteer.support@ssafa.org.uk

Visit ssafa.org.uk/newrecruits



■ The Poppy Factory's

The Poppy Factory's mission is to support wounded, injured and sick veterans on their journey into employment and to continue supporting them whatever challenges they may face. Four out of five of the veterans we work with report a mental health condition.



Are you ex-Forces?

Is a physical or mental health condition making it tough to find a job?

The Poppy Factory is here to help you. We support hundreds of veterans with disabilities back into meaningful work across England, Wales and Northern Ireland every year.

We provide:

- 1:1 support to prepare you for work
- Assistance in CV preparation
- Local job searching
- Interview skills
- Guidance on how to share information with employers about a disability or a criminal conviction.

For more information please call 020 8939 1837 / 020 8939 1877 or visit www.poppyfactory.org



Reg Charity No.225348



■ The Poppy Factory's

Our one-to-one employability service is veteran-centred and helps people of all ages, including many over 50. The men and women we support move into a wide range of jobs across many different sectors, from logistics and construction to the charity sector and health care. Support is provided remotely by telephone and by email, with video calls wherever possible. We are here to help veterans with health conditions navigate the challenges of today's employment market and move back into meaningful and sustainable work.

If you are supporting any individuals who are unemployed or have a redundancy date please do send them our way as we are still accepting referrals for support. Since the COVID19 Pandemic started we have supported over 100 individuals with health conditions back into work. The Poppy Factory is not an accredited healthcare provider and as such our consultants will not be able to advise veterans on any specific health concerns they may have. Any veterans who have concerns about the virus or their own personal health should follow the latest NHS guidance at <http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus>

Employment support during coronavirus

Supporting veterans looking for employment

As we all continue to weather the coronavirus crisis. The Poppy Factory's employability service is here to support veterans with health challenges on your journey towards work. Employment support is available to veterans with health conditions.



"Picking myself up and asking for help was a massive thing.

The support from The Poppy Factory just kept me going."

Vicki, Logistics Manager

"My PTSD is kind of unwinding now and I'm fitting in more, but I'm not quite there yet.

My working hours are really good for me."

Will, HGV Driver



Find out more -
www.poppyfactory.org



REMEMBRANCE DAY

LEST WE FORGET

WITH many Remembrance Sunday parades cancelled this year to prevent the spread of coronavirus a different commemoration is being proposed

Doorstep Silence
We are encouraging all residents to stand on their doorstep at 11am and honour the 2-minute silence

BTM Poppy Decoration
Lamp posts around the #BTMarea will be decorated with poppies and we are encouraging local households and businesses to make their own remembrance poppies to display in windows

Hang your poppy in your window to show your support for the armed forces community and make sure you share your pictures with us and on social media using the hashtags #NeverForgotten and #BTMRemembers so we can share them with our social media followers

Find your local War memorial
Residents are encouraged to visit the war memorials in the BTM area, to lay a wreath or show their respects individually during the weekend

Share your photos with us paying your respects at the memorials on social media using the hashtags #NeverForgotten and #BTMRemembers

SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER

A Volunteering Opportunity



Would you like to **volunteer** to support someone who is **lonely** or socially isolated?

Ffrind i mi/Friend of Mine is a partnership approach to combatting loneliness and social isolation across our communities. **Loneliness** can affect anyone, at any time and at any age.

Ffrind i mi/Friend of Mine provide a robust volunteer recruitment process, all our volunteers will have:

- DBS check at **no cost** to the volunteer
- Occupational Health Check
- Reference check
- **Free** training
- Volunteer Peer **Support**

For more information please contact the **Ffrind i mi / Friend of Mine** team:

- ☎ 01495 768645
- ✉ Ffrindimi.abb@wales.nhs.uk
- 🌐 www.ffrindimi.co.uk
- 🐦 @FfrindIMI



TAKE YOUR CAREER TO NEW HEIGHTS



MA in Professional Practice

Using your Military Experience

Achieve your full potential

Using your previous military history and experience you can achieve all of the following:

- Post Graduate Certificate in Professional Practice 60 credits at level 7
- Post Graduate Diploma in Professional Practice 120 credits at level 7
- MA in Professional Practice 180 credits at level 7

Modular Solution

The British Training Board have partnered with The Wales Academy for Professional Practice and Applied Research to facilitate HE learning and qualifications. You can study at your own pace. Gaining credits from your previous military history using the British Training Board "Skills Translator" and your Certificated learning from your CLM and other courses.

Each Award has its own Graduation ceremony

info@britishtrainingboard.org.uk
www.britishtrainingboard.org.uk



614 (County of Glamorgan) Squadron RECRUITING NOW IN YOUR AREA 02920 428050

- 20 Different ground based roles
- Competitive rates of pay
- Exciting opportunities
- World class training



Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club*

■ Blaenau Gwent

Combined Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club

Brewers Fayre, Victoria Business Park, Waun-Lwyd, Ebbw Vale, NP23 8AN

Ray Taylor: **07746 043666** Jim Warnock: **07523 582945**

email: cafvinc@gmail.com

- Fourth Saturday of each Month 09.30 onwards.

■ Caerphilly

Combined Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club

Toby Carvery, Corbett Lane, Pwll-Y-Pant, Caerphilly, CF83 3HX

- Every Saturday. Tel: **029 2086 7049**

■ Monmouthshire

Combined Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club

Brewers Fayre, Westgate, Abergavenny, NP7 9LH

Tel: **01873 776294**

- Meet 1st Saturday of the month from 09.30 am onwards.

Coach & Horses, Chepstow

Tel: **07539268440** email: Davefoxfordbrown@gmail.com

- Meet 1st Saturday of the month from 09.30 am onwards.

Robin Hood Inn, 124 Monnow Street, Monmouth NP25 3EQ

Ray Taylor: **07746 043666** Jim Warnock: **07523 582945**

email: cafvinc@gmail.com

- Meet 3rd Saturday of Each Month - 09:30 onwards.

■ Newport

Newport Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club

The Potters Pub, 22-24 Upper Dock Street, Newport, NP20 1DL

Phone: **01633 223311** (Mark Hayden - Venue's number)

Email: Newport_AFVBC@outlook.com

- Meet 1st Saturday of the month from 9.00am onwards.

- Meet 3rd Wednesday of the month from 09.00am onwards.

■ Torfaen

Torfaen Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club

The Crows Nest, Llangorse Road, Llanyravon, Cwmbiran, NP44 8HU

Phone: **07887 566048** Iain McGregor

- Meet 2nd Saturday of the month from 9.00am onwards.

* Please note that many may be on hold due to current covid 19 restrictions.

Heritage Centre

Now Open to Visitors



Wednesdays 11am - 3pm

Saturdays 11am - 3pm

Next to the Old Gate to Beachley Barracks

Everybody Welcome
Come and enjoy a significant
piece of local history

Contact Telephone: **07501 237052**

Community & Veteran Groups

■ Band of Brothers and Sisters Fellowship Hub

One-to-One Advice and Sports Recovery monthly sessions:
Newport Sports Village - 2nd Tuesday of every month, 11:30 - 14:30
 One-to-One Advice and model-making: Treforest Help for Heroes
 Community Recovery Office. Fourth Tuesday of the month 10:30 - 13:30.

■ Change Step Wales

Change Step offers effective support for veterans in Wales - including dedicated services for those in crisis, older veterans, and people with mental health and substance misuse needs.

Drop ins:

Caerphilly Coffee Morning is the first Tuesday every month from 10:00hrs-12:00hrs Cedar Tree.

Tredegar Coffee Morning is the 3rd Tuesday every month from 10:00hrs-12:00hrs in Tredegar Library.

Blaenavon Coffee Morning is the First Wednesday every month from 10:00-12:00hrs in Blaenavon Surgery and Resource Centre.

■ CADESA (Cwmbran and District Ex-Services Association)

Ex service personal from all three services who meet every Wednesday evening at the Army Reserve Centre, Ty Coch Way, Cwmbran, at approx. 19:30hrs. **email:** bryncarr@hotmail.com

■ Caerphilly Royal British Legion

The Caerphilly and District Branch of the Royal British Legion meeting bi-monthly on the third Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the Caerphilly Visitor Centre, Lower Twyn Square, Caerphilly (next meeting is in January). The branch are always looking for new members... so if you're interested, please do come along!

You can also follow Caerphilly Branch of the Royal British Legion on Facebook by searching 'Royal British Legion Caerphilly Branch'.

■ Caerphilly Royal Welsh Veterans Association

We are a VETERANS group which meet the last Monday of every month at 1900 hrs. All arms are welcome, with lots going on so if you have a few hours to spare come along as there is lots going on.

Municipality Club, Market St, Caerphilly, CF83 1NX

■ Comrades of the Great War (Pontypool) Club

Date and times / location of meetings

Meetings held every 1st Tuesday of the month at 19:30 and generally finish around 20:30. Please contact Secretary - Caroline Coombes for more information, we welcome new members Military / Ex- service men and civilian members. Chairman - Bruce Kilshaw.

Contact Details: Ms Caroline Coombes - Branch Secretary.
 Market St, Pontypool, Gwent NP4 6JNR Tel: **01495 762093**
 Mobile: **07871974023** email: carolineclues62@gmail.com

■ Gwent RBL Contact

Contact: Gordon Hill - Gwent County Secretary
 Royal British Legion. Tel: **07855 402493**

■ Help For Heroes

Help for Heroes Community Recovery Team supports serving personnel, veterans and their loved ones who are wounded, injured and sick in Wales & Hereford. We work with local organisations and other charities partners to ensure that we can support those affected by their military service, across the country. Complementing the facilities on offer at Help for Heroes national Recovery Centres, our expert team delivers tailored holistic support at accessible locations within the community.

Contact: 01443 808910 **Twitter:** @H4HWales

Facebook: Help for Heroes Community Recovery Wales

■ Newport

The Maindee Con Club, 26-28 Fair oak Terrace, NP19 8FG

Meets on the first Tuesday of every month. We exist to have fun, provide a social and welfare network for our members and maintain great Royal Navy traditions. We welcome current and former Royal Naval Service personnel, their families and friends and anyone who supports our Royal Navy.

Contacts: Ken Lowe, Chairman

Peter Grey, Secretary admin@newport-rna.co.uk

Webpage: [Newport RNA](#)

■ Newport Veteran

Drop in every Friday 12-2pm. Bar Amber 36A Clarence Pl, Newport.

■ Rogerstone Royal British Legion

Meets 1st Friday of the month at 19:30 for a 20:00hrs start, at Rogerstone and Bassaleg Social Club, Tregwilym Road, Rogerstone, Newport.

■ Royal British Legion

Pop In Centres are the Legion's new High Street presence. Each centre offers a welcoming space for Service personnel, veterans and their families to get practical help and advice. You will also find representatives from Combat Stress and RFEA in some of the centres to help with your questions or needs.

Your local drop in:

18-19 High Street, Cardiff CF10 1PT 10am to 4pm, weekdays.

■ Royal Engineers Association (Newport and Cwmbran District Branch)

Army Reserve Centre, 100 Field Squadron (M), Chapman VC House, Ty Coch Way, Cwmbran. NP44 7HB.

Meetings: First Tuesday of each month starting at approx. 20:00hrs

■ Royal Navy Association (Chepstow & Districts)

RNA Chepstow & District Branch, Conservative Club & RBL, 10 Moor Street, Chepstow, Gwent, NP16 5DD

Meetings: We meet on the second Thursday of every month at 8pm. (Except August).



Follow us on: Facebook Gwent Armed Forces Community & Twitter
@GwentAFC page that promotes the work & events for the Armed Forces Community!

BLESMA - Service Update

The Limbless Veterans (Wales and West)



Service Update -Blesma, The Limbless Veterans (Wales & West)

Blesma Wales have stopped all local activities until further notice but are still providing direct welfare support and offering grants to our members and widows to ensure that their needs are met quickly. The Support Officer (Tom) is also be dealing with Prosthetics issues and liaising with ALACs as usual in support of our members. The Support and Outreach Officers, along with the help of Blesma Volunteers and Members who are not 'at-risk,' are supporting with essential tasks such as shopping, paying bills, repairs to disability and mobility aids etc and offering befriending calls and contacts through Welfare and wider Volunteers. Blesma are working and collaborating closely with other services, 3rd sector, agencies and local community groups to provide help with War Pension, benefits and other entitlements issues, and are offering practical or emotional support to Blesma members who may be isolated or lonely in communities across Wales.

Support In Our Area

In all aspects it is, as far as possible, "business as usual" with physical visits by Blesma Support Officers, Outreach Officers, volunteers and Welfare Representatives replaced by phone and video calls, with some staff even organising virtual events to replace physical get-togethers. Blesma has also developed online and video activities, reading groups and many other initiatives – including our **free Making Generation R Digital Resilience Resource** available for all secondary schools: <https://blesma.org/making-generation-r/>

Currently, the Blesma Support Officer will still carry out home visits in essential cases only, unless of course there is a clear risk. Regular contact with our more isolated and vulnerable members is priority. Blesma Wales are also connecting our digitally excluded members by issuing iPads, Samsung tablets and Kindles wherever appropriate.

Activities and Events

Blesma has postponed all UK and Overseas Blesma Events until at least the end of June. All Activities and Events into July and August are under review. Local events are similarly affected, and Members are being contacted and updated accordingly. The Outreach Officer is carrying out virtual activities with members, including weekly Tea and Toast, Escape Rooms, Quiz's, and online lunches.

Information for our Members and Supporting Agencies

Please know that Blesma will continue to support its Members in all the ways it can. Ours is an Association founded on a strong sense of community, and this community is more important now than ever. If members require any additional support at this time or if agencies wish to refer a veteran for Blesma support (or find a Blesma member or widow in need) they can contact:

Blesma Support Officer:
Tom Hall - tel: 077 8016 5085
e-mail: bsowest@blesma.org

More Information here: <https://blesma.org/news-media/blesma-news/> or www.blesma.org

Veterans NHS Peer Mentor Support at **Newport Veterans Hub**

Aim: Best use of Peer Mentor to support recovery and improvement of mental health needs of veterans currently on the treatment waiting list.

Target patient group: Veterans who have been assessed by veterans therapist and have been taken on by the team for treatment for service related difficulties. Within this group, those who are deemed to be benefitted from having short term self-guided therapy and/or low intensity intervention, including behaviour activation, social inclusion and physical activities based interventions. Veterans who understand and are willing to engage in such interventions.

Case Management: Discussions held between the therapist and the peer mentor to ensure that a joint agreement of suitability as well as intervention goals are established before any engagement. Veterans to be informed that the peer mentor programme is set up as a short term therapeutic intervention to help with their recovery. Peer Mentor should engage with the veterans regularly, during which they will try to use appropriate online programmes/mobile apps (Digital Inclusion), behaviour experiments, social activities, physical activities,

psychoeducation etc, to improve resilience and encourage self-healing. Veterans therapist responsible should review the veterans after 3 sessions and provide brief solution focused therapy to encourage further progress. I also refer to other agencies whom have specialist skills that may be able to provide support to the veterans and do joint meetings with organisations to discuss and provide all round support for the individual. Therefore ensuring the individual receives bespoke care.



The British Training Board

About us

We at The British Training Board are a Community Interest Company which passionate about helping people still serving in the Military and Veterans alike. Our community is the Armed Forces and public services community. Our goal is to make the training and skills you achieved in the Armed Forces and other public bodies recognized by civilian employers and get you the best start on the way to your second career and to help you with your qualifications while still serving.

A recent success

We have recently employed in three Veterans and one Veteran family member into our place of work thanks to a fantastic funding opportunity we had received. This has been a great success because it means that we have successfully given jobs to four more personnel in need of work.

Our Services

We have a wide range of career development pathways including the UK's only Military Skills Translator. We can take your Military Skills and Qualifications and translate them into Industry recognized civilian qualifications to help Veterans when in their transition phase to get better jobs. The transition is very tough for most Military Personnel which is why we want to make it easier.



Veterans TV

We are a part of a Military dedicated Facebook Page called Veterans TV. This is a page that gives other Veterans an opportunity to see what is out there and also has newsletters of activities and helpful information about Veterans. We also offer a FREE interview for other Veteran owned companies to come on and promote their business to others in order to help support them and what they do.

Contact information

Phone Number: **01792 709 287**

email Address: **admin@britishtrainingboard.org.uk**

Website: **www.thebtb.co.uk**

“Training Is The New Time Off”



COVID 19 CHANGES TO SERVICE

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/en/resident/emergencies-crime-prevention/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-information/

Caerphilly County Borough Council www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Coronavirus

Newport City Council www.newport.gov.uk/en/Council-Democracy/Coronavirus-COVID-19.aspx

Monmouthshire County Council www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/services/planning-for-emergencies/coronavirus/

Torfaen County Council www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/AboutTheCouncil/Homepage-Stories/COVID-19-Coronavirus.aspx

Armed Forces Covenant across Gwent

The Covenant is a promise from the nation ensuring that those who serve and have served in the Armed Forces and their families are treated fairly.



Lisa Rawlings Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer Penallta House, Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed CF82 7PG

☎ **01443 864447**

☎ **07717 467341**

@ **armedforces@caerphilly.gov.uk**

✉ **rawlii@caerphilly.gov.uk**

📘 There is now a **Facebook** and **Twitter @GwentAFC** page that promotes the work & events for the Armed Forces Community!