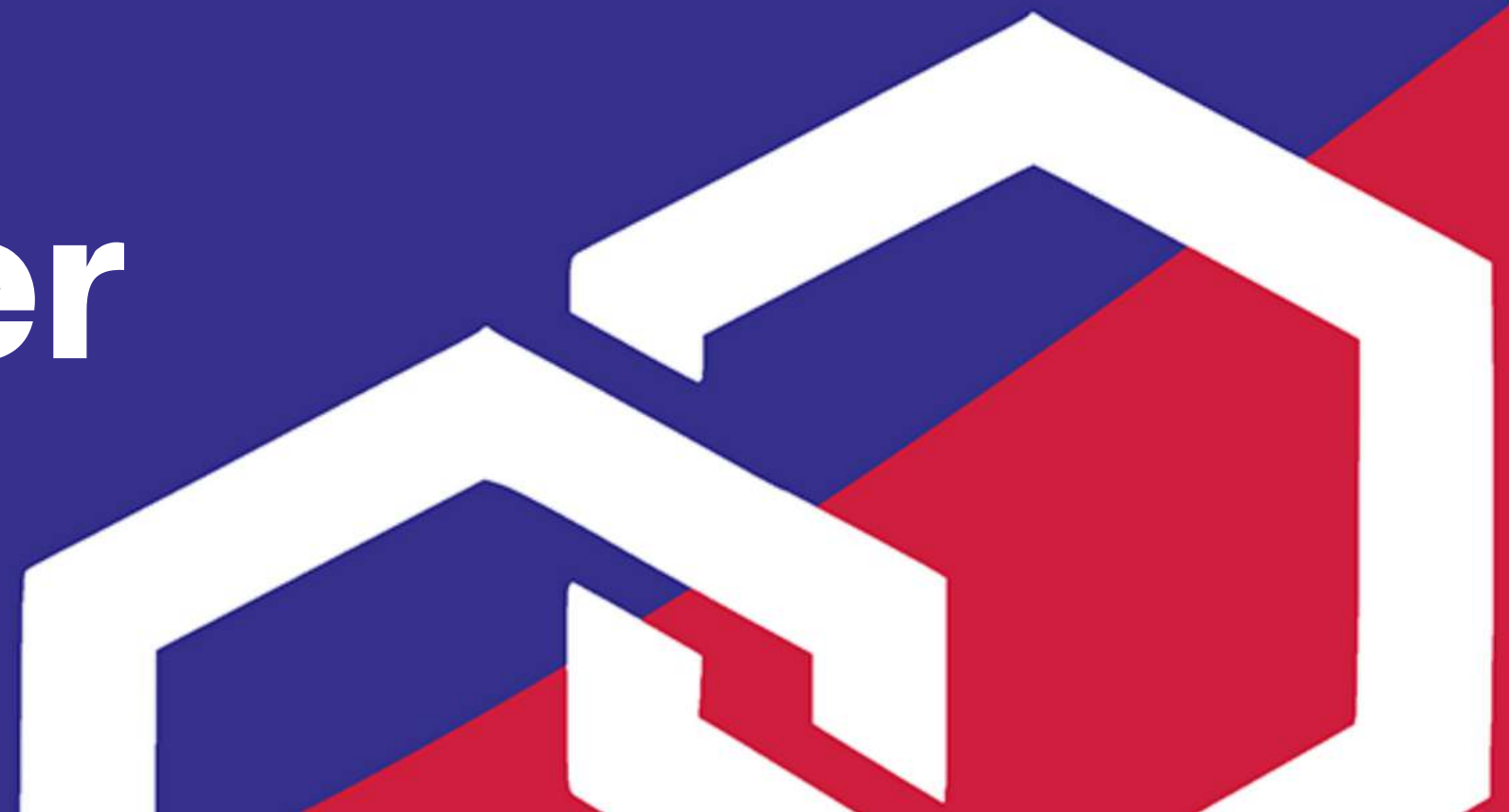


JULY 2022

# Veterans' Newsletter

From the Northern Ireland  
Veterans' Support Office



**Dear friends and colleagues,**

I hope you have all managed to have a break during these early summer months and to enjoy a little bit of the current lovely weather, if not the heatwave that others are experiencing. We are not called the Emerald Isle for nothing! Welcome to the third edition of our Newsletter which I am sure you will agree is a bumper edition. Thank you to all who have contributed articles and invited Janette, our roving reporter, to events where she has met some truly inspirational veterans, such as Maisie and Albert, and the Blesma NI community – and even our own George Chesney who enjoys a challenge! We are privileged to hear and record their stories and activities and admire their wonderful spirit and resilience. We hope you enjoy reading their stories and are inspired, as we are, by how they continue to be active and involved with friends and communities.

We are delighted to have launched the new programmes we highlighted in our last edition – the Veterans Adviceline for Statutory Professionals (VASP) and to say a big welcome back to Mark Ewing, who some of you may remember, into the veteran support network, as VASP Programme Manager. Mark will be out and about promoting and explaining this new and important programme which has been funded by The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust. Equally important is our new portfolio programme of direct veteran support - Veterans Places Pathways and People (VPPP) - which we launched officially on 23 June. Those who attended the launch heard all about the support which would be delivered as part of this programme, where over half the portfolio has been dedicated to complex mental health support. We have produced a separate VPPP information booklet, which is available on request. But it was lovely to introduce some new delivery partners and veteran services to NI during the launch event, such as Dougie Morgan, Fighting With Pride's Community Outreach Worker who will be assisting organisations to reach out to and support isolated LGBT+ veterans.

We also say a big hello to Gemma Ralston, the Defence Medical Welfare Services Families in Transition Navigator, who has such an important role in ensuring that service families leaving the military are better prepared than ever before for civilian life and have direct practical support and guidance that they need to make a more confident transition. Gemma also supports isolated veterans in need of a little more help and friendship, tackling loneliness within the community.

And finally a goodbye and a big thank-you to Laura, our Positive Pathways Art, Culture and Heritage Navigator, whose role came to an end when the Positive Pathways activity based programme finished earlier in the summer. Laura worked to create some unique arts based activities, for veterans across NI, such as a veterans theatre project for instance. So it is fitting that we feature a theatre based story in this edition. 'How to Bury a Dead Mule' will be a thought provoking production, telling the story of Irish Fusilier Norman Clements' struggles with PTSD after WW2. I, for one, will be booking a ticket to see the show, scripted and performed by Norman's grandson, Richard. What an important story to tell, both for his grandfather and for all today's veterans who struggle similarly with PTSD.

Enjoy this edition and, as ever, we welcome your feedback, comments and articles for our future editions. Let's keep sharing and celebrating NI's vibrant veteran community and those who support it.

**Head of the Northern Ireland  
Veterans' Support Office**



# Veterans' Places, Pathways and People Programme Launch

**On Thursday 23rd June we celebrated the launch of the Northern Ireland Veterans' Places, Pathways and People Programme, a new two-year portfolio of support for veterans in Northern Ireland.**

The programme launch took place in Malone House, Belfast, and was attended by representatives from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, members of the Northern Ireland Veterans' Support Committee, Northern Ireland Veterans' Commissioner Danny Kinahan, Veterans' Champions, and representatives from veteran supporting organisations from across NI.

Head of the Northern Ireland Veterans' Support Office, Liz Brown, said: "Funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust has been the single biggest enabler for us to deliver and directly support programmes here. There is a close knit veteran support network across Northern Ireland, we are very proud of the work going on here.

"We have programmes involving horticulture, fishing, bee-keeping and even equine therapy. Navigators and care co-ordinators ensure services are connected, they work on building trust with beneficiaries to make accessing advice and guidance straightforward. Veterans need more than an information poster, they need a warm hand-over and boots on the ground to build relationships. Our veteran community really does communicate better shoulder to shoulder."

The range of projects being delivered sets out to bridge gaps and offer support from peer-to-peer activities all the way through to higher level clinical services. Services will be delivered by 8 project partners and NIVSO who will work together to form wraparound care and services for veterans and their families in Northern Ireland.

Guests at the event were treated to a performance by the Frontier Pipes and Drums, Northern Ireland's veterans' pipe band. The Frontier Pipes and Drums are also funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, and open to all veterans living in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Veterans Commissioner, Danny Kinahan, said: "One of my key aims is to ensure that every veteran living in Northern Ireland knows what mental health support exists for them, and how to access it whenever it is required. The NI Vital Veterans' Network is an exciting and significant programme that will enhance existing mental health support across Northern Ireland and I look forward to working with the project partners and the Veterans' Support Office as the programme is delivered to veterans and their families over the next two years."



Colonel (Ret'd) Johnny Rollins OBE, Chief Executive, Reserve Forces and Cadets Northern Ireland, Liz Brown MBE, Head of the Northern Ireland Veterans' Support Office, Andy Allen MBE, Founder, Andy Allen Veterans Support, Tom Keenan, Chair, Andy Allen Veterans Support. Photo by Nigel King.

Chief Executive of the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, Anna Wright, said: "The Trust is excited about the potential that these grants can have to deliver real and lasting change."

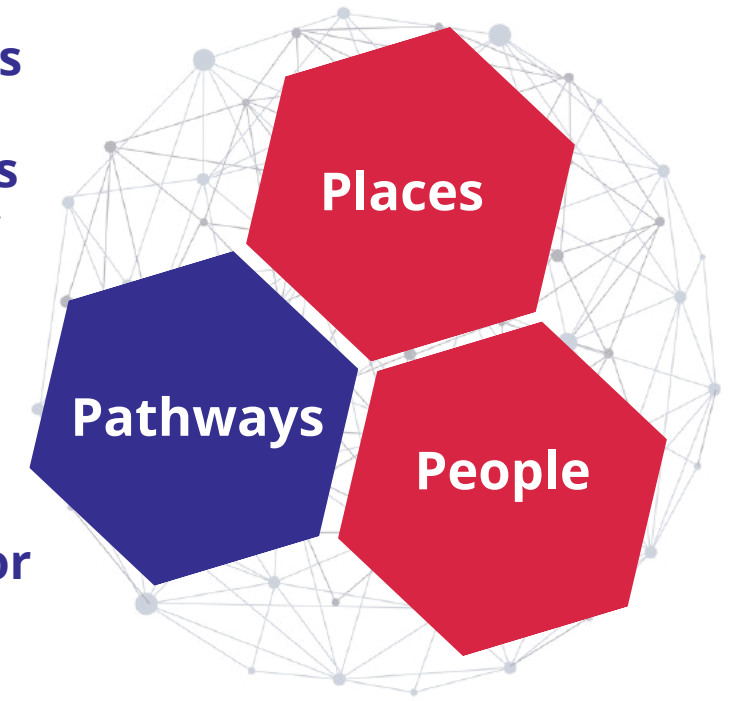


Alan Murphy, Head & Strategic Lead, Rachael Harger, Communications and Policy Support, Danny Kinahan, Northern Ireland Veterans Commissioner.



**Veterans and their families can get involved in the Veterans' Places, Pathways and People programme by contacting the Northern Ireland Veterans' Support Office.**

**Phone 028 9521 6784 or email [info@nivso.org.uk](mailto:info@nivso.org.uk) for more information and support.**



Guests at the event were treated to a performance by the Frontier Pipes and Drums, Northern Ireland's veterans' pipe band.

**You can find out more about the individual programmes of support available by [clicking here](https://www.nivso.org.uk/veterans-places-pathways-people) or visiting [www.nivso.org.uk/veterans-places-pathways-people](https://www.nivso.org.uk/veterans-places-pathways-people)**

# RFCA NI Chair takes on fundraising challenge for SSAFA!

**This September George Chesney is taking on a solo unsupported 450 mile cycle trip from Madrid to Bayonne, in Southern France, to raise money for SSAFA.**

George is from Ballymena, Co Antrim, and is the Chair of the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association Northern Ireland. He confesses to being over 21.

After Sandhurst, George served with the Royal Engineers for 5 years in the Regular Army, and then spent 24 years in the Territorial Army. He has travelled all over the world with the Army, serving in the Middle East, Africa and North West Europe. Before taking on his current voluntary role with RFCA NI, George once commanded the Queen's University Officers' Training Corps.

George has named the route The Wellington Trail, as it roughly follows the route taken by The Duke of Wellington's allied armies in the latter part of the Peninsular Campaign during The Napoleonic War.

As with many veterans, as time goes on, bits tend to fall off but have been glued back on. Thanks to the NHS, Surgeon Mark Chapman and the staff at the Sports Surgery Clinic in Dublin this is George's second fundraising cycle trip, and should be a breeze after successful surgical repairs earlier this year.

George will fly to Spain on the 4th of September to begin his journey. Cycling Northwest from Madrid, he will begin the 450 mile cycle to Bayonne along the route taken by Wellington's army in their advance in 1813.



**Join us to wish George all the best for his trip!**

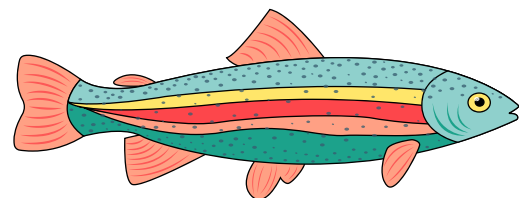
**Wednesday 31st August:** send-off from The Mayor of Mid and East Antrim Council - Galgorm Resort and Spa.

**Saturday 3rd September:** send-off from HM Lord Lieutenant for the City and Borough of Belfast, Dame Fionnuala Jay- O'Boyle DBE - Belfast Rowing Club.

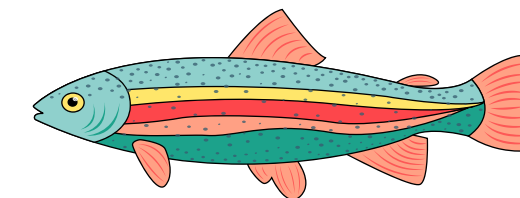


**You can read more about George's trip and donate to SSAFA directly by visiting his fundraising page:**

**[www.justgiving.com/wellington-trail](http://www.justgiving.com/wellington-trail)**



# Gone Fishing with Blesma!



We recently had the opportunity to join Blesma members at Northern Ireland Cross Community Angling outside Newtownards. It was fantastic to meet some of the veterans and their family members and have a go at catch and release course fishing!

We also got to meet Jake, the great-grandson of former Blesma member, Arthur Bomber, who passed away in 2019 aged 100. Jake is spending the next 6 months volunteering alongside Fiona Blesma NI for his Silver The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Jake told us, *"It's great to be able to understand what people have gone through. This is definitely a place where you can see people making a difference."*



NIVSO comms officer, Janette, spoke with Blesma members about their experiences.

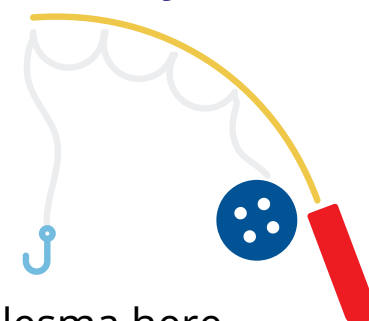


Volunteer, Jake, and Blesma Outreach Officer, Fiona



Also on the fishing trip was Iain McAfee and his son Cameron, who are currently fundraising for Blesma. In 90 days they are challenging themselves to:

- Walk 900,000 steps (average 10,000 steps/5 miles a day)
- Do 9,000 press ups (average 100 a day)



You can read more about the fundraising challenge, and donate directly to Blesma [here](#)

Thank you to Fiona from Blesma for having us along on the excursion, and thank you to Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for funding the activity.

# Introducing Gemma - DMWS Families in Transition Navigator

Hi, my name is Gemma and I am employed by DMWS (Defence Medical Welfare Service) as their Families in Transition Navigator in Northern Ireland.

In Northern Ireland we have a team of three staff, two providing support to serving personnel and myself, supporting those who are transitioning out of military life and veterans. Our team may be small but we are mighty and work hard at ensuring any individual and family who come to us for support receive a high standard of care and attention.

My role is a little different from my colleagues, I have the privilege of guiding individuals and families through the transition process, complementing behind the wire transition provision. While encouraging individuals and families to organise the practical aspect of moving into civilian life I have the opportunity to help them explore their new community – this could include visiting local parks, tots groups, schools and colleges, to finding out bus routes, form filling, sourcing employment or attending appointments.

Crucial to this role is the emotional wellbeing of the individuals and families. Even the best laid plans can hit a bump in the road and it's my job to ensure the wellbeing of everyone involved is considered throughout the change. From adjusting to new family dynamics, for example both parents are home more, dividing up the responsibility of maintaining a home, relationship break downs, shared care of children and the sense of loss of identity (taking off the uniform for the last time) I am here to support the individual and their family through it all.

For the veterans I work with, the freedom to talk about their experience of military life in a safe space without judgement is liberating. Often over a cuppa or a bite to eat, veterans share their insights, humour, highs and lows of military life. Our relationship is built on trust, respect and appreciation – allowing veterans to get stuff off their chest. One gentleman who I am in regular contact with told me: “Your company is worth more to me than someone handing me an envelope with £1,000 in it, you have no idea what it means to me to have you to talk to.” **Statements like this highlight the importance of supporting our military and veteran community. A community that I feel privileged and proud to be part of.**

**DMWS is an independent charity providing medical welfare to the Armed Forces, veterans, NHS staff, emergency services, The Merchant Navy and their immediate family when they are receiving treatment in hospital. Our practical and emotional support ensures that no one goes through the worry of illness or injury alone. Our purpose as an organisation is to *help people in their most critical time of need.***

For more information please visit: [www.dmws.org.uk](http://www.dmws.org.uk)

You can contact Gemma by phoning: 07818748879 or email: [gralston@dmws.org.uk](mailto:gralston@dmws.org.uk)



“

Your company is worth more to me than someone handing me an envelope with £1,000 in it. You have no idea what it means to me to have you to talk to.

”

# Veterans' Adviceline

Welfare Assistance

Ex-Service Organisations

Physical/Mental Health

Financial/Legal

Family Support

Camaraderie

# FOR Statutory Professionals



## Connecting people to veteran organisations

The Veterans' Adviceline for Statutory Professionals (VASP) is now up and running! The adviceline is a new signposting service for professionals, veterans, and other members of the community who come across veterans in their routine interactions.

You can contact the VASP Adviceline to obtain signposting support to the vast array of veteran support organisations and welfare services most appropriate for the needs of the individual.

This project is funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust and falls under the auspices of the Somme Nursing Home and the Northern Ireland Veterans' Support Office.

Adviceline: **07551 397384**

Email: **VASP@sommenursing.org**

A very warm welcome to Dougie as he starts his new role alongside Fighting With Pride! We are delighted to work with Dougie and the FWP team as part of our NI Veterans' Places, Pathways and People Programme.

*I'm Dougie Morgan, one of Fighting With Pride's Community Workers covering Scotland and Northern Ireland.*

*I'm an Army veteran having served with the Black Watch and 3 Scots and the Royal Engineers as a reservist. I am passionate about all LGBT+ matters ensuring fairness and equality in all walks of life, but my priority is for our veterans, serving personnel and their families.*

*After serving 38 years in the British Army, it makes it even more special to be looking after fellow veterans, families and serving service personnel from all three services both regular and reserve.*

*Northern Ireland is a special place and one of my favourite things is the people because it's the people that make the difference here. I love the Mourne Mountains as it's a great place to escape and get the fresh air. I also love Bushmills whiskey which is a great tippie, and one of the best distillery tours that I have been on!*



“ I want to make sure that all LGBT+ veterans in Northern Ireland are aware that I am here to support them. It is very important that they know they have someone who they can trust and who has lived the experience. I want to be the person who they can turn to and ask for advice and guidance without the fear of being judged. ”



Founded in January 2020 as a lived-experience military charity, Fighting with Pride is leading a campaign to support the health and wellbeing of LGBT+ Veterans, service personnel and their families. In particular, FWP is supporting those most impacted by the ban on LGBT+ personnel and helping reconnect these veterans with the military family and its support services

Part of Dougie's role is to support veterans in the LGBT+ community here in Northern Ireland. If you would like to get in touch with Dougie, please email [dougie.morgan@fightingwithpride.co.uk](mailto:dougie.morgan@fightingwithpride.co.uk)



# Remembering the Korean War Through Music and Reflection

Northern Ireland Veterans, Mr Albert Morrow, The Royal Ulster Rifles, and Captain Basil Singleton, The Royal Artillery, who fought in the Korean War, recently attended a concert at the Linen Hall Library, Belfast, to commemorate the outbreak of the Korean War.



Albert and Basil enjoyed an afternoon of classical music organised by The Korean Cultural Centre as part of their *Where Belfast Meets Korea* event. Also in attendance at the event was Catherine Champion, RFCA NI Veterans' Sub-Committee Member, and daughter of Korean War Veteran Colonel Robin Charley, The Royal Ulster Rifles.

Catherine said: "We are delighted that the Korean Culture Centre organised this event in Belfast to commemorate the Korean War and to remember the soldiers who fought in it. It was a wonderful afternoon, a superb atmosphere and excellent music."



Korean War veteran Mr Albert Morrow RUR, pictured beside the Korean War Memorial at Belfast City Hall.



Korean War veterans Mr Albert Morrow RUR and Captain Basil Singleton RA with Naire Kim of the Korean Cultural Centre.



Korean War veterans Mr Albert Morrow RUR & Captain Basil Singleton RA; family members of veterans and of those killed in action in Korea; representatives of the Korean Cultural Centre.



Korean War veterans Mr Albert Morrow RUR & Captain Basil Singleton RA, with musicians Mabelle Young-Eun Park - Violin, Kynan Walker - Violin, Jamie Howe - Viola, Danushka Edirisinghe - Cello.

# Northern Ireland Veterans Awards - Nominations Open!

The Northern Ireland Veterans Awards are now open for nominations and applications! If you are or you know a veteran that's done some great things since transition to civilian life, or you're a business, organisation or charity that's gone above and beyond to support our former military then get in touch with the NI Veterans Awards!

The awards are there to celebrate and reward veterans and reservists from all aspects of our community including fitness and business and those all important volunteers who live, work or are based in Northern Ireland.

The Awards will take place at the Stormont Hotel Belfast on 26th October, and the chosen charity supported in this year's event is Andy Allen Veterans' Support. The UK's first Cabinet Minister for Veterans Affairs, Johnny Mercer, will also attend as a guest speaker.



Northern Ireland Veterans Awards Organiser, Jason Gillard, has been busy spreading the word about the awards! He is pictured with Northern Ireland Veterans Commissioner, Danny Kinahan.

## Categories

**Role Model of the Year**  
**The Community Award**  
**Contribution to the NI Fitness Industry and Society**  
**Inspiration of the Year**  
**Entrepreneur of the Year**  
**Employer of the Year**  
**Lifetime Achievement**  
**Volunteer of the Year**  
**Health and Wellbeing Award**  
**Reservist of the Year**  
**Veterans Business of the Year Award**  
**Business Leader of the Year**



Andy Allen Veterans' Support is the 2022 chosen charity for the awards!

To apply or nominate someone for an award, visit:

[www.veteransawardsni.com](http://www.veteransawardsni.com) or contact Jason: [info@veteransawardsni.com](mailto:info@veteransawardsni.com) 07796084069

# WW2 Veteran Maisie Tells her Story



**World War 2 veteran Maisie, Veterans' Champion for Causeway Coast and Glens, Alderman Sharon McKillop, Maisie's daughter, Janis, and NIVSO Communications Officer, Janette Loughlin**

**At the start of the summer we had the opportunity to meet 103 year old World War Two veteran, Maisie, and record her oral history. We were joined by Maisie's daughter, Janis, and Sharon McKillop, Veterans' Champion for Causeway Coast and Glens.**

Maisie, who was born in Glasgow and now lives in Abbeyfield House in Ballymoney, spent the visit recounting stories from her past, from life in the Army to life with her family in the years that followed World War Two.

At aged just 22, Maisie was engaged to a soldier. She travelled to Newcastle, England, to meet him and get married, but before they could wed he was sent abroad and Maisie unfortunately never heard from him again, "We went down back to barracks and we couldn't get seeing him, he must have been sent abroad just after that, and then I never heard any more, never again heard any more about him. So that was that," Maisie said.

Instead of returning to Glasgow, Maisie joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), the women's branch of the British Army. In those years she spent a lot of time stationed in Quorn, near Norwich. "I was an intercept operator for the Signal Corps, we did all the messages and things there from Quorn. Norwich had a great big air space, and the Americans were there with their planes they were taking over to France, taking parachutes over and dropping them to the French Resistance," Maisie said.

"When you were invited to a dance at the American place, you had to get a pass from your own camp, you couldn't just go. And you got a pass to stay out until 23.59 - you had to be back in at a minute to 12 like Cinderella," Maisie laughed.

"They had stacks of stuff in their American NAAFI. Maybe if you were friends with one of them they would give you a whole packet of cigarettes. Or if they had steak sandwiches for their tea, the girls in the billet used to say bring us back some steak sandwiches!"



**The Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) was established in September 1938.**

Maisie also spoke about a trip to London, when she and some friends snuck off site from the barracks for two days, "There was a lot of lorries that would give you a lift. I went away down with this other girl, but she was a Londoner, and I didn't know she was going to people in London, and when we got into London she just left me there. She said I'll get you in two days' time down here and left me in this corner. I was standing there wondering what I was going to do with myself, and these two women came up and told us to get off their beat, then I found out it was a couple of prostitutes standing there.

"Well I went to Madame Tussauds then, and I went to the corner shop, the tea rooms, and then I was saying to myself I'm going to have to stay somewhere for the night, so I looked all about and I knew I couldn't go to the church hostels or anything because I had no pass. So I went into the station and I saw the inquiry place and fortunately for me it was a Scots man and I told him my dilemma and he gave me his room for the night. He was on nightshift in the office downstairs, and he gave me the key and told me to lock myself in and then get up in the morning before anybody caught me.

"So I vamoosed back to the place to get a lift, and the red caps were waiting for us all trotting out. Then we got some horrible things to do - you go for jankers as they called it. They used to gather pig swill and you had to empty these bins out, wash them and put the swill back in again."

After a bout of illness, Maisie was transferred from the ATS into the Royal Armoured Corps (RAC) in Wales where she worked as a quartermaster sergeant. And in those times, as Maisie told us, "There was good things and bad things. I used to go down for training to this other island where they would practice, and the shells went over into the Irish Sea, I think they're still clearing up shells down there. There was a terrible accident there. A shell was put in the wrong way round and this boy was killed. It turned out that he came from Scotland and he lived in the Gallowgate. All the ones that were in the village there and camps all had parties and collected money to send to his wife in Scotland. That was a terrible thing."

Maisie managed to escape a brush with danger a few times during her service, "Funnily enough every time I left a place it got bombed after I left, it didn't get bombed while I was there!

"They used to all run away into the bomb shelters, but I just lay in my bed and said if I'm to get it I'll get it. I suffer from claustrophobia and I couldn't sit in a claustrophobic shelter. I would just lie in my bed and they're all running down to the shelters but I was never in any place where it was really bad except Scotland, and that was in Clydebank."

After the war, Maisie went back home to Scotland where she was reunited with her family, including her sister, Jean, and little brother, Alastair, who she had raised after the death of their mother, "He was more like a son than a brother," Maisie said. "He was evacuated during the war, down to a farm outside Girvan, and the family were very good to them. When we brought him home again he decided he would go into ship building. He was in the shipyard that had something to do with the Titanic."

Alastair then joined the Merchant Navy and travelled all over the world. He is 91 now, living in Scotland, and still keeps in touch with the family he was evacuated to during the war.

Maisie went on to marry her first husband, Daniel, and have three children of her own, Janis, Alastair and Robert. "In those days you didn't get help for things like they do nowadays and because I was under 50 I had to get out and work," Maisie explained.

Maisie remembers her time in Glasgow with fondness, and recalls an occasion where she saw Prince Phillip and Queen Elizabeth during a visit to the city. "He was out on the veranda in the City Chambers and people were all there in George Square and they were all calling out to him.

"These girls all came down from Blackie's, a print place. In these days the factory girls were a wee bit gallous and of course they were all shouting up at Prince Phillip and he was shouting back at them because he was like that you know he spoke to everybody."

Maisie also loved taking her children out at the weekends. "Everywhere in Glasgow has a park, and all the parks have something in it a museum, concerts or they open up things for dancing. Although I had to go out and work for the children, I used to take them out on a Saturday.

"This day I had sandals on and a bee stung me on my foot, and this man heard the shouting and came over and asked what is it, and I said I've stood on a bee. He says don't move, and he got the shoe off, and must have had tweezers or something in his pocket, and he took the sting out of my foot and says, that's good for you. That'll be good health for you, mind to take honey when you're taking your porridge in the morning, and I've done that ever since. That's when I started taking honey. "

From Glasgow, Maisie and her family moved to Douglas. "We were trying to get a bigger house because we were staying in my father's house.

"You couldn't get a council house and we saw adverts in the paper when they were closing down all the pits - that was Margaret Thatcher closing all the pits down. They were advertising houses, trying to get people to take the houses, and I came down to Douglas to have a look at one and stayed. It had a great big garden, we grew all our own vegetables, even grew our own potatoes," Maisie said.

Maisie's children went to school in Douglas, and after her husband passed away, Maisie met Dan and they were married. "I was a manageress in a Co-operative store. It was great, it was quite a busy wee shop because we used to put a van out round the farms and round the village."

Maisie has been living in Ballymoney for seven years, where her daughter Janis, grandchildren and great grandchildren are close by.

"I have a friend who phones me from Scotland, and when she comes on I say I don't want an obituary phone call. Both of my husbands died of cancer, here's me at 103 jumping about. My son keeps telling me do you forget how old you are? It's quite normal, he says. I must be abnormal then!"

According to the mayor, Maisie is the oldest person in Ballymoney, and gets out and about the town, often visiting the Salvation Army for a cup of tea and a chat. Maisie also visits the local shops, "I meet a chap in Home Bargains called Tommy. I keep saying to him see if you can get a job for me, he says no jobs for you here and you're not getting mine!"

Alderman Sharon McKillop, Veterans' Champion for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council said:

"It was a privilege to introduce Maisie to the NIVSO who quickly seized the opportunity to record her Oral Military History experience.

"It was important that Maisie's story was recorded and it was a surreal experience for me to hear it first-hand. It provided me with a fuller picture of what War Time was like for Maisie and others.

"She is a remarkable woman for 103. Her recollections transported me to that period and reinforced how selfless and gallant our Military servicemen and women were at that time."

**Background image of George Square, Glasgow, 1955, from Glasgow City Archives.**

# Royal Irish Fusiliers Veteran's Story Comes to Life



**How to Bury a Dead Mule tells the story of Norman Clements, Royal Irish Fusilier, his experiences of the front line battles of North Africa, Sicily and Italy during World War Two and his subsequent struggles with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.**

Norman's account is brought to life in a one man show with original music, scripted by his grandson, actor Richard Clements who also performs. You can read more about the play, and Norman's story, by visiting [www.howtoburyadeadmule.com](http://www.howtoburyadeadmule.com)

The show is being performed in the Lyric Theatre, Belfast, from Tuesday 6th to Saturday 10th September, and tickets are between £12 & £18.

Richard is planning to host a Q&A after the performance on Wednesday 7th September, and is encouraging veterans, veterans groups and members of the Armed Forces Community to attend this performance.

If you plan to attend on this date, alongside booking your ticket please also email [rclements@mail.com](mailto:rclements@mail.com) to let them know, so that Richard is aware of numbers of veterans and members of the Armed Forces Community attending on the night and can plan for the Q&A.

Tickets can be purchased here:

[www.lyrictheatre.co.uk/whats-on/how-to-bury-a-dead-mule-2](http://www.lyrictheatre.co.uk/whats-on/how-to-bury-a-dead-mule-2)





# Spotlight on Adult Volunteers: Recruitment and Development Officer



**Pilot Officer Kathy McHugh is the NI Recruitment and Development Officer for the RAF Air Cadets. She joined the Royal Air Force Air Cadets as an adult volunteer instructor 5 years ago. Here, Kathy gives us an insight into her time as a Cadet Force Adult Volunteer (CFAV).**

I joined the RAF Air Cadets as a Civilian Instructor with 72 Omagh Squadron. I am a Civil Servant in my day job and was able to fit cadets around my professional and family life. I then decided that I wanted to go down the uniform route as a Non-Commissioned Officer. I was responsible for Drill, Dress and Discipline on the Squadron, and attended camps and assisted in the delivery of fieldcraft, shooting, first aid, map-reading and radio comms.

I then took the decision to commission as an Officer, and I felt an immense sense of pride and personal achievement to pass the Officer and Aircrew Selection at RAF College Cranwell. I thoroughly enjoy assisting in the delivery of Leadership Training to cadets from each of our 14 units across the province.

A great personal 'high' for me was flying in one of the 2 Grob Tudors during the recent Easter Camp at Flying Station Aldergrove. I got to experience taking control of the plane as well as several aerobatic manoeuvres in the safe hands of an experienced RAF Pilot.

I thoroughly recommend the RAF Air Cadets as a great way to impart knowledge, learn new skills and meet new people. I received full training at each stage, supported by my Commanding Officer and RAFAC colleagues. There is a role for all skill sets and backgrounds in this fantastic organisation.



*Find out more by visiting  
[www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets/want-to-join/join-as-an-adult-volunteer/join-as-a-civilian-instructor](http://www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets/want-to-join/join-as-an-adult-volunteer/join-as-a-civilian-instructor)  
Or email:  
[develop.nireland@rafac.mod.gov.uk](mailto:develop.nireland@rafac.mod.gov.uk)*



# UK Veterans Family Study

The UK Veterans Family Study (UKVFS) is a unique, large scale, tri-service (Royal Navy, Army, & Royal Air Force) research project funded by the Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) and the Big Lottery Fund.

*What was it like for you and your family after separation from the military? What supports best helped your well-being?  
Your perspectives are important and can help the entire military community.*

The research for UKVFS is being conducted by Prof Chérie Armour at Queen's University Belfast and Professor Nicola Fear at King's College London and aims to understand how social and psychological factors determine wellbeing and mental health of veteran families in the UK.

The study involves an online survey and in-depth interviews to explore the wellbeing of veteran family members and veterans as well as experiences of support and transition to civilian life.

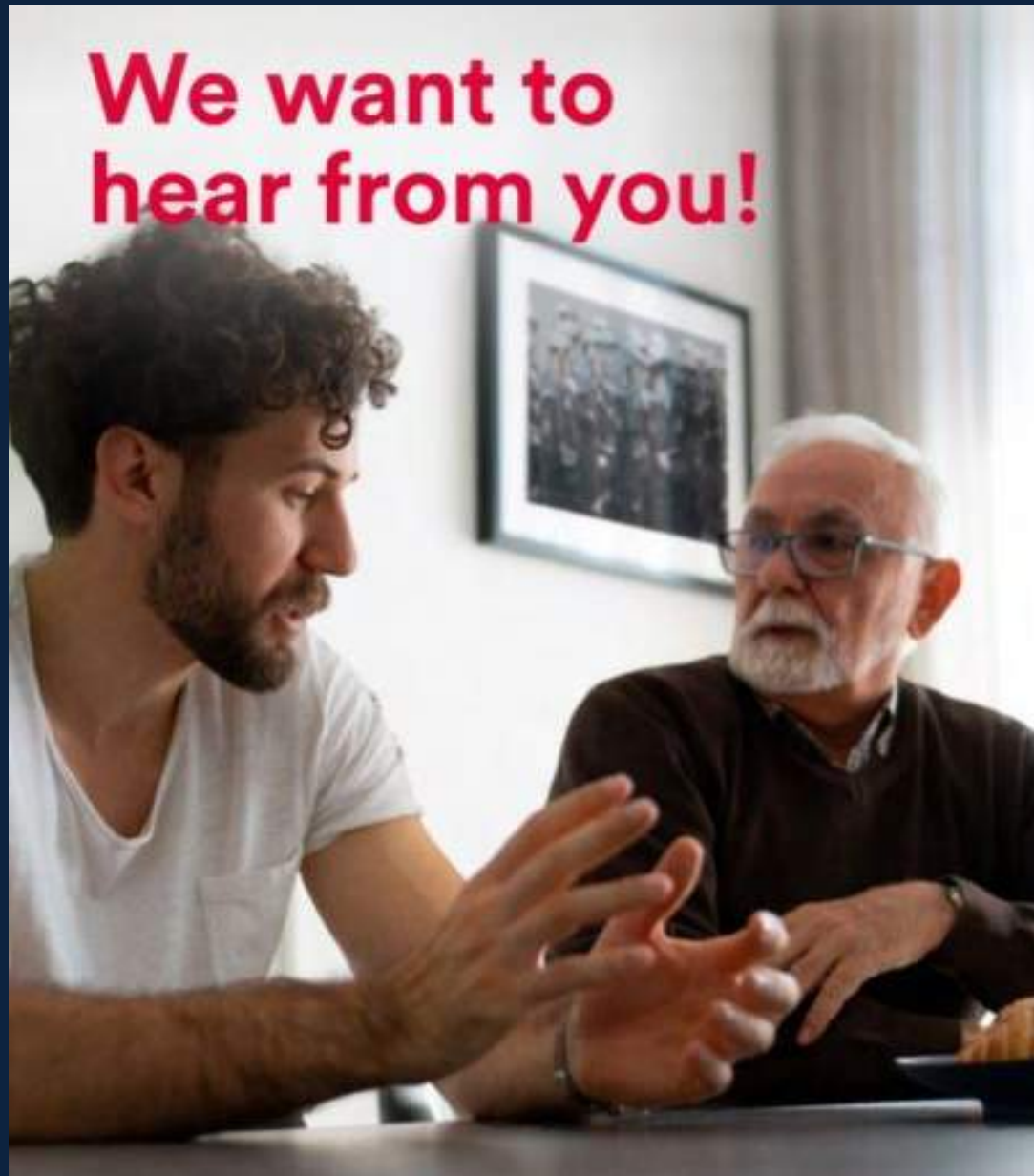
## You are eligible to take part in this study if:

- You are a relative (e.g. spouse/partner, now adult (18+years) child) of a veteran who has served at least one day in any branch of the UK Armed Forces, but no longer serves (your relative may have also served or is currently serving with the Reserves).
- OR
- You are a veteran who has served at least one day in any branch of the UK Armed Forces as regular personnel and have since left service, (you are eligible if you have also previously or are currently serving in the Reserves).
- AND
- You are over 18 years old and currently live in Scotland, Northern Ireland, England, or Wales.

If you chose to participate in the UK Veterans Family Study, you'll take part in a one-hour, confidential telephone interview with one of our researchers who will ask you about your experiences. You can also choose to be entered in a prize draw for a £50 Amazon gift card.

The survey does not ask you to include any names, telephone numbers, or email addresses that are connected to your answers.

*To get involved or find out more, please email [ukveteranfamilystudy@gmail.com](mailto:ukveteranfamilystudy@gmail.com) or text/call 07753451059*



# Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust - Funding Opportunity!



The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust has launched a new programme, Transformational Grants, a highly specialised programme that will make grants to create systemic change for Armed Forces communities. Grants of up to £300,000 are available.

The Trust is inviting applications from charities that have been registered in the UK for at least three years at the time of applying, and which can demonstrate relevant experience and engagement.

Under this programme the Covenant will fund a very small number of projects that will deliver permanent and significant changes or improvements for Armed Forces communities, where there are hidden needs not being met by current service provision.

This is a two-stage application process. Organisations will be required to submit a short expression of interest by 9am Monday 12 September 2022 to continue with the application process.

For more information click [here](#) or visit:

[www.covenantfund.org.uk/programme/transformational-grants-programme/#whats-available](http://www.covenantfund.org.uk/programme/transformational-grants-programme/#whats-available)

**As always, please link in with our NIVSO website and social media channels to stay up to date with our activities!**



[www.nivso.org.uk](http://www.nivso.org.uk)



@VeteransNI



@ni\_veterans\_support\_office



@NorthernIreland VeteransSupportOffice

## Transformational Grants

**CREATING CHANGE**  
Funding for distinctly targeted projects

**COLLABORATE**  
Where the **specialist support** that people need does not yet exist

**BUILD**  
To build new approaches & understanding of needs and services

**SUSTAIN**  
That will keep delivering systemic change long after the grant has ended

For specific communities within the **Armed Forces** community

Your project will work with the people that are affected by **significant challenges**

[covenantfund.org.uk](http://covenantfund.org.uk)

