

QARANC ASSOCIATION

A Guide to Support Agencies



Your paragraph text



May 2026

INTRODUCTION

As an Association we often hear from veterans who have served in the Queen Alexandras Royal Army Nursing Corps (QARANC) or their dependents and who need help to live their lives as they wish due to any number of issues, temporary or longer lasting. This can be many years after they left the army, or they may have just finished their service and need some specialist advice and support as they adjust to civilian life.

We know from those that apply to us for support that in addition to any financial assistance signposting to an agency that can help is often just as valuable, certainly in the long term. However, not everyone wants to apply for benevolence assistance but just need some ideas of where they can go to get help.

There is an enormous amount of support available to Armed Forces veterans and dependents, so much so it can seem daunting at times. This guide aims to provide a starting point for people to access that support – either for themselves or on behalf of someone else. Not all of the charities are specifically for veterans but we have included them as they are the experts in their particular field and may be a good starting point when looking for help. The agencies that are included are UK based although some do have branches and offices overseas (for example SSAFA). We plan to include some local charities in the future as we develop this document.

We have included some brief information about what each organisation can do to help. This ranges from Government initiatives to smaller charities that we have come across through our benevolence work. We are constantly being made aware of different organisations so this document is by no means exhaustive but we hope that it will be helpful. We will aim to review and update regularly.

We have tried to put the information in a layout that is easy to navigate but are always open to suggestions how this could be improved. If you do have any queries or comments or suggestions for charities we could include, please do email the Chair of the Benevolence Committee on benevolence@qarancassociation.co.uk

In Friendship,

The Benevolence and Grants Committee.

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GOVERNMENT VETERANS SERVICES – THE OFFICE FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA) is a part of the Ministry of Defence. Leading on the government's policy on veterans, they work with devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, local government, charities and businesses to help veterans when they need it, enabling them to continue to make brilliant contributions to society after leaving the armed forces. You can find out more about the work of OVA by visiting their website

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-veterans-affairs/about>

On their website there is a lot of information about different ways they can help as well as clarity regarding health, employment and pensions.

There are a number of services that have been designed to support veterans in specific situations. Some can be accessed directly by an individual and others will need input from others such as a GP. Information about this is on their websites which are below or via the above link.



Op ASCEND is a free service that helps veterans and their families grow their careers. It is helpful for those leaving service, their spouses or partners and young people from military families who are seeking free employment support.

<https://careersafterservice.campaign.gov.uk/>



Op COURAGE provides mental health support for veterans through the NHS. It is an NHS mental health specialist service designed to help serving personnel due to leave the military, reservists, armed forces veterans and their families.

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/armed-forces-community/mental-health/veterans-reservists/>



Op FORTITUDE is the pathway for veterans at risk of or experiencing homelessness into supported housing or to keep them in their current home. It is funded by The Armed Forces Covenant Fund to deliver a centralised referral pathway into veteran specific supported housing. The remit of the team is to work with individual veterans at risk of or experiencing homelessness, supporting them either with advice and guidance to maintain their current home, or into suitable veterans supported housing. The service is designed to help those veterans who do not have a suitable support network already, the network they do have is struggling to support them, or the veteran struggles to engage with local services.

<https://www.riverside.org.uk/care-and-support/veterans/opfortitude/>



Op NIGHTINGALE is a initiative to assist the recovery of wounded, injured and sick military personnel and veterans by getting them involved in archaeological investigations.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/operation-nightingale>



Op NOVA provides support for veterans who are in contact with the justice system, enabling them to access the services they need. Op NOVA's specialist team is drawn from those who have served in the armed forces, as well as partners, children and parents of those who serve or have served. Other members of the team have worked in the police, probation, prisons or charity sector. Our team is trained in Information Advice and Guidance, Level 4, and Mental Health First Aid. <https://www.forcesemployment.org.uk/programmes/op-nova>



Op RESTORE offers specialist NHS care for veterans and service leavers with physical health needs linked to military service. It does not matter when the physical health injury or related medical problems occurred or how long ago you left the armed forces, Op RESTORE can help you if:

- you have served at least one day in the UK armed forces
- you are soon to leave or are in the process of leaving the UK armed forces
- you have sustained a physical health injury that was attributable to your time in service regardless of when that happened
- you have ongoing medical problems related to the physical injury sustained in service
- we have received a clinical referral from your GP practice

<https://www.oprestore.nhs.uk/>



Op VALOUR is a new national programme designed to make it easier for veterans across the UK to access the care and support they deserve. Led by the Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA) within the Ministry of Defence, it aims to improve how services are coordinated at national, regional and local levels, ensuring veterans get the right support, in the right place, at the right time.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/valour-information-and-next-steps>

MILITARY CHARITIES THAT PROVIDE A RANGE OF SUPPORT OPTIONS

There are several large charities that provide specific support for serving personnel, veterans and dependents. All are household names and are well established in the charity sector, providing a range of support options. Two, RBL and SSAFA, are the charities through which people can apply to the QARANC Association for consideration of benevolence assistance.



The **Army Benevolent Fund** stands at the forefront of support for the army family. They award grants to individuals and families, and fund leading charities and organisations to ensure help is there when you need it.

<https://armybenevolentfund.org/about-us/how-we-help/>



Help for Heroes believe every member of the armed forces community deserves the chance to live well after service. Transitioning to civilian life can be tough, so they provide tailored support for physical and mental health, welfare, and social needs — for veterans and their families. They also help civilians who served under UK Command, for example Afghan interpreters. Since 2007, they have supported over 25,000 people to live well after service. Help is provided through physical healthcare support, mental health counselling, financial grants, sport and social activities and welfare support as well as support for families.

<https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/about-us/>

Poppy Scotland have helped countless men, women and families with issues linked to their time in the armed forces or with struggles adjusting from military to civilian life. We even help with needs that have arisen long after someone has left the armed forces. Whenever, wherever support is needed, we are here.



<https://www.poppyscotland.org.uk/get-help/how-we-help>



The **Royal British Legion** is here to help members of the armed forces community and their families in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Support starts after one day of service and continues through life, long after service is completed. There are numerous ways the Legion can support individuals from financial and social support to provision of care homes and support for those living with dementia through the provision of Admiral Nurses.

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-support/how-we-help>



SSAFA helps the armed forces community in a number of ways, though our focus is on providing direct support to individuals in need of physical or emotional care. Addiction, relationship breakdown, debt, homelessness, post-traumatic stress, depression and disability are all issues that can affect our members of our armed forces community. Many of these problems only become apparent when an individual has to leave their life in the forces and join 'Civvy Street'. SSAFA is committed to helping our brave men and women overcome these problems, and rebuild their lives.

<https://www.ssafa.org.uk/about-us/how-we-help/>

ADDICTION SUPPORT

Addiction can be experienced in many ways – below are just four charities that can help but there are many more out there. What they have in common is that they are experts in their fields and can make a real difference to someone's life.



Alcoholics Anonymous works by members coming together to share their experience, strength, and hope to support each other to stay sober and recover from alcoholism.

<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/about-aa/>



Beat is the UK's leading charity supporting those affected by eating disorders and campaigning on their behalf. Founded in 1989 as the Eating Disorders Association, it celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2019.

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



Frank provides friendly, confidential advice if you are worried about a drug issue for yourself or someone else. The charity operate a 24 hour helpline

Telephone: 0300 123 6600




GamCare operates the National Gambling Helpline which is the quickest and easiest way for people affected by a gambling addiction to access help. The helpline is available all day every day and is completely free of charge to access.


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

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

When someone dies it can seem overwhelming to sort out the practicalities such as arranging and paying for a funeral. There is help available – “What to do when someone dies” (below) is a step by step guide from the government about what needs to be done. We have included some other links that may be of use when organising a funeral.

 **Cruse** helps people through the difficult times when someone has died. They provide a range of services and information support.

<https://www.cruse.org.uk/about/>

 **Funeral Expenses Payment**


You could get a Funeral Expenses Payment (also called a Funeral Payment) [if you get certain benefits](#) and need help to pay for a funeral you're arranging.

<https://www.gov.uk/funeral-payments>

 **Funeral Expenses for War Pensioners and Veterans**


Information and guidance on how to claim funeral expenses for a veteran whose death was due to service before 6 April 2005.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/funeral-expenses-for-war-pensioners-and-veterans>

 **Support after the death of a Service Person or Veteran**

Bereavement compensation information for when a service person's or veteran's death is predominantly caused by His Majesty's Armed Forces service on or after 6 April 2005.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/support-after-the-death-of-a-service-person-or-veteran>

 **What to do when someone dies**

Check what to do after a death - how to register the death, notify government departments and deal with the estate.

<https://www.gov.uk/when-someone-dies>

CANCER CHARITIES AND ORGANISATIONS

There are numerous charities that can help people and families that are facing or living with a cancer diagnosis. Some are specifically linked to the military. Here are a just a few that may be of help in the first instance and which provide signposting to other organisations that can help. There are many more out there and it is worth checking to see what local cancer charities are in your area if you need help.



Breast Cancer Now is the UK's leading breast cancer charity. They carry out research, support and campaign for change for those with a breast cancer diagnosis. Through a number of ways such as a helpline, website and written information the charity supports people diagnosed with breast cancer throughout their journey.
Support Line: 0808 800 6000

<https://breastcancernow.org>



Cancer Care Map is an online resource to help people living with cancer find care and support services in their local area, anywhere in the UK. The website is run by cancer charity, The Richard Dimbleby Cancer Fund. People with cancer, their friends and family and healthcare professionals can search for any cancer-related service, free of charge. A team works to make sure the details are up to date.

<https://www.cancercaremap.org/about/cancer-care-map>



Charlie Charlie One is a charity providing Peer Support and Organisational Signposting for Service Personnel and Veterans Battling Cancer. They are dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of British armed forces personnel, veterans and their families, offering guidance, support and connections to essential cancer services and resources for those facing cancer diagnoses.

<https://www.charliecharlie.one/>



Macmillan Cancer Support has spent more than 100 years helping people living with cancer. From the moment someone is diagnosed with cancer, they are there with all the information, support and guidance they need, to help everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can. MacMillian is here to help everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can. Whether you need help paying bills, advice on benefits or treatment, or just want to chat.

Support Line: 0808 808 00 00

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/get-help>





Military vs Cancer is a grant-giving charity providing emotional, financial, and practical support to military personnel, veterans, and their families affected by cancer. They offer grants, respite, and one-to-one support to serving and former members of the armed forces facing cancer.


<https://www.militaryvscancer.com>

FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIPS SUPPORT

Getting support for family issues can be challenging but there are some charities that can help. Below are just some of these.

 **Coram Family Lives** Family Lives understand that family life and parenting can be challenging, and we know that the right support at the right time can make all the difference. We offer a comprehensive suite of resources, including our national helpline, online chat, WhatsApp and email support service. We have online advice articles and a wide range of free online parenting courses. For families in need of in-person support, we provide a range of direct services across various locations in England and Wales.
<https://www.coramfamilylives.org.uk/>

 **Gingerbread** is the charity for single parent families. We provide expert advice and practical support for single mums and dads in England and Wales.
<https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/>

 **Relate** has a network of relationship counsellors and a group of licensed local counsellors that provide face-to-face and online counselling and support.
<https://www.relate.org.uk/what-we-do>

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

There are many charities that support people when they are struggling with their mental health. Below are some that are specifically aimed at supporting veterans.



Combat Stress is the UK's leading veterans' mental health charity, the work they do is life-changing and often life-saving. They provide the only intensive mental health treatment service to UK veterans. Their services are provided across the UK, in-person and online. At a time that can be isolating and daunting, they are here to help. They provide specialist clinical treatment and support for veterans from the British armed forces, focusing on those with PTSD, Complex-PTSD, and moral injury resulting from their experiences during military service. When some military personnel leave service, their experiences can't easily be left behind.

<https://combatstress.org.uk/>



Hidden Wounds is a specialized mental health service, primarily by Help for Heroes, providing free, confidential support for veterans, their families, and service personnel dealing with PTSD, anxiety, depression, and addiction. It offers Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), counselling, and family support, focusing on non-visible injuries.

<https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-help/mental-health-and-wellbeing/>



Icarus was founded by two veteran therapists who recognised that, to be able to provide reassurance and support having an understanding of military service is extremely important. Each person asking for help is treated as an individual and there is no set time limit to the time services are offered.

<https://www.icaruscharity.org>



Through information and support at both national and local level, **MIND** makes sure people with mental health problems find the help they need.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/>



Samaritans make sure that there is always someone to listen if you are in crisis or feel suicidal.

<https://www.samaritans.org>



Walking With The Wounded supports veterans with the most complex and challenging needs to improve mental health and wellbeing. In partnership with the NHS, we work with ex-Forces to design tailored programmes of support that inspire change and save jobs, homes, relationships and lives.

<https://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk/get-support/>

The Warrior Programme. Most Veterans report a successful transition back into civvy street, however for a number this can be a difficult process, finding a job, juggling family responsibilities and settling down to a very different way of life. The Warrior Programme offers a 12 month programme, commencing with either a 3 day residential or 5 day online intensive foundation course, followed by regular refresher sessions and online interaction. During the programme you will be introduced to coaching techniques that will enable you to stay grounded, build resilience, deal positively with day to day life and ensure that you remain focused and motivated to achieve what you want. The 12 month programme is fully funded, including food and accommodation, however participants will need to make their own travel arrangements to the course.

<https://www.warriorprogramme.org.uk/veterans/>



Veterans at Ease is a leading Military Mental Health Charity, committed to helping all members of HM armed forces community, be it veterans, reservists, serving military personnel or their families, so they can deal with mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, flashbacks or thoughts of suicide, as well as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other combat stress-related issues. They will help anyone who feels they need support whether they have been diagnosed or not. They provide free therapy and support through a technique called NLPt by trained therapists (all of whom have suffered themselves, been through treatment with Veterans at Ease and then gone on to qualify).

<https://veteransatease.org/>



With You is a drug, alcohol and mental health charity. With over 80 services across England and Scotland, they provide support and advice to more than 100,000 people a year. They are working towards a future free from harm caused by alcohol, drug and mental health challenges, where anyone seeking help feels welcomed, not judged.

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

PHYSICAL HEALTH SUPPORT

There are hundreds of charities that support people who need help relating to a physical health condition and below are just a very few of these. All are charities that support people with specific health needs and some are specifically there for veterans.



The **Alzheimer's Society** provides support to those living with dementia through provision of local support, information and advice and helplines. They support carers to provide the best care for their family member or friend throughout their dementia experience.

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/dementia-support-services>



BLESMA is an armed forces charity dedicated to assisting serving and ex serving men and women who have suffered life changing limb loss or use of a limb, an eye or sight. They support these men and women in their communities.

<https://blesma.org/>



Blind Veterans UK helps vision-impaired ex-Servicemen and women to rebuild their lives after sight loss. They provide rehabilitation, training, practical advice and emotional support to veterans regardless of how or when they lost their sight. They are here to help blind veterans regain their independence and live the life they choose.

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



The **MS Society** support those living with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). They provide information, local and national support and a hub which is a point of contact for assistance.

<https://www.mssociety.org.uk/support-and-community>



Mutual Support is a vital lifeline for service personnel, veterans and their dependants living with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). The 1200 strong group offers a uniquely understanding and inclusive network. Founded in 1991 to address the specific challenges faced by military personnel with MS, from deployments, to medical discharges, applying for benefits and beyond.

Run entirely by volunteers who live with MS themselves, Mutual Support offers empathy, practical assistance and reassurance. We restore military level support and care not just for the Booty, Crab and Jack Tar but for their families too.

<https://mutual-support.org.uk>



The **Stroke Association** provides support for those who are affected by stroke – survivors, carers, family members or friends. They provide support through initiatives including helplines, local support groups, online activities and information provision.

<https://www.stroke.org.uk/stroke/support>



The **Veterans Hearing Foundation** supports veterans who have developed hearing problems maybe through military service. They work in partnership with other organisations to provide support to veterans who may need it.

<https://www.veteranshearing.org.uk/veterans-welfare-group/>

VETERANS SERVICES

Over recent years there have been many veterans services set up across the UK. Information about what is in your area can be found on your Local Authority webpages as it can vary depending on where you live. Below are just some veterans services that may be of help.



Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Clubs (AFVBCs) are informal, community-based organisations that provide a supportive and welcoming environment for veterans of the armed forces. These clubs aim to address the welfare needs of veterans through a variety of activities and initiatives.

<https://afvbc.com/about-armed-forces-veterans-breakfast-clubs>



The **Forces Employment Charity** aims to empower the Armed Forces community with lifelong employment advice and supporting veterans in the justice system. All their support is provided regardless of circumstances, rank, length of service, or reason for leaving.

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



The Stoll Foundation provides affordable, high-quality housing and support services to enable vulnerable and disabled veterans to lead fulfilling, independent lives.

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



The Veterans Charity provides urgent support to Veterans who find themselves battling hardship and the distress it causes. Despite being a small charity, they operate nationally, delivering support across the entire UK. We are able to assist with essentials such as food, utilities, clothing and footwear, communications including smartphones and tablets, travel and fuel support, household basics and large single appliances.

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

ADVICE AGENCIES

We have found that people sometimes need a little extra help with daily living especially if they have had problems managing their finances or understanding whether they are entitled to benefits. The following are some agencies that can help.



Age UK provides information on a wide ranging number of topics around money and legal matters, health and wellbeing, care and support and working and learning for older people living in the UK. They also provide a number of services both nationally and locally.

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



Disability Rights UK is the UK's leading disabled persons charity. Links on their website give information on a wide range of topics including benefits, Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG), Council Tax and the Motability Scheme.

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org>



Step Change is a debt advice charity which provides a free debt advice service online.

<https://www.stepchange.org/how-we-help/debt-advice.aspx>



Support Line supports those feeling isolated and at risk. They signpost to a number of options for support, many included in this document, and have a section specifically for those who are or have served.

<https://www.supportline.org.uk/problems/armed-services-and-ex-services/>



Turn2Us is a website which provides a benefits calculator, a means of searching for potential grants and support with Personal Independence Plan (PIP) applications.

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk>

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

Finally, this section provides some ways of getting more information and help regarding issues such as compensation caused by service and armed forces pensions. It also has the link to the website where people can apply for a Veterans Card.



The **Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS)** compensates for any injury, illness or death which was caused by service on or after 6 April 2005.

There are 2 main types of AFCS awards: a tax free lump sum payment for pain and suffering and a Guaranteed Income Payment (GIP) which is a tax free, index linked monthly payment.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/armed-forces-compensation-scheme-afcs>



Armed Forces Pension Scheme When a member of the armed forces reaches their retirement age, they receive one of the most generous pensions available in the UK. This fairly reflects the unique sacrifice they have provided their country throughout their career. All members of the armed forces are automatically enrolled into the Armed Forces Pension Scheme. Unlike all other public schemes, members pay 0% in contributions each month. The scheme is unfunded and paid from the public purse.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pensions-and-compensation-for-veterans>



The **Forces Pension Society** is an independent organisation that acts as a pensions watchdog for the military community. It provides an enquiry service to help people make informed decisions about their pensions.

<https://forcespensionsociety.org/>



A **HM Armed Forces Veteran Card** is a way to prove that you served in the UK armed forces. The card can make it quicker and easier to apply for support as a veteran. You'll get your Veteran Card in your service leavers' pack within 6 weeks of leaving the armed forces. If you left the armed forces before December 2018, you can [apply for a Veteran Card](#).



If you are in receipt of a war pension but feel your condition has changed, you can ask for a review of your pension.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/war-pension-assessment-apply-for-a-review>