

A guide to Living and Working in Northern Ireland

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Foreword

Preparing for civilian life after a prolonged period of service can be unsettling. You should, however, be reassured that uncertainty and anxiety are normal emotions for anyone entering what can feel like the unfamiliar world of 'Civvy Street'. Whether you're moving into further training, education, or new employment, the process of transitioning out of an environment that you have become so accustomed to will likely seem very daunting. However, view it this way - leaving the forces is like any exercise or operation; if you plan and prepare well, create a good network, and remain focused, flexible, ambitious and determined, you will reward yourself (and your family) with the very best chance of future success.

This guide has been developed to aid your journey, exploiting expertise from the Career Transition Partnership, the Veterans Support Office, and 38 (Irish) Brigade & Northern Ireland Garrison. It primarily aims to provide information to those currently serving, as well as those in the process of leaving (including their families) who are thinking of settling in Northern Ireland. Specifically, it also provides regionally-aligned information on a wide range of topics, including: resettlement, housing, employment, health, pensions, benefits, education and skills. It also provides contact details of charities and other organisations operating in Northern Ireland who exist to provide advice and support to you.

I do hope you find it useful and wish you, and your family, every success on your onward journey.

Commander Northern Ireland, 2021

Housing

You should not make a decision to leave until you are properly prepared and have researched an exit plan. If you don't you could inflict serious hardship onto yourself and your family. The Armed Forces wants you to leave the Service in the strongest possible position and long term planning can significantly raise your future standard of living.

If you do decide to leave, when thinking of housing and the area that you wish to live near, please take into account points specific to that area: children's school place availability; local job market; social housing availability; costs of social housing vs private rental vs home ownership; personal security etc.

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is the main organisation for dealing with social housing in NI. The website can be found here <https://www.nihe.gov.uk/> and it contains all you need to know about applying for a home, the points system, availability, allocation etc. Some points to consider are:

- Ex-service personnel do not automatically attract higher priority for social housing.
- The Forces Help to Buy scheme enables servicemen and servicewomen to borrow up to 50% of their salary, interest free to a maximum of £25,000, to buy their first home or move to another property on assignment or as their families needs change. The pilot scheme, which launched in April 2014 and has now been extended to 31 December 2022, aims to address the low rate of home ownership in the armed forces. Service personnel can apply for the loan online through the Joint Personnel Administration system and can seek advice on their application through their Chain of Command and personnel agency.
- Engage early with the loss of entitlement team to ensure you receive your loss of entitlement certificate in time, this gains you 50 points in the housing application process and you will normally receive this approximately 28 days before your discharge date.
- Our advice is to register early, 12 months before your discharge date, this will give you time to get to know the system and correct any mistakes that may have delayed your application.
- Attend all available Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO) presentations and those run locally by the Military Housing Liaison Officer (MHLO).
- Haig Housing (UK Wide) is a charity who provides housing assistance to ex-service people and their dependants. They provide rental accommodation at affordable prices and where needed with solutions specific to individual needs. They have properties in Northern Ireland, but availability is extremely limited.

If you still have questions about housing options after your future discharge date then please contact your Bde HQ MHLO or Life skills Officer.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Our vision for housing in Northern Ireland



Everyone is able to live in an affordable and decent home, appropriate to their needs, in a safe and attractive place. Our role in working with local communities and other agencies, whether public, private or voluntary sector, to tackle issues that make a real difference to everyone's quality of life including:

- The physical and social regeneration of local neighbourhoods
- Community safety and reductions in anti-social behaviour
- Good community relations

<https://www.nihe.gov.uk/>

<https://www.housingadviceni.org/housing-options-ni>

Education, Skills & Training

To complement the experience accumulated through a military career, employers sometimes require qualifications. Many military qualifications can and should be translated to a civilian equivalent and this can be done through schemes such as the Army Accreditation Offer. Employers also want to see a history of continuous and progressive personal development. This needs to be managed by each individual whilst taking full advantage of the many opportunities open to them. Your start point should be to seek advice from your Career Advice Officer or local Education Centre. Don't be one of those many Service persons who say that they wish they had known that when they had a chance to do something about it.

Remember: you will probably be in civilian employment for longer than your military career. Your success will affect your whole family. The Armed Forces provides mandatory education and personal development throughout your employment. Exploit the many opportunities available to you and you will succeed in your military career and flourish in civilian employment.



An easy first step is to take advantage of your Learning Credits.

The MOD provides you with funding for personal development. It is available in two forms: Standard Learning Credits (SLC) and Enhanced Learning Credits (ELC). Sadly this is not used as often as it should be – largely because service personnel are not aware of it or do not see the relevance to them. It is very much your opportunity to undertake some personal development that interests you. It also allows another way to demonstrate your commitment to continual professional development training which is highly valued by civilian employers as it demonstrates that you are taking an interest and are committed to your own future. Use SLC for on-line courses, to purchase course books or training material, initial registration and accreditation fees to professional bodies or support funding of a first driving license.

The MOD's ELC Scheme promotes lifelong learning amongst members of the Armed Forces. The scheme provides financial support in each of a maximum of three separate financial years for higher level learning of a nationally recognised qualification at Level three or above or, if pursued overseas, an approved international equivalent qualification with an approved learning provider. Minimum 6 years ELC qualifying service is required and must be used within 5 years of discharge. Further details can be found at www.enhancedlearningcredits.com

The Accreditation Offer

All three Services have developed close links with several professional and educational institutes, including Chartered Management Institute, Institute of Leadership and Management, City and Guilds of London Institute, BTEC/Edexcel etc to accredit military qualifications to civilian equivalents. For example, the Army Accreditation Offer – allows personnel to gain one qualification for every eligible course that they successfully complete. An example is 1 x qualification per course for soldiers who have successfully completed Ph1, Ph2 and Ph3 training; and for each Command Leadership and Management (CLM) and Army Instructor Capability (AIC) course that they attend. It allows qualifications to be gained in Employability Skills, Leadership & Management, Instruction, Coaching & Mentoring and elements of apprenticeships or trade training. You will see how taking advantage of these opportunities will result in soldiers developing several progressive qualifications. This is not done for you. You must take responsibility for yourself and ensure that you gain the accreditation you deserve.

There are other education opportunities such as Short University Courses which are run from several universities across the country and tend to last between 2 – 5 days. These are very helpful in broadening horizons. Language Training is available in support of operations but can be undertaken at any time. There is also Electronic Learning Centre which provides courses on-line such as the European Computer Driving License. Lastly, individuals can take advantage of the many Further Education and Higher Education (PF FEHE) courses run by colleges and universities in addition to the mandated and elective training and study available from the Armed Services.

The PF FEHE scheme is a government initiative that enables personnel in their resettlement phase to up-skill their qualification levels to either their first full further education (level 3) qualification (equivalent to 2 A levels) or first higher education (level 4, level 5 and level 6) (equivalent to HNC/HND/Fd Degree or BA/BSc). Personnel must be a member of ELC scheme.

Northern Ireland Colleges

Northern Regional College

<https://www.nrc.ac.uk/>

Belfast Met

<https://www.belfastmet.ac.uk/>

South Eastern Regional College

<https://www.serc.ac.uk/>

Southern Regional College

<https://www.src.ac.uk/>

Health



Northern Ireland health and Social Care Trust

This link will show you all health services available from the NHS in Northern Ireland:

<http://online.hscni.net/>

Registering with a GP

To register with an NHS GP, you should contact your chosen practice and ask to be included on their patient list. You will be asked to fill in a form so your medical records can be transferred to the practice. As part of this process, it is important to tell the GP practice that you are a Veteran and give your GP the paperwork that your military medical centre gave you, including any medical records.

This will help to ensure your military health record transfers to your NHS health record. It will also give your GP information on your health and ensure that any ongoing care and treatment is continued.

To find a local GP in your area follow the link below:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/gp-practices>

Registering with a Dentist

It is important to register with a dentist as soon as possible. You will also need to register any other members in your family.

To find a local dentist, please follow the link below:

<http://online.hscni.net/family-practitioners/dentists/>

Veteran Support

Northern Ireland has a wealth of service charities available to support you should the need arise.



Who we are: The Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) is part of Veterans UK which, in turn, is part of the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

What we do: The Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) gives support to veterans, and their dependants. The focus of the service is to provide assistance following a change in situation that may have resulted in a welfare need, such as:

- Leaving the services.
- Bereavement
- Changes in disablement.
- Changes affecting income or finances.
- Changes affecting housing.

Who we can assist:

- Veterans (anyone who has served in HM Armed Forces, regular or reserves including National Servicemen), their families and dependants.
- Anyone who is eligible, (injured in Service) for or in receipt of, compensation from the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) or the War Pensions Scheme (WPS).
- Service personnel who are to be Medically Discharged or have a welfare requirement on discharge.
- Bereaved families of service personnel. How we can help Help and guidance can be given through either telephone contact or a dedicated visiting service through a national network of Welfare Managers. Support can include
- Identifying when someone is eligible to claim or apply for a benefit, compensation or other service.
- Help with completing application forms.

- Help when making contact with other organisations. Initial contact should be made by telephone to the Veterans Welfare Centre. Once contact has been made, a Welfare Manager will be allocated to become the individual's caseworker. The Welfare Manager will either make further contact by telephone or if appropriate a home visit will be arranged.

The Welfare Manager will:

- Ask about the situation and identify any welfare needs. 7 Northern Ireland Veterans Handbook - electronic version published by www.aftercareservice.org Updated November 2019
- Using this information, identify what type of assistance is needed and available from different sources.
- Provide advice and practical help towards meeting the needs identified. Things we can do include
- Help with applying for WPS and AFCS.
- Help with applying for any Armed Forces Pension which there may be entitlement to.
- Give information and advice about benefits through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and help with applications for them.
- Make referrals to Social Services, Local Authorities, ex-Service organisations or other voluntary organisations to apply for the services they provide. Our Partners The VWS work alongside in-Service welfare providers and closely with local authorities, voluntary organisations, service charities and Social Security Agency within N.I. This ensures that those leaving the services and existing veterans and their families receive all the information and assistance they need to access the appropriate services and benefits. How to contact us Initial contact should be by telephone and, if appropriate, we can arrange a home visit.

NI (and the Republic of Ireland) is covered by a Veterans Welfare Centre in Glasgow.

UK National Helpline: 0808 191 4218

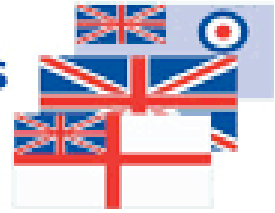
National Email veterans-uk@mod.uk

Website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk

Local Telephone: 0141 224 2709

Local Email: Veterans-uk-vws-scot-ni@mod.uk

Veterans Advisory & Pensions Committees (VA&PC)



VETERANS ADVISORY AND PENSIONS COMMITTEE

The Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee exist to serve and support ex-servicemen and women, their widows or widowers and their immediate family members. So whenever or wherever you have served, whether in the Second World War or Afghanistan, we are here to help.

We are an independent voice and can act as a bridge to:

- Advise and guide you if you are unsure of your rights or where to turn in the complex world of government pensions and other allowances.
- Listen to complaints when things go wrong and, where we can, help to sort them out.
- Assist you in obtaining help from the appropriate ex-service charity or government department.

If you would like to be put in touch with your local VAPC, please contact Veterans UK

Email: veterans-uk@mod.uk

Free helpline telephone: UK only 0808 1914 2 18

Free helpline telephone: overseas +44 1253 866 043



Cobseo is an organisation that exists for the interests of the Armed Forces community in order to:

- Represent and support the needs and opinions of member organisations to all levels of government and other organisations.
- Identify, communicate and act on issues of common interest on behalf of member organisations.
- Exchange and coordinate information between member organisations.
- Act as a single point of contact for external inquiries.

How we work

Cobseo's membership consists of over 180 Service and ex-Service organisations, including regimental associations. It does not have individual members and is not a caseworking organisation.

Contact: Via NIVSO on 028 9521 6784



The Legion is there for all members of the UK Armed Forces community, not just serving members of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force, but also ex-Service men and women (veterans), their carers and families. Millions of people in the UK and overseas are eligible to call on the Legion for help and half of those helped by the Legion are below retirement age. We provide practical care, advice and support to the Armed Forces family all year round. Welfare is at the heart of everything we do.

Our Pop-In Advice & Information centre is situated at 51-53 Fountain Street, in Belfast City centre. Open from Monday to Friday, 10:00am to 4:00pm, the Pop-In provides a welcoming modern facility where staff and volunteers are available to meet with callers.

The Area Office for Ireland (covering NI and the Republic) is at the same address in Belfast. We currently operate an Outreach service in Portrush, Larne and Bangor and Dublin.

Our Contact Centre operates seven days a week, from 08:00am to 08:00pm.

The UK Freephone number for the Contact Centre is 0808 802 8080.

For callers from the Republic of Ireland, the Freephone number is 1800 992 294.

For more information, visit our website www.britishlegion.org.uk. Our website offers a live web chat facility and access to our extensive Knowledge Base.

Why not 'pop in' and see us:

The Royal British Legion
51-53 Fountain Street Belfast
BT1 5EB



Lifelong support for our Forces and their families

SSAFA is a national charity operated on a regional basis. All our Branch members are highly trained volunteers, giving their time freely. SSAFA helps serving and ex-service men or women and their wives, husbands, partners, and dependant family members, who need friendship, advice or assistance, from the day their service starts and for the rest of their lives.

This help continues for widows and widowers, after divorce, and for people separated from established partnerships and for dependent children. We do not sit in judgement; we simply help people to sort out problems – with their agreement and as fast as possible. We are available, at the end of the telephone, by email or by letter, to do everything possible to relieve distress or to solve a problem.

We will discuss the matter with you and agree the action to be taken. You can come to us with any problem or request – we don't limit the type of problem or the type of help that might be possible. And we will see it through with you to the end – we won't abandon you during the process.

Telephone: 028 9032 7740

Mail: 21 Talbot Street, Belfast BT1 2LD

Web: www.ssafa.org.uk E-mail: Nireland.Branch@ssafa.org.uk



ABF The Soldiers' Charity, giving lifetime support to serving and former soldiers and their families. Includes making grants to individuals and specialist charities that help ex-soldiers and their families. Support offered includes:

- Financial: Financial assistance to relieve hardship, grants for living costs, emergency needs, debt relief.
- Provision of annuities and Educational Bursaries.
- Accommodation: Care home fees. Home adaptations. Furnishing and equipment.
- Personal: Mobility assistance. Funding holiday breaks.

ABF The Soldiers Charity
Mountbarrow House
6 – 20 Elizabeth Street LONDON
SW1W 9RB
Tel: +44 (0) 845 241 4820
www.soldierscharity.org

The Ulster Defence Regiment and The Royal Irish Regiment (Home Service) Aftercare Service



Bespoke support to veterans resident in Northern Ireland who formerly served in the Ulster Defence Regiment and the Home Service element of The Royal Irish Regiment during Operation BANNER; plus any personnel discharged as Wounded, Injured or Sick via the Personnel Recovery process. Based at four centres throughout the Province, it consists of caseworkers and support staff who provide outreach to the veterans' community, advising, case-managing and signposting to other trusted agencies which assist those in need. It offers holistic resolution to each case via:

Welfare – via domiciliary visits, ranging from simple befriending to full-blown intervention in issues of bereavement, debt, housing, benefits and pensions and including assistance in application for recompense; in conjunction with Veterans UK.

Medical - building trusted pathways to the wider Health and Social Care Services via a client's General Practitioner and also able to offer immediate referral to psychological therapies and physiotherapy for conditions caused by or made worse by military service.

Vocational – sign-posting to Regular Forces Employment Agency (RFEA) provides career and employment advice.

Benevolence – assisting in supporting cases of proven financial need. Successful liaison is routinely undertaken with many service charities.

Expansion of the service to assist all other veterans resident in Northern Ireland is still being considered.

The Aftercare Service can be contacted initially on 028 9042 0145 or through its website: www.aftercareservice.org

COMBATSTRESS

FOR VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH

We are the UK's leading charity for veterans' mental health. For over a century we've helped former servicemen and women deal with trauma-related mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.

For some of those who have served, life as we know it can be shattered without our help. Mental health problems can tear families apart, destroy relationships and devastate lives. But our help can transform lives.

We provide our unique mental health treatment to veterans from every service and every conflict. Our specialist team help veterans find the right support to tackle the past and take on the future. When a veteran asks for our help, we develop a programme of treatment and support to meet their individual needs.

This might include one-to-one sessions with a member of our specialist team in the community or visiting one of our treatment centres for an outpatient appointment or therapy programme. We also have a Peer Support Service. Led by veterans for veterans, it's a chance to talk and share experiences, receive support, give support and socialise with others who have also served.

Talk to us if you or someone you know is experiencing any of the following:

- Feeling cut off from life
- Loss of temper more often
- Having unwanted terrible thoughts
- Finding it hard to sleep
- Feeling on edge and easily irritable
- Having nightmares or flashbacks
- Feeling extremely alert – always on the look out for danger
- Having panic attacks

To find out more about how we can help, visit www.combatstress.org.uk or call our Belfast office on 028 9026 9999.

Veterans and their families can also call our 24-hour Helpline for free, confidential mental health advice.

Call: 0800 138 1619

Email: helpline@combatstress.org.uk



115 New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0QT

T: 02085901124

F: 02085992932

E: info@blesma.org

www.blesma.org

Blesma is dedicated to assisting serving and ex-Service men and women who have suffered lifechanging limb loss or the loss of use of a limb, an eye or loss of sight whether during or after their military Service. Blesma provides lifelong support to its Members, and following the death of a Member, the widow/widower have membership in their own right and are provided with the same lifelong support; in essence caring for the carer.

Our mission is to assist limbless veterans to lead independent and fulfilling lives and Blesma will work tirelessly to ensure Members are not failed, forgotten or left to fend for themselves.

Our Expertise

- Providing advice and assistance on war pensions, compensation and benefits.
- Delivering unique individual welfare support and advice.
- Providing financial assistance to Members to aid their independence and wellbeing.
- Working with the NHS on prosthetic issues.
- Advocating on behalf of our Members on issues that concern them.
- Offering support to elderly Members to help them maintain independence, enabling them to remain in their own homes whenever possible,
- Providing a national annual programme of amputee-supporting-amputee activities.
- Providing regional activities and events within Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland contacts

Blesma Support Officer Scotland, Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland

Steve Burton:

07766 258461

bsosniroi@blesma.org

The role of the Blesma Support Officer is to provide practical and emotional support to Members. He is trained in providing wide ranging support and advice from benefits, War Pension, AFCS, financial grants, independent advocacy to prosthetics and mobility aids; the Blesma Support Officer is out on the ground delivering that support. The Blesma Support Officer is also engaged in executive level meetings in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Blesma Outreach Officer Northern Ireland

Fiona Morrison: 07741 744617 outreachni@blesma.org



Rebuilding lives after sight loss

Blind Veterans UK is the national charity for ex-Service men and women with severe sight loss. Founded in 1915 and previously known as St Dunstan's, Blind Veterans UK has supported more than 35,000 Armed Forces and National Service veterans to rebuild their lives after sight loss. We help veterans to learn vital life skills by giving them the means they need to be safe in their own homes. We do this by giving veterans free rehabilitation, training and the support they need to live independent lives.

Blind Veterans UK has a network of community support teams all over the UK who give blind veterans the rehabilitation and training they need closer to them, either in their own home or in their local area.

In Northern Ireland we have a locally based Community Support Worker providing the service to blind and visually impaired veterans. We organise activities and events such as social outings and reunions which gives our veterans the opportunity to be part of a community with a shared experience. We also provide services to carers and family members, whether in the form of information and advice, or by simply giving them the opportunity to take a break.

Contacting Blind Veterans UK

If you, or someone you know, believes they are entitled to receive Blind Veterans UK's free lifelong support you can call us free on **0800 389 7979**. More information about receiving Blind Veterans UK's support, including the criteria required can be found [here](#).

HELP for HEROES

SUPPORT FOR OUR WOUNDED

We can provide Immediate Financial Support via our Quick Reaction Fund which helps by giving swift financial support to those with life-changing injuries, life-changing illnesses and their families.

The Help for Heroes Band of Brothers offers life-long support and opportunities to those suffering from life-changing injury or illness. The Help for Heroes Band of Sisters provides supports, recognition and fellowship to those who care for our heroes.

Help for Heroes strives to achieve the best for the men and women of Great Britain's Armed Forces, both serving and veteran. We are proud to work with other Service charities to make sure that the wounded, injured and sick get the support they deserve.

You can contact us by:

Post: write to us at Help for Heroes 14 Parkers Close Downton Business Centre Downton Salisbury Wiltshire SP5 3RB

Tel: 01980 846 459 (opening hours 9am to 5pm)

Do you need our support? For financial support please email us on grants@helpforheroes.org.uk

To join our Band of Brothers or Band of Sisters please email:

bandofbrothers@helpforheroes.org.uk / bandofsisters@helpforheroes.org.uk



The main aim of Decorum NI is to promote, advocate and address the needs of former security force personnel (Armed forces, Police, Prison Service) and their families who have suffered as a result of the violence perpetrated over the period of Operation BANNER between 14th August 1969 and 31st July 2007. Services include:

- Counselling Befriending
- Shared heritage trips
- Welfare Advice/Signposting
- Social Interaction
- Safe Harbour/Hub for meeting
- Advocacy, Emotional and Practical Support, Comradeship and Friendship
- Education/Training
- Provision of social activities
- Commemoration & Remembrance Activities
- Lobbying
- Creative Writing
- Legacy Work
- Debating Forum
- Youth Engagement
- Storytelling
- Research
- Exhibition
- International Study Visits
- Volunteering Opportunities

Decorum NI
26 Balloo Avenue Bangor
Co Down
BT19 7QT

Telephone No: 02891457565

Web: www.decorumni.co.uk

Email: info@decorumni.co.uk



ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Established to further the efficiency and well-being of the Service, preserve its traditions and encourage recruiting, the Royal Naval Association provides the following support:

Financial: Helps members access all forms of benefits, compensation and pensions. Medium size almonising charity fund serving and ex Naval Forces.

Personal: Network of 400 branches and 40 clubs offering comradeship and support; welfare help and those looking for jobs.

Nationally the Association can be contacted at

Royal Naval Association
Room 209 Semaphore Tower
PP70 HM Naval Base
PORTSMOUTH
PO1 3LT
Tel: +44 (0) 2392 729 747
www.rnabelfast.com

Locally the Association can be contacted at

Royal Naval Association
Telephone + 44 (0) 289 032 0487
Web Site www.rnabelfast.co.uk/



The charity that supports the RAF family

RAFA, The Royal Air Forces Association (or RAF Association), is a membership organisation and registered charity that provides welfare support to the RAF family.

Receiving no government contributions, our work is completely funded by the generosity of our members and through vital donations from our supporters in the general public and from businesses.

We are proud to have helped and to continue to help the whole Royal Air Force family, providing friendship, help and support to current and former members of the Royal Air Force and their dependants.

We help those who have served for at least a day in the RAF from its beginnings through to the present day. The RAF Association currently helps any serving and ex-RAF personnel and their families in times of need. The Association exists in the recognition that RAF personnel and their immediate families dedicate their lives to their country, and to ensure that such a sacrifice does not result in suffering, poverty or loneliness.

Through the assistance of our generous members and volunteers, we are proud to be helping thousands of truly amazing people. As a signposting organisation we also offer financial assistance, respite breaks, short welfare breaks, war pension advice, home and hospital visits.

For further information please contact our Belfast office on 028 9032 5718 or email nireland@rafa.org.uk



THE NOT FORGOTTEN ASSOCIATION

A TRI-SERVICE CHARITY FOUNDED IN 1920

The Not Forgotten Association in Northern Ireland established in 1930 is a small tri-service charity which provides help and support to serving and ex-service men and women who are wounded injured or sick. We do this through a varied and tailored programme of recreational, leisure and adventure activities. We also provide television licenses, through our main charity, The Not Forgotten, based in London, to eligible beneficiaries, whether they are living in their own home, a care home or a personnel recovery centre.

For younger serving and ex-serving men and women our adventure activities offer the opportunity to enjoy challenges they may otherwise not have. We also ensure that our activities remain relevant to veterans of all ages and from conflicts of the last 70 years.

As a small charity we do have the resources to undertake a formal fundraising programme. We are therefore enormously grateful to the charities, trust groups, associations and individuals who generously support us through their activities, grants and legacies.

For those who may be feeling vulnerable, isolated or depressed our events and activities can bring a much needed boost and something they can look forward to. The Not Forgotten Association Northern Ireland were granted the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2019.

The Not Forgotten Association Northern Ireland can be contacted through its website, as follows:- <https://thenotforgottenni.org/>

Patron: Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal President: His Grace The Duke of Abercorn KG



Providing entertainment and recreation for the serving wounded and the ex-service community with disabilities



We provide life-long, life-changing support, jobs and training opportunities to service leavers, reservists, veterans and their families.

Founded in 1885 and operating across the UK, we have the specialist knowledge and understanding to bridge the gap between military life and civilian employment.

We are strongly linked to local employment markets and all our advice is based on our knowledge of industries that are growing where you live and the big recruiters in the area. We can provide access to our in-house jobsite, RightJob where we advertise vacancies from local employers.

We exist to provide life-long, life-changing support, jobs and training opportunities to service leavers and veterans irrespective of circumstances, rank, length of service, or reason for leaving.

To register for employment support please visit our website at www.rfea.org.uk or alternatively please telephone 0121 262 3058.

Northern Ireland contact details:

Alana Surgenor

asurgenor@ctp.org.uk

07805725242



About Us

AA Veterans Support is a Northern Ireland based charity set up to provide help and support for Veterans and their families across Northern Ireland. It is our aim to provide the necessary support services for those Veterans or their family members that may need our help. We believe that our Forces and their families deserve our lifelong support. We aim to provide Practical, Training, Emotional and Financial support to anyone who is serving or has ever served and their families. Whenever they may need us, we'll do whatever we can to help.

Who We Help

Anyone who has ever served in the Army, Royal Navy or RAF

- The Families / Dependants of the Armed Forces residing or looking to reside in Northern Ireland
- The Dependants of veterans residing in Northern Ireland
- Members of the reserve forces and their dependants
- National Servicemen residing in Northern Ireland

What we offer

- We offer a range of services to meet client needs including - Counselling
- Advice & Guidance
- Training
- Benefits
- Housing
- Furnishing & Equipment
- Pensions
- Respite
- and more....

Contact Us

Telephone No 028 9074 7071

Email info@aavsnri.com



Mid Ulster Victims Empowerment (MUVE)

MUVE was set up in 2012 to help support, advise and improve the wellbeing of Innocent Victims, their families and individuals affected by the Troubles. Our members include those bereaved, physically and psychologically affected by the Troubles. The majority of our membership is drawn from ex-services [men and women] who have served the community in any capacity e.g. Ulster Defence Regiment, CGC, RUC GC, NI Prison Service, Emergency Services etc.

MUVE has now established itself strongly as a victims support group with a membership of over 600. **Services provided:**

- Welfare / Benefits Clinics
- Counselling
- Complimentary therapies
- Advocacy / legacy work
- Health & well-being services, accessing the Victims & Survivors Service frameworks for support
- Coffee mornings / luncheons
- Recreational Activities, - arts and craft classes, yoga, fishing and walking groups
- Respite trips and breaks
- Transgenerational programmes, for example activity weekends
- Remembrance events
- Storytelling
- Social events – dances, BBQ's, etc.
- Lobbying and representing member's views. For example, NIO Victims Pensions Scheme, etc.
- Volunteering opportunities
- Signposting to other service related organisations, for example Veterans UK, UDR Aftercare Service, Combat Stress, etc.

MUVE has been building vital partnerships with other innocent victims' groups and the wider Service community over this past number so that our veterans get the support that they and their families deserve.

MUVE Project Email: muveproject@yahoo.co.uk

Tel: 028 8676 3349

Cookstown Mob: 07702 902823



The War Widows' Association of Great Britain

The War Widows' Association is essentially a pressure group and exists to improve the conditions of War Widows and their dependants in Great Britain.

Its work encompasses those who have suffered bereavement as a result of World War II and all conflicts since then including Iraq and Afghanistan. The WWA also represents those who have suffered the loss of their partner and in peacetime, when the death was attributable to their service life.

There is no office as such in NI but the Regional Organiser can be reached via:

War Widows' Association

c/o 199 Borough High Street

London

SE1 1AA

Tel: 0845 2412 189

Email: info@warwidows.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1002656



MAPS
Military and Police Support
of West Tyrone



Military and Police Support of West Tyrone (MAPS)

MAPS is based in a hub in Omagh for those who served in the Military, Police and Prison Service during Operation Banner. The organisation is run by volunteers all of whom have served giving us the empathy to deal with veterans who turn to us for help. Our ethos is simple, to provide a place of refuge for veterans to encourage them to come from obscurity and receive the advice they so richly deserve. In the 8 years since its formation, MAPS has built up a formidable team of signposting partners putting in practice its own mini gateway dealing with everything from applying for a veteran's badge to seeking mental health consultations.

MAPS offer a popular drop in service, in house advice, complementary therapies, an award-winning befriending service, respite, coffee mornings and activities. The organisation recently opened a veterans' garden project which has grown from a field to paradise for those who work in it and visit alike.

The MAPS office is open Monday to Friday, 10 am to 4 pm.

Address: 53 Market Street, Omagh, Co. Tyrone

Email: mapsofwesttyrone@btinternet.com

Telephone: 02882245459



Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund

In 1919, just one year after the Royal Air Force was founded, there was an urgent need to support those who had served in the First World War. Lord Trenchard set up the RAF Benevolent Fund with donations from the public to help ex-servicemen and their families get their lives back on track. Our vision then as it is now is that no member of the RAF Family will ever face adversity alone. We are the RAF's oldest friend - loyal, generous and always there.

The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund supports current and former members of the RAF, their partners and families, providing practical, emotional and financial support, whenever they need us. We are committed to getting them through the toughest times, whatever life may send their way. We'll consider any request for assistance, however big or small, providing a tailor-made approach to each individual situation.

We are unique in providing a range of support for serving RAF and their dependants, from support with childcare and relationship difficulties to help with retraining, injury, disability, illness and bereavement. For former serving RAF members and their partners, we offer financial grants to aid day-to-day living, cover one-off unexpected costs for practical items like a new fridge or replace a broken boiler, right through to renovating homes to help people live independently.

We can provide respite care, bereavement support or arrange telephone groups to help those isolated or lonely. We work closely with our partners and organisations to provide direct and targeted assistance to the RAF Family, while caseworking organisations, including SSAFA and RAFA, act as our 'eyes and ears' on the ground, having direct contact with those who need our assistance.

The RAF Family is spread all over the country and you and your organisation are vital in helping us to spread the word about our work.

visit: www.rafbf.org

0800 160 2942

The logo for Brooke House Health & Wellbeing Centre is displayed on a dark olive green rectangular background. At the top center is a large, stylized, light-colored letter 'B' in a script font. Below the 'B', the words 'BROOKE HOUSE' are written in a large, light-colored, all-caps serif font. Underneath 'BROOKE HOUSE', the words 'HEALTH & WELLBEING CENTRE' are written in a smaller, light-colored, all-caps serif font.

BROOKE HOUSE

HEALTH & WELLBEING CENTRE

The Brooke House Health and Wellbeing Centre seeks to support and improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of retired Royal Ulster Constabulary Officers, Military veterans, and their families, who have been physically injured, psychologically impacted and/or bereaved as a result of their service.

Eligibility criteria for Veterans Brooke House is currently supported through two funding streams which set the eligibility criteria. Clients must fall into at least one of the following categories:

LIBOR funding

Veterans of the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force post 2008 and their families, who reside in Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland

Tackling Serious Stress funding

Veterans of the British Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and their families or carers who reside in Counties Fermanagh, Armagh, and Tyrone

Who can refer?

Clients can self-refer or be referred by Statutory Services, the Community and Voluntary Sector or Armed Forces Charities and Associations. Brooke House services may not be suitable for clients who are considered at high risk of harming themselves and/or others or who have been diagnosed with a Psychotic or Personality Disorder – a discussion with the team may help clarify this.

What is the process?

Once a referral is received and eligibility confirmed the client will receive an acknowledgement letter within 5 days asking them to call in to the service to arrange an appointment for screening by one of the Health and Wellbeing Coordinators. Following this, they will be referred and/or signposted to appropriate services based on need and following discussion with the client.

Support services include:

- Structured Residential Programme
- Psychological Support
- Physiotherapy
- Alternative and Complementary Therapy
- Nature-based therapy
- Physical Activity

For more information on Brooke House Health & Wellbeing Centre please contact us Tel:

028 8953 1223 Email: info@brookehouse.co.uk

Web: <http://www.brookehouse.co.uk>



38 (Irish) Brigade

Headquarters 38 (Irish) Bde is situated in Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn and is responsible for providing the personnel support infrastructure, which we call the 'Firm Base', for all serving Regular and Reserve military personnel and their families living and working in Northern Ireland. Around 8000 members of the Army leave each year and 38 (Irish) Bde has an obligation to ensure that those soldiers and their families, who elect to resettle in Northern Ireland, make the Transition to civilian life as successfully as possible. The aim is to produce a settled veteran, who makes a positive contribution to local society and acts as an advocate for the Army.

An individual can start the transition process up to 2 years before leaving. Some people may previously have known this as 'resettlement' but it is now much more than that. All aspects of that journey are considered, focused on the following 5 pillars: Education, Employment, Housing, Health and Welfare (E2H2W). During the process any areas of potential concern will be highlighted early and can be addressed prior to discharge either with the assistance of the unit welfare and resettlement staff or by signposting to external agencies.

38 (Irish) Bde provides practical assistance to all service leavers and their families, who are wishing to resettle within Northern Ireland via biannual Transition Fairs. The aim is to ensure that the service leaver is given all the relevant information needed, based upon the 5 Pillars of Transition, to make an informed choice allowing for the smooth transition into civilian life.

For further information on Transition or resettlement in general contact the SO2 Transition at 38 (Irish) Bde on:

Tel 02892 263906 Or

Email 38X-Pers-Transition-SO2@mod.uk

Local Council Veterans Champions

Each of Northern Ireland's eleven local Councils has a legally-appointed Veterans' Champion to help deal with issues raised by the ex-Service community and by individuals in need.

The Veterans' Champions are all Councillors who are firmly engaged with the NI Veterans' Support Office and so link to national policy and operational strategy but also have wide networks of support and influence within their own Council areas. They act as stakeholders for all the other support agencies and are also front-line gatekeepers when veterans in need cannot find any other alternative resolution to their issues.

To contact them and seek advice or guidance, use the link to your own Council area and ask for the Veterans' Champion.

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

Phone: 028 9034 0000

Email: info@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

Website: <https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/>



Ards and North Down Borough Council

Phone: 0300 013 3333

Email: enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/>



Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Phone: 0300 0300 900 / 028 3831 2400

Email: info@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/>



Belfast City Council

Phone: 028 9032 0202

Email: generalenquiries@belfastcity.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/>



Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

Phone: 028 7034 7034

Email: info@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk/>



Derry City and Strabane District Council

Phone: 028 7125 3253

Email: info@derrystrabane.com



Website: <http://www.derrystrabane.com/>

Fermanagh and Omagh District Council

Enniskillen Office Phone: 0300 303 1777

Email: info@fermanaghomagh.com

Website: <http://www.fermanaghomagh.com/>



Fermanagh & Omagh
District Council

Comhairle Ceantair
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí

Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council

Phone: 028 9250 9250

Email: enquiries@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/>



Lisburn &
Castlereagh
City Council

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Phone: 0300 124 5000

Email: enquiries@midandeastantrim.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/>



**Mid & East
Antrim**
Borough Council

Mid Ulster District Council

Dungannon Phone: 0300 013 2132

Email: info@midulstercouncil.org

Website: <http://www.midulstercouncil.org/>



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Phone: Council - 0300 013 2233

Email: info@nmandd.org

Website: <http://www.newrymournedown.org/>



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/>

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/your-local-doctor-gp>

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/health-service-dental-charges-and-treatments>

Families

Forces Families Jobs

Forces Families Jobs is the go-to place for training and employment for family members of currently serving UK military personnel.

Apply for jobs and access employment and training opportunities with companies and organisations who are forces family friendly. You can use this website with confidence in knowing that employers have signed the Armed Forces Covenant or are able to demonstrate their commitment to the Armed Forces.

This is your gateway to accessing information about acquiring new skills, upgrading your existing skills or applying directly to employers who are understanding of the unique challenges that come with being a family member of a serving person.

NI FEAT

The Families Employment Advisory Team (FEAT) is based in Lisburn but covers the whole of NI. This service is unique to NI and they will help you to update and 'civilianise' your CV, offer advice and coaching on interview technique and how to complete application forms. They can also, in conjunction with 38 Bde security, G2, give security advice about working in NI. For more details, contact RC-AWS-N-38X-0mailbox@mod.gov.uk

Manpower Jobs

Every day tens of thousands of people go to work because of us; and thousands of companies thrive because of the people we find them.

Throughout our 60 year history in the UK alone, we've led the way in the world of work. Few companies can match Manpower's history, and we're proud to remain the global leader in contingent and permanent recruitment workforce solutions to this day.

We're part of ManpowerGroup – the world's workforce expert, which connects more than 600,000 people to work every day and helps more than 400,000 clients worldwide. With 3,000 offices in 80 countries worldwide, ManpowerGroup offers the full spectrum of workforce solutions needed to address the complex recruitment challenges that exist today.



X-Forces Enterprise (XFE)

XFE is the UK's largest provider of enterprise support to the ex-military in business. Support is available to service leavers, veterans, reservists, spouses, widows, cadets and dependents over 18.

XFE supports the individual throughout their enterprise journey; starting and scaling up their own businesses, ongoing support through knowledge exchange, networking and mentoring.

We believe that everyone should attend a business programme at some point as it gives each delegate the opportunity to understand how business works. Whether you utilise these skills in your own business or work for another small, medium sized business these skills can be invaluable.

XFE is the industry leader for enterprise training for the Ministry of Defence and is a recipient of the Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award for outstanding support of the Armed Forces Community.

www.x-forces.com | [@XForces](https://www.instagram.com/XForces) | www.facebook.com/xforces



RBLI

LifeWorks-Families is a leading employability support service that helps military families get the career advice they need or job they want. The sessions are funded by organisations keen to support military families and are available, free of charge, to the immediate family of any

serving British Armed Forces member or veteran. LifeWorks-Families can be delivered face to face in small, fun, community forming groups or via virtual video coaching and includes access to our online portal and continued support – whenever or wherever you or your family needs it.

For more information and to sign up....

Just give us a call on 0800 319 6844 or drop us an email at lifeworks@rbli.co.uk

You can also contact us and register via our website www.wearelifeworks.org.uk



RFEA

RFEA - The Forces Employment Charity has launched a programme to help the spouses and partners of serving and ex-Forces personnel into employment with the support of a dedicated Families Employment Advisor.

The programme is open to civilian spouses and partners of still serving and ex-service personnel including divorced spouses and widows, subject to eligibility checks.

[Click here to view the RFEA Families Programme.](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)

Call: 07970 409688

Or email: lee.johnston@rfea.org.uk

www.rfea.org.uk/families



Recruit For Spouses

Recruit for Spouses is a social enterprise focussed on supporting military spouses to get back into the workplace. We believe in the power of the military spouse but, as military partners ourselves, we understand the impact military life has on careers, self-esteem and confidence.

We work with individuals within our community to help, guide and champion them as they take steps back into the workplace, offering a bespoke approach to each member.

We don't just provide job opportunities that are flexible and agile with employers who value hard work and commitment. We also have a Career Academy which aids you as you prepare for your next professional steps. Providing services such as free coaching and mentoring, free training programmes, CV toolkits and more – all designed to help you focus on what you want to achieve and increase your confidence in going out to get it.

At the heart of RFS is our community – we have the largest group of supportive, informative and encouraging military spouses and partners, and in our opinion, there is no one we would rather have on our side.

Get in touch: [RFS website](#)

For more information on our Career Academy: [Career Academy](#)

Employment

Northern Ireland has its own set of employment factors and unique employment legislation – this is different from the remainder of the UK.

This region covers six counties with cities such as Belfast, Londonderry, Enniskillen, and Armagh. It is emerging as one of the fastest-growing regions of the United Kingdom offering small to medium-sized enterprises excellent opportunities for growth and prosperity, which in turn creates various employment opportunities.

Each of these areas has its own varying set of employment factors which you need to consider when job searching. Therefore, it is beneficial for you to sign up with local job search websites and keep up to date with local business news and sign up with local job search websites to get relevant, up-to-date information to aid you in your search for employment.

As someone new to the civilian employment market it is crucial that you are realistic about your salary expectations, whilst ensuring that you do not undersell yourself and the vast skills and experience you have acquired. NIJobs have recently carried out research on NI Job Market and created a guide for salaries here in Northern Ireland. It can be found via this [link](#). Knowing your potential roles' market value will be useful for negotiations with employers, and also for planning during your resettlement.

RegularForcesEmploymentAssociation(RFEA)



RFEA are a UK wide charity who provide life-long support, jobs and training opportunities to service leavers, veterans and reservists. They have two Regional Employment Advisors in Northern Ireland. <https://www.rfea.org.uk/>

Recruitment agencies

[Recruitment agencies](#) are also known as employment agencies. You will go to a local branch for an interview and an assessment before being taken onto the agency's books. Recruitment consultants then work to match you with the vacancies they have. If you are suitable you will be shortlisted and put forward for an interview.

Grafton Recruitment www.graftonrecruitment.com/en - Job search that gives you access to an extensive database of jobs from all industry sectors throughout Northern Ireland

Diamond Recruitment Group www.diamondrg.com Discover jobs and careers in Belfast, Ballymena and across Northern Ireland

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

Industrial Temps <http://www.industrialtemps.com/> A leading recruitment agency throughout Northern Ireland, offering a great variety of jobs

CPL Jobs www.cpl.ie/northern-ireland-jobs Working with employers of all sizes, from start-up companies to multinational organisations, Cpl Northern Ireland is dedicated to placing the best people in the best jobs across all sectors

Hays Recruitment <http://www.hays.co.uk/contact-hays-northern-ireland/index.htm> Recruit for clients in the private and public sectors offering permanent, temporary and contract jobs

Brightwater Recruitment NI www.brightwaterni.com Recruits for jobs across Ireland & Northern Ireland in various sectors

Driver Hire <http://www.driverhire.co.uk/> UK's largest specialist transport and logistics recruitment company

Executive Job Sites

4c Executive www.4cexecutive.com Highly experienced specialists in executive search, headhunting, senior-level appointments and business-critical recruitment, based in Belfast, Northern Ireland

PwC www.pwc.co.uk/careers/ni-jobs.html Largest firm of professional advisors in Northern Ireland

Clarendon Executive www.clarendonexecutive.com - The leading corporate head-hunter in Northern Ireland.

Gilpin ESD <http://www.gilpinesd.com/> Northern Ireland leader in the Executive Recruitment market.

Veteran's Gateway

[Veteran Gateway](#) offers Information and useful services for

veterans seeking employment support



Careers Service

The Careers Service provides an impartial, all-age careers information, advice and guidance service, to help young people and adults make informed choices about their future career paths. Find out below how you can contact one of the Careers Service's professionally qualified careers advisers.

Find your local careers office

Select your nearest office for contact details and opening hours:

- [Antrim](#)
- [Armagh](#)
- [Ballymena](#)
- [Ballymoney](#)
- [Ballynahinch](#)
- [Banbridge](#)
- [Bangor and Newtownards](#)
- [Belfast](#)
- [Carrickfergus](#)
- [Coleraine](#)
- [Cookstown](#)
- [Downpatrick](#)
- [Enniskillen](#)
- [Kilkeel](#)
- [Larne](#)
- [Limavady](#)
- [Lisburn](#)
- [Londonderry](#)
- [Lurgan](#)
- [Magherafelt](#)
- [Newcastle](#)
- [Newry](#)
- [Omagh](#)
- [Portadown](#)
- [Strabane](#)

Northern Ireland Job Boards

www.nijobs.com

<https://www.recruitni.com/>

www.adzuna.co.uk

www.nicsrecruitment.gov.uk

<https://www.hscrecruit.com/>

Apprenticeships

Service leavers can find out more about apprenticeships in Northern Ireland here:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/search-apprenticeship-opportunities>

Advice, Pension and other Benefits

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/>



<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/>

A handy site for information on everything from rates, taxing your car and pensions

Self Employment Support



INVEST NI

As the regional business development agency, Invest NI's role is to grow the local economy.

We do this by helping new and existing businesses to compete internationally, and by attracting new investment to Northern Ireland.

We are part of the Department for the Economy and provide strong government support for business by effectively delivering the Government's economic development strategies.

Enterprise Northern Ireland

About Enterprise Northern Ireland

Since we were established in 2000 to represent the 28 Local Enterprise Agencies, Enterprise Northern Ireland have worked with thousands of entrepreneurs, helping them set up their business in Northern Ireland, and enabling them to grow and develop. Enterprise Northern Ireland helps local business on three levels:

Delivering

Enterprise Northern Ireland has been responsible for delivering national contracts with various public sector organisations, with contracts delivered primarily by the member agencies. Programmes have included:

- Regional Start Initiative ([Go For It](#))
- Social Entrepreneurship Programme
- Exploring Enterprise Programme
- Tradelinks programme
- Business Boot Camp

Nibusiness Info

nibusinessinfo.co.uk a free service offered by Invest Northern Ireland, is the official online channel for business advice and guidance in Northern Ireland.

It contains essential information, support and services for you and your business - whether you work for a large organisation or are on your way to starting up.

Simple to use, up to date and practical, nibusinessinfo.co.uk is the first place to go to find guidance on regulations and to access government services. It also has a number of useful online tools, calculators, and best practice case studies; and provides access to funding options, as well as wider support.