

Extra funding for service charities as veterans' support is stepped up

- £6-million of new funding announced for 100 military charities across the UK
- consultation will be launched in July on tax relief for businesses that employ veterans
- enhanced support for ex-service personnel announced during Armed Forces week part of government's drive to make the UK the best country to be a veteran.

Today the Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA) and the MOD have announced that 100 UK Armed Forces charities will benefit from nearly £6-million of extra funding to support serving personnel, veterans and their families during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

This is part of a package of support announced by the Chancellor in April to ensure charities can continue their vital work during the pandemic.

The charities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland that are benefiting from this funding range from smaller local charities to bigger, more well-known names.

The charities provide support to veterans and serving personnel in a range of different areas, including employment, mental health and well-being, physical health, and recovery and support for service families.

As part of the government's commitment to supporting service personnel throughout their military and civilian lives, next month a consultation will also be launched on employers paying no National Insurance contributions on the salary of any veteran they take on during their first year of civilian employment.

This delivers on the government's manifesto commitment to encourage businesses to further utilise the immense skills and experience that veterans can bring to businesses.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Johnny Mercer said:

Today we mark and give thanks to our veterans for the outstanding service which they have given to this country. To show our appreciation we're advancing veterans issues across government, through the Office for Veterans' Affairs. I'm delighted as well to confirm extra funding for service charities to help them through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

If it wasn't for the brave servicemen and women who serve and protect our country, we would not have a United Kingdom to call our home.

That's why we must continue to do everything we can to support our veterans through these challenging times.

Under the plans announced in this year's Budget, an employer taking on a veteran earning £25,000 will save around £2,000 in NICs.

General Sir John McColl, Chairman of the Confederation of Service Charities, said:

This emergency funding is a very welcome step towards sustaining life-saving support for those in need across the Armed Forces Community. The Service Charity Sector has once again demonstrated great imagination and determination in adapting its delivery methods during this crisis, and we look forward to continuing to work with the MOD and the OVA to sustain these vital services in the coming months as the true impact of the pandemic is fully felt by charities throughout the Sector.

Employers currently pay Employers' National Insurance contributions of 13.8% of the employee's salary. Under this measure, they will be able to save this cost on an employee's salary up to the Upper Earnings Limit (£50,000).

Recently the OVA announced the launch of a study to look at whether COVID-19 has had any specific impact on the veteran community in the UK. This in turn will allow policy makers in government to understand potential issues affecting veterans and respond accordingly based on expert advice and evidence.

The OVA, which was created last year, is ensuring that the whole of government is delivering better outcomes for veterans, particularly in areas such as mental health, employment and housing. It is working in partnership with government departments, the Devolved Administrations and charities to coordinate activity across the United Kingdom.

The role of the OVA includes:

- pulling together all functions of government, and better coordinating charity sector provision, in order to ensure this nation's life-long duty to those who have served
- ensuring that every single veteran and their family knows where to turn to access support when required
- helping to generate a 'single view of the veteran' by making better use of data to understand veterans' needs and where gaps in provision exist
- improving the perception of veterans.

The charities receiving funding are as follows:

- ABF The Soldiers' Charity
- Age UK Suffolk
- Alabaré Christian Care and Support, £62,462
- Armed Forces Community Support Hub
- Beyond the Battlefield NI, £40,000
- Blind Veterans UK, £125,000
- Bravehound, £45,849
- Bright Horizons Day care Centre, £20,160
- British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association, £125,000
- British Nuclear Test Veterans Association, £59,600
- Brooke House Project
- Broughton House Home for Ex-Service Men and Women, £125,000
- Building Heroes Education Foundation, £50,250
- Burnley FC in the Community, £17,981
- Can International, £24,074
- Cardiff City FC Foundation, £11,108
- Care After Combat, £83,318
- Care and Repair (North East Wales), £23,460
- Care for Veterans (formerly The Queen Alexandra Hospital Home), £125,000
- Catterick Garrison Preschool Group, £16,689
- Central Bank Lisburn Station, £20,000
- Ceredigion Armed Forces Veterans Hub, £2,000
- Combat Stress, £250,000
- Communities Fiji Britain £15,000
- Deafblind Cymru
- Dig In
- East Sussex Veterans Hub
- Erskine
- Finchale Group
- Friends of Wavell
- Future for Heroes
- Gloucester Rugby Foundation
- Groundwork Manchester Salford Stockport Tameside and Trafford
- Help 4 Homeless Veterans
- Help for Heroes
- Historic Army Aircraft Flight Trust
- Home Start Richmondshire
- Horseback UK
- Hull FC Community Foundation
- Icarus
- Improving Lives Plymouth
- Invictus Games Foundation
- KartForce
- Maximum Edge C.I.C.
- Mindfulness Scotland
- Mission Motorsport
- Nomad Construction Training CIC
- On Course Foundation
- Operation Veteran CIC
- Oxford Parent Infant Project
- Poppy Factory

- Poppyscotland
- PTSD Resolution Ltd
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham Charity
- Quick Response Memorial Woodland
- RAF Association
- RAF Brize Norton Pre-School
- RAF Benevolent Fund
- Reading Force
- Recruit for Spouses Career Academy CIC
- RFEA – The Regular Forces Employment Charity
- Royal British Legion Industries
- Royal Hospital of Chelsea
- Sailors Children's Society
- Scotty's Little Soldiers
- Sharks Community Trust
- Sheffield Mind
- Shots in the Community Foundation
- Smart Savings South West CIC
- Special Boat Service Association
- Spinal Injuries Association
- St John & Red Cross Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS)
- Stand Easy
- Step Together
- Supporting Wounded Veterans Ltd
- Surf Action
- Team Endeavour Racing UK
- The Advocacy People
- The Bridge for Heroes
- The British Training Board
- The Felix Fund
- The Matthew Project
- The Military Wives Choirs Foundation
- The Not Forgotten Association
- The Royal Air Force Central Fund
- The Royal British Legion
- The Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund
- The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity
- The Royal Star and Garter Homes
- The Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation
- The Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association – Forces Help
- The VC Gallery
- The Veterans Charity
- The Veterans Hub Weymouth & Portland CIC
- The Warrior Programme
- Thistle Health and Wellbeing
- Tom Harrison House
- Veterans Aid
- Veterans in Communities
- Veterans Outreach Support
- Walking With The Wounded
- Waterloo Uncovered

- Wigan Borough Armed Forces HQ CIC.