

## News story: MOD Veterans UK welcomes Prince Harry to Blackpool in a visit marking 25 years of helpline support

During the visit, Prince Harry was accompanied by Jon Parkin, Head of Veterans UK, as he was shown the extent of work undertaken in support of all UK veterans. Veterans UK provides vital welfare help for ex-service personnel and their families, working in partnership with a number of charities and support networks. They also administer pension and compensation schemes for those injured or bereaved through service in the armed forces.



His Royal Highness Prince Harry talks to Veterans UK staff about the work they do, Crown Copyright, All Rights Reserved

Jon Parkin, Head of Veterans UK said:

I was delighted to welcome Prince Harry to Veterans UK. I am hugely inspired by his work with veterans, so I was very proud to be able demonstrate the breadth of services we provide here and the commitment our staff show in support of veterans.



Christine Bulpitt explains the support provided by the Veterans UK Helpline team to Prince Harry, Crown Copyright, All Rights Reserved

Representatives from the Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) described to the Prince how they provide assistance in enhancing the quality of life for veterans.

Russ Egan, Regional Welfare Manager said:

It was an immense pleasure to meet Prince Harry this morning. He clearly has a keen interest in the support and assistance we provide to our ex-service veterans and recognises the importance in helping those approaching discharge to ensure we make that transition pathway as seamless as possible.

Prince Harry also met the Veterans UK Helpline team and gained an insight into the invaluable service they provide. Helpline advisor, Lyndsay Ethell facilitated a call with the Prince watching on.



Prince Harry listens in to a Helpline call with Lyndsay Ethell, Crown Copyright, All Rights Reserved

Lyndsay said:

It was a great honour meeting Prince Harry, a once in a lifetime opportunity that I feel extremely privileged to be part of. The whole of Helpline deserve this recognition for all the hard work we do and to say we all enjoyed the day is an understatement!

The Prince then took time to talk to members of the local community who have received help from Veterans UK over the years. They included a retired squadron leader who receives a war disablement pension, a family member who has recently received welfare help and a member of the local Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee.





Prince Harry is presented with a Passchendaele 100 brass poppy badge by Phoebe Taylor, Crown Copyright, All Rights Reserved

Prior to leaving, local children of Veterans UK staff presented the Prince with a brass Passchendaele 100 poppy made from shell fuses found on World War 1 battlefields.



Prince Harry unveils a plaque to commemorate 25 years of the Veterans UK Helpline, Crown Copyright, All Rights Reserved

Outside the building the Prince unveiled a plaque marking 25 years of service by the Veterans UK Helpline to great rapture by the watching staff.