



Celebrating Armed Forces Week

MEMBERS of Veterans In Communities were represented at flag raising ceremonies across Lancashire to mark Armed Forces Day.

In Haslingden, at the war memorial on Manchester Road, the Armed Forces Week flag was raised while in Rawtenstall, in St Mary's Gardens, Rawtenstall, VIC was out in force for the Borough's official ceremony.

Present were: Chief Executive Amanada Walton, Operations Manager Phil Speddy, trustees Bob Elliott, Bob Smethurst and Alan Woods and Councillor Marilyn Proctor and members Ron Flowers and Bob Brindley.

The Mayor of Rossendale Councillor Michelle Smith attended and was accompanied by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire Louise Cooper BEM.

Amanda and Trustee Bob then went over to County Hall where they were joined by Administrator Amy Thompson who is also the



Royal British Legion Country Standard Bearer and was also on parade.

On Saturday June 28 there will be an Armed Forces family fun day at the VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden from noon to 3pm. Army cadets will be present along with Lancashire Fire and Rescue and Community First Responders. There will be a tombola, facepainting, carnival games, a food stall and a raffle.



King's team spruce up centre

A TEAM of 10 King's Trust students completed a 10-day community project to spruce up the VIC Centre.

The ACCROSS 35 team, linked to Nelson and Colne College's Accrington and Rossendale base, were on a 12-week programme to overcome adversity and help them develop skills to improve their future employability potential.

To celebrate the end of the project, the Mayor of Rossendale Councillor Michelle Smith and Mayor of Hyndburn Councillor Josh Allen and Mayoress Sheena Tyldesley attended a ceremony.

Students explained how they sourced masking tape from Lidl and paint brushes

from Asda.

They learnt about health and safety and risk assessments and appointed team leaders to co-ordinate daily activities.

Courtney Diggel, 18, from Accrington, is now hoping to train as a paramedic. Her great-grandfather served in the Second World War.

She said: "We went to different charities and we picked out the one which stood out most and that was VIC.

"VIC stood out because veterans risk their lives for us and we never show our appreciation, here they have a place they can come to get help if they need it, and it is amazing that our team has done something



for them in return.

"We learned how to work as a team and to manage our feelings and improve our listening and communication skills.

"Most of all, we all learnt how nice it is to do stuff for the community and what the community means to us."

As well as painting the conference room, the team

also carried out work in the back yard including painting the shed and a bench

Operations Manager Phil, Speddy and Chief Executive Amanada Walton said the young people had become a part of the VIC team.

Phil and Amanada were presented with a signed and framed picture of the King's Trust team which will be put up in the centre.



Injury delays bike ride

Thank you

TO CELEBRATE Volunteers Week in June we would like to say a heartfelt thank you to the volunteers who give so much to VIC.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "Without them we simply couldn't do what we do. Thank you to each and every of you for your incredible and wonderful dedication.

"Whether you are helping with fundraising, events and activities or supporting our team at the Centre or guiding us as Trustees, your efforts do not go unnoticed."

We would also like to thank the Community Champions at Tesco stores in Rossendale Wendy and Emma and Laura at Asda for their continued support of our charity throughout the year.

School help

IT IS an honour for VIC to have been selected as one of four nominated charities by the school houses at Broadway Primary School in Haslingden.

VIC will be supported by Red House and our members will attend assemblies to explain what the charity does.

Already there are plans for a colour run, summer fair and Christmas fair.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "The inspiration behind pairing the school's houses with a local charity is to let the children know that not everyone has the same opportunities, but that there are charities in their community that can help."

OUR planned Riding for Forces and Families 260-mile cycle ride has had to be postponed until July after one of the participants suffered an injury during training.

Operations Manager Phil Speddy's wife Mandy ruptured her quad tendon and has had to undergo surgery.

Phil said: "I'm so incredibly proud of her bravery, resilience, and spirit through what has been an extremely tough and testing time."

Mandy, Phil and veteran Bob Brindley were due to be cycling from London to Haslingden during Armed Forces Week but the event will now take place from July 20-26.

Phil said: "While Mandy won't be able to join us on the road in July, her courage continues to inspire us all.

"The entire VIC team is standing with her in her



recovery, and we're more determined than ever to ride in her honour, and for the veterans and families who need our support.

"Thank you for your understanding, encouragement, and unwavering support. We ride united, for Mandy, for each other, and for the causes we vehemently believe in.

"Please join us in wishing Mandy a strong and speedy recovery. We can't wait to see her back in the saddle."

The event will raise money

for three charities VIC, Scotty's Little Soldiers and the Friends of Lancashire Army Cadet Force.

To help raise funds, Bob, Bill Ogden and Phil were in Tesco, Rawtenstall, and in Asda where Community Champion Laura Saxton also donated much needed supplies which will help sustain the crew and support team on the journey.

To sponsor visit <https://sponsorme.charitiestrust.org/.../35ccf70c-8664...>



Champion visits

WE WERE delighted to welcome new Armed Forces Champion for Lancashire County Councillor Gary Kniveton to the VIC Centre.

Gary, who founded Bay Veterans' Association in Morecambe has been a friend of VIC for a number years and we have worked together on numerous projects.

He attended with Bay Veterans' new Business Manager and Executive Director Wendy Tose as Gary will be stepping back to focus on his Lancashire Armed Forces and County Councillor roles.

We will be working together to support veterans – here's continuing our strong and meaningful partnership.

Top business award for VIC

SINCE launching in 2014, over 200 charities have received Weston Charity Awards.

The most recent impact report revealed that six months after participating in Pilotlight 360, an impressive 100% of charity leaders said it positively impacted the effectiveness of their senior management team.

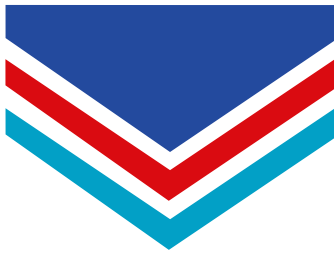
The Weston Charity Awards support the vital work of small charities across the Midlands, Wales, and the North of England. Award winners gain free access to 'Pilotlight 360' – a remarkable eight-month support programme of charity leadership coaching worth an estimated £16,000. VIC won the award in 2024, but deferred participation

until 2025.

Amanda Walton, CEO and Ronnie Barker, Chair of Trustees attended the Awards launch for the Class of 2025 in Birmingham.

Clare Gough, Director at the Garfield Weston Foundation, said the awards give charities space to reflect, learn, and forge a path to long-term sustainability and success.

Amanda said: "We are so grateful that we were permitted to defer our participation to this year. We are excited to join the programme and as a direct result, I hope VIC can further develop strategies to provide sustainable core capacity to provide secure and ongoing support to vulnerable veterans and their families."



On track with Mission Motorsport

Final farewell



VIC member RAF Veteran Jacko Pearce joined veterans to say a final farewell to LWA Carol Hesketh at Burnley Crematorium by parading the VIC Standard.

MEMBERS of VIC have been gearing up once again for a mix of banter, brews, and cars thanks to exciting racing opportunities offered from Mission Motorsport.

In May, VIC joined Mission Motorsport for a track day at Three Sisters Race Circuit in Wigan. Recognising from the outset the remarkable inspirational and therapeutic power sport holds, the charity supports those affected by military operations by giving them direct access to it.

Following the success of May's event, we were delighted to return in June, with 11 VIC members experiencing the thrill of high-speed laps as passengers in racing cars.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "My driver told me he rarely gets to push his car like that on a regular day, being on the track gave him the chance to give something back



to those who have served."

On Wednesday July 16, we're heading back to Three Sisters for a free Karting Day so this time, our veterans will be in the driving seat.

Operations Manager Phil Speddy said: "The Mission Motorsport events are incredibly well organised and professionally run, and we're extremely grateful to be

included.

"They've proved hugely popular with our members, offering them a unique and exciting outlet that's a bit different from our usual activities.

"We're also very appreciative of the car owners who generously bring their vehicles and share the track experience with us."

Helping sew the seeds for a thriving community

OUR Community Capacity Builder Brian Hawke has been visiting a veterans' project in Fleetwood this month.

Brian met with Tony Codling, *pictured below*, who works for Fleetwood Town in the Community and he also visited a veterans' garden at Norcross, Thornton-in-Cleveleys.



He said: "It is great to meet with the different organisations and discuss how we can support veterans across Lancashire."

The veteran groups tackle isolation and also set programmes of activities.

Thrive Together has capacity builders across the North West working with the community to build services and organisations.

They are then encouraged to share best practice with others so everyone benefits.

While on the Fylde coast, Brian also met up with Fleetwood Council's Armed Forces Champion Jimilao Kuruvakadua, *pictured above*.



Why not join the choir?

OUR community choir is appealing for new members to come along and see how much fun singing together can be.

Every Thursday, the VIC Choir meets at the VIC Centre for fun sing-a-long rehearsal, with the emphasis on the word fun.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "You don't need to be able to read music or even be able to sing! Just come along and see the benefits of being in a group and singing.

"Anyone is welcome to just come along on a Thursday

evening from 6.30pm to 8.30pm and just give it a go."

The choir has been out raising awareness of VIC with a performance at Burnley's Tesco store, thank you to Community Champion Mukhtar for the invitation.

This month, the choir also performed at ASDA in Rawtenstall – thanks to Community Champion Laura Saxton for inviting us. Thanks also to our collectors Jacko and Stuart for their support.

To find out more about the choir visit on a Thursday evening or call Administrator Amy Thompson on 01706 833180.



ROSSENDALE

Activities at the VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL, unless otherwise stated.

Outreach Service

MONDAY-FRIDAY

9am-4.30pm

For a home appointment call 01706 833180

MONDAY

Crafty Chatters

10am-12 noon

TUESDAY

Art Group

10am-3.30pm

Cost £6 places limited book on

01706 833180

WEDNESDAY

Allotment

Help on the allotment in Holcombe Road, Helmshore. Contact 01706 833180

THURSDAY

Greggs RV

1pm-3pm

THURSDAY

VIC Choir (weekly)

6.30-8.30pm

FRIDAY

Art Group

10am-3.30pm

Cost £6 places limited book on

01706 833180

SUNDAY

Drop-in

10.15am-12.30pm

SECOND SATURDAY IN THE MONTH

Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club

10am-12.30pm

Haslingden Community Link Cafe, Bury Road, Haslingden BB4 5PG (book in advance)

EVERY MONTH

Painting in the Style of Bob Ross art classes

Contact Darren 01706 833180

Walking Groups/ Social Inclusion trips

see Facebook or website for details

BURNLEY AND PENDLE

Outreach Service

MONDAY

10am-noon

Breakfast Club at Burnley Miners' Social Club, Plumbe Street, Burnley, BB11 3AA.

Contact 01706 833180 for dates of outreach at: Burnley FC in the Community; Pendle Armed Forces Support Group, Holmefield House, Gisburn Road, Barrowford; Morrisons in Nelson and Asda in Colne.

HEYWOOD, MIDDLETON AND ROCHDALE

VIC Outreach

TUESDAY

The Mess Tin - cafe and drop-in

1pm-2.30pm

The Lighthouse Project, Middleton Shopping Centre, M24 1AB.

THURSDAY

Rochdale Veterans' Breakfast Club and VIC Outreach

9am Flying Horse Hotel, Packer Street, Rochdale, OL16 1NJ.

HYNDBURN

Outreach / Drop-In/ Model Railway Club/ Art Group

FRIDAY 10am-3pm

VIC Hyndburn, Accrington Arndale Centre, BB5 1EX.

Accrington Stanley Breakfast Club/ Drop-In

LAST SATURDAY EVERY MONTH

10.30am-noon

Stanley Sports Hub, Thorneyholme Road, Accrington, BB5 6BD.

BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN

Veterans' football

MONDAY 8-9pm

Blackburn Rovers Indoor Centre, Ewood Park, Blackburn BB2 4JF. A cost applies.

Outreach Service

TUESDAY 10am-noon

Rovers Breakfast Hub, Legends Lounge, Darwen End, Blackburn Rovers FC, Ewood Park, Blackburn, BB2 4JF.

Contact Chris McGrail 07787 585109

RIBBLE VALLEY & PRESTON

TUESDAYS

Redoubt Coffee Morning and Outreach

10am-noon

Trinity Methodist Church, Wesleyan Row,

Parson Lane, Clitheroe, BB7 2JY.

Sandbag Cafe

10am-12.30pm

St George's Church, off Lune Street, Preston PR1 2NP. This is a joint session with Lancashire Armed Forces Association.

VIC – 01706 833180

Chief Executive Amanda Walton

amandawalton@vic.org.uk

Operations Manager Phil Speddy

philspeddy@vic.org.uk

Administrator Amy Thompson

amythompson@vic.org.uk

Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth

stevebutterworth@vic.org.uk

Project Worker Ray Sharkey

raysharkey@vic.org.uk 07741 902 188

Community Capacity Builder Brian Hawke

brianhawke@vic.org.uk 07741 902 343

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren

Horsnell

darrenhorsnell@vic.org.uk

VIC Choir Bookings Barry Hyde

barryhyde@vic.org.uk

Veterans at risk of homelessness

or organisations working with them are encouraged to contact OP FORTITUDE

0800 952 0774 or visit riv.org.uk/opfortitude

Combat Stress Helpline

0800 138 1619

NHS Military Veterans Psychological

Therapies Service (NW)

0300 323 0707

The Royal British Legion

0808 802 8080 7 days a week 8am-8pm

SSAFA

email Lancashire@ssafa.org.uk

01772 260 462

Citizens Advice East Lancashire

0808 278 7975 freephone Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

The Samaritans

01282 694929 Mon to Fri 9am-9pm

Freephone 116 123

Op Courage

0300 373 3332 email

opcourageNORTH@cntw.nhs.uk

Veterans UK Free Helpline

0808 1914 218

East Lancashire Single Point of Access via

GP or self-referral

0800 0130 707

Armed Forces Support Group

01282 613132

Veterans In Communities
Charity Number 1151194

Want to help?

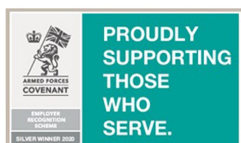
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