



VETERANS

FOR VETERANS IN CARE

Finding our “Forgotten Army”

Veterans For Veterans In Care

Annual report and unaudited accounts

14th November 2024 to 31st December 2025

Page contents

Page	Content
3	Legal Information
4	Chairmans report
5	Our three pillars
6-7	Military-Themed Flash Cards
8-9	Veteran visitor program
10	Empowerment Workshops
11	Funders and supporters
12-18	Milestones
19	Feedback
20-22	Finances

Legal information

Chairman	Mark Elliott
Trustees	John Hambling
Trustees	Kelly Anne Ross
Charity Number	1210937
Registered building	5 Greenbank villas Jarrow NE32 3NA
Registered Bank	Co-op Bank 1 Balloon Street Manchester M60 4EP

Chairman's Report

The past year has been a big step forward for Veterans for Veterans in Care (VVIC). We've strengthened partnerships, expanded our reach, and made a real difference for veterans living in care. At the heart of everything is our mission: making sure every veteran in a care setting is recognised, valued, and supported.

One of our main focuses this year has been bringing recognition directly to veterans who can no longer get out to community events. At The Lodge Care Home, our Remembrance initiative honoured five veterans with a personalised in-home service, along with commemorative plaques now proudly displayed at their room doors. Building on that success, we held two formal ceremonies in early 2025 to present Veterans Badges and Oaths of Allegiance, helping residents reconnect with their identity and service.

Our community engagement has also grown significantly. Events like the Christmas Lunch and VE80 celebration brought together around 180 people, veterans, families, carers, schools, and local groups. These gatherings have helped bridge generations and strengthen community ties. Our first Armed Forces Day awareness event in South Tyneside raised our profile even further, and taking part in the Lincoln Care Association event (with support from Solutions for Care) sparked new interest in our **"What Makes Us Different"** empowerment workshops for care providers.

A major milestone this year was achieving official charity status in November 2024. This strengthened our credibility, unlocked early funding opportunities, and reinforced our ongoing work to support veterans, families, and carers across the Northeast.

We also launched the Veteran Visitor Programme, which is already making a clear difference. Monthly peer-to-peer visits are helping reduce loneliness and give residents a sense of connection. Alongside this, our **"What Makes Us Different"** empowerment workshops are giving caregivers the cultural understanding and confidence they need to deliver truly compassionate, veteran-centred care.

Our 3 Pillars

Veterans for Veterans in Care (VFVIC) is built on three simple but powerful pillars: **Locate, Engage, and Integrate**. These guide everything we do and help us make sure no veteran in a care setting is ever forgotten or left without support.

Locate

Our priority is finding Armed Forces veterans living in the care sector. Over time, many veterans lose touch with the wider military community, especially when they move into care. Because we're an organisation created by veterans for veterans, we're committed to seeking them out, by visiting individual care homes to locate our brothers and sister, recognising their service, and making sure they, and their partners, receive the respect, support, and connection they deserve.

Engage

Engagement is all about involving, interesting, and connecting people, and it sits right at the heart of our work. We create opportunities for veterans to share stories, take part in meaningful activities, and rebuild a sense of identity and belonging. It's the step that turns simple recognition into real, human connection.

Integrate

Integration is about making sure veterans in care stay part of the wider veteran community rather than feeling cut off from it. Through events, peer-to-peer support, and strong partnerships, we help veterans reconnect with the culture, camaraderie, and shared history that shaped their lives.

Military Themed Flash Cards for Veterans and Veterans with Dementia

Funded by: Barbour

Project Overview

With support from Barbour, our volunteer team and members from our local veteran community have created a set of military-themed flash cards to help carers, families, and veterans, including those living with dementia, connect more easily in care and retirement homes. Each card uses familiar images and military cues to spark conversation, trigger memories, and build emotional connection.

Objectives

- Create a simple, practical tool that helps carers and families engage positively with veterans.
- Support communication and reminiscence through recognisable military themes.
- Boost emotional wellbeing and help reduce isolation.

Development Process

- **Collaborative Brainstorming:** We held a dedicated session at The Longship in Hebburn, home of the Hebburn Armed Forces Breakfast Club. Veterans from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Merchant Navy shared their experiences and memories, helping shape the content and authenticity of the cards.
- **Research & Design:** Before the event, we tested early prototypes during a veteran visit. One card featured bulled boots, paired with open questions like “Do you know what these are?” and “Where did you wear them?” The responses helped guide the final design.
- **Content Creation:** Each card includes photographs, cap badges, rank structures, and historical imagery linked to the veteran’s service era, along with simple information and open-ended prompts.
- **Testing:** The completed cards will be trialled in several care homes, with feedback gathered on clarity, ease of use, and how well they support communication.
- **Adjustment:** We’ll refine the cards based on feedback, focusing on readability, prompt quality, and accessibility for veterans with different cognitive needs.

Outcomes & Impact

- Early testing shows strong engagement, with veterans sharing stories, memories, and emotional responses.
- The cards are expected to break down communication barriers and encourage meaningful interactions, helping improve social and emotional wellbeing.

Next Steps

- Roll out the cards to more care homes once they complete their Silver Level Workshop.
- Develop additional themed sets to keep long-term engagement fresh and meaningful.
- Continue gathering feedback to monitor communication outcomes and guide future improvements.



ARMY5
info@vfw.co.uk

Highly polished (called bullet boots) boots used while on a parade such as the Trooping of the Colour

1. How often did you wear these?
2. When and where did you wear them?
3. Did you wear Ammo boots or DMS
4. How did you get them that shiny?
5. What polish did you use (possible Kiwi parade gloss)?
6. Did you spit or use water to polish them, and what type of cloth did you use?
7. How long did it take you to get them looking like that?
8. Tell me about the parades that stand out in your memory, either good or bad

Veteran visitor program

A Veteran Visitor plays an important part in supporting former service personnel living in care homes by offering emotional connection, shared understanding, and a renewed sense of identity. Many veterans find it easier to talk to someone who has walked a similar path, and these visits can ease feelings of loneliness, low mood, and being forgotten. Through conversation, shared stories, and gentle reminiscence, Veteran Visitors help restore dignity and spark memories.

The role involves regular, planned visits, sometimes supported by a buddy system that pairs older veterans with younger ones for ongoing companionship. Visitors may also get involved in special events linked to military dates or use creative ways to connect, like story sharing, looking through military history books, or chatting about regiments, ships, or aircrafts.

For the visitors themselves, the role brings a renewed sense of purpose. It offers a chance to reflect on their own service and reconnect with the wider veteran community. There are responsibilities too: working closely with care home staff, keeping an up-to-date visit diary, and completing basic training in dementia awareness and respectful communication. A DBS check is required for safeguarding, and visitors are encouraged to wear berets, jackets, or medals to help spark recognition and conversation. To take on the role, volunteers should have served at least three years in the Armed Forces and be able to commit to at least one hour a month.

Demographics:

- 37 Care homes visited.
- 38 veterans located in care homes.
- 23 Army.
- 5 RAF.
- 6 Navy.
- 4 Merchant Navy.
- 30 males, 8 females.
- Ages ranging from 71 to 103.
- 13 veterans received their official Veterans' Badges and Oath of Allegiance, ensuring their service was formally recognised.
- 3 Coffee morning over 3 Care homes.

Case Study: Veteran Visitor SB

SB is a Veteran Visitor with Veterans for Veterans in Care (VFVIC), helping the charity find, engage, and reconnect veterans living in care homes and sheltered housing. He stepped into the role after recognising a clear problem: many veterans in care had become cut off from the wider military community, losing the sense of identity, belonging, and camaraderie that once meant so much to them. At the same time, SB was looking for renewed purpose and connection himself, hoping to ease his own feelings of isolation as a veteran.

To help him get off to a confident start, SB was accompanied by the VFVIC Operations Manager for his first three visits. This gave him guidance, consistency, and reassurance, and highlighted how important sensitivity, professionalism, and relationship-building are when working with residents and care home staff.

SB took a structured and proactive approach from the beginning. He created a full spreadsheet of all local care homes and sheltered housing sites, then visited each one in person. His friendly, respectful, and professional manner helped introduce VFVIC's aims and encouraged managers to help identify veteran residents. Some homes didn't respond, likely because they had no veterans, but many did. Where veterans were identified, SB set up regular visits. One home now receives a monthly one-to-one visit, and three others with multiple veterans have started monthly coffee mornings that are gradually becoming more structured social gatherings.

SB's background has played a huge part in his success. He served as a Merchant Navy Marine Radio Officer with Marconi International, spending two years at sea on Far East routes, followed by 14 years in the Royal Navy as an Electronic Warfare Officer, serving both ashore and at sea. He also spent three years in the Royal Naval Reserve, seven years as a Sea Cadet Corps Commanding Officer, and 20 years in local government, eventually moving into a senior finance role. This mix of operational discipline, leadership, community involvement, and organisational skill has given him the confidence and credibility to approach care homes effectively.

The main issue SB tackles is the isolation many veterans experience in care settings. By helping them reconnect with their military identity and community, he reduces loneliness and supports their wellbeing. His approach blends structured outreach with personal visits, regular routines, and group activities where appropriate. VFVIC leaflets, posters, business cards, and small branded gifts help create a warm, welcoming atmosphere, while SB focuses on building trust, listening, and letting veterans guide the conversation.

Since the Washington Veteran Visitor post was created in October 2025, SB has visited 11 care homes, identified 11 veterans, set up one individual monthly visit, and launched three coffee mornings involving 10 veterans. Feedback from both veterans and care home staff has been consistently positive, and a new volunteer has now joined the programme locally. Looking ahead, plans include revisiting homes that didn't respond, expanding activities, and widening coverage into nearby communities while bringing more Veteran Visitors on board.

What Makes Us Different – Empowerment Workshops

Our “**What Makes Us Different**” empowerment workshops are designed to give caregivers the confidence and understanding they need to communicate more easily and meaningfully with the veterans they support. Many staff want to connect but aren’t always sure how military backgrounds shape identity, behaviour, or day-to-day preferences. These workshops break that barrier by exploring military culture, routines, language, humour, and lived experience in a friendly, down-to-earth way.

Caregivers often tell us that the sessions help them “finally get it”, why a veteran reacts a certain way, why structure matters, or why small details can carry big emotional weight. By seeing the person behind the uniform, staff feel more prepared, more relaxed, and more confident when starting conversations or offering support.

The impact is clear: better communication, stronger relationships, and a noticeable lift in trust, dignity, and emotional wellbeing for both staff and residents.

Demographics:

- We've now delivered our presentation in **6 care homes**.
- **32 members of care home staff** have taken part so far.



Funders and supporters.

Support from Solutions for Care

Solutions for Care have been a huge help to us from the very beginning. They've opened doors, introduced us to new people, and helped spread the word about what VFVIC is all about. Their invite to the Lincoln Care Association event was a real boost too, it gave us the chance to show what we do and sparked genuine interest in our **"What Makes Us Different"** empowerment workshops.

They also provided the early seed funding that helped us get off the ground. That support gave us the breathing space and confidence to start building momentum and reaching veterans much sooner than we could have managed alone.

On top of all that, they've always been there with advice, encouragement, and hands-on help whenever we've needed it. Their backing has strengthened our credibility and helped us connect with more veterans, families, and care providers across the region.

We're really grateful to the funders and supporters who've backed us and helped us grow. Support from groups like the Sir James Knott Trust, Ballinger Charitable Trust, Dog Bank Wind Farm, Karbon Homes, the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, The Red Bench Project, Barbour, Bede's Helping Hands Food Bank, Inspire South Tyneside, South Tyneside Council, The Mayor's Charity and Sunderland AFC. Their help, whether through funding, resources, encouragement, or connecting us with the right people, has allowed us to get projects off the ground, reach more veterans in care, and keep building the kind of support our veterans deserve. Their belief in our work keeps us moving forward.



Milestones

First donation: What an amazing milestone for Veterans for Veterans in Care. TB and her brilliant team from Bede's Helping Hands have been out fundraising again, and we're blown away by their generosity. BHH's have been absolute stars over the past year, stepping in when it mattered most, from providing a wheelchair for a veteran who was struggling to get around, to supplying a mobility scooter that's made a world of difference. Your support keeps our veterans moving, connected, and valued. We couldn't do this without you.



First Care Home Remembrance Event: In both 2024 and 2025, The Lodge Care Home held their very first Remembrance Parades, as their veterans couldn't make it to the main service. They invited Veterans for Veterans in Care on both occasions to help mark the day, and it was honestly lovely to be part of it each time. Every veteran received a plaque to proudly display in their room, and The Lodge care home have now completed accreditation through the Veteran Friendly Framework. The care and respect they show is something special. If their veterans couldn't get to Remembrance Sunday, we made sure to bring it to them. We will remember them.



Christmas Lunch: Veterans for Veterans in Care were delighted and honoured to be invited to the Veterans Christmas Lunch, organised by Bede's Helping Hands and SURT (Supporting Unsafe Relationships Together). It was a brilliant afternoon where two generations came together to share stories, laughs, and experiences. It was lovely seeing the Young Surt Steering supporters sitting alongside our older veterans, really taking the time to connect. Five Quarters Café put on an amazing meal that everyone enjoyed. Veterans from The Lodge Care Home, NAAFI Break ST, South Tyneside Council Housing Plus, and Palmersdene Care Home all joined in. The gifts from Bede's Helping Hands were a perfect finishing touch.



First Veterans Badge and his Oath of Allegiance presentation: Veterans for Veterans in Care were absolutely chuffed this week to present Mr BT with his Veterans Badge and his Oath of Allegiance. It was a really special moment, and having his close family there made it even better. You could see how proud he was, and it honestly made the whole morning feel quite moving. We spent time chatting, sharing a few laughs, and celebrating everything he's given through his service. A huge thank you to Stapleton House Care Home for the warm welcome and brilliant hospitality, it really helped make the day feel extra special for everyone involved. Mr BT receives a monthly from our Veteran visitor.



First ever Veteran Visitor and Coffee Morning: At

Cheviot Court, and it was a brilliant way to bring everyone together. We welcomed 11 veterans into the café space for a relaxed morning of hot drinks, cakes, and plenty of good conversation with the veterans who live with us. The room was full of stories, laughter, and that lovely sense of connection you only get when veterans get chatting with each other. It was a really warm, friendly first event, and definitely the start of many more coffee mornings to come.



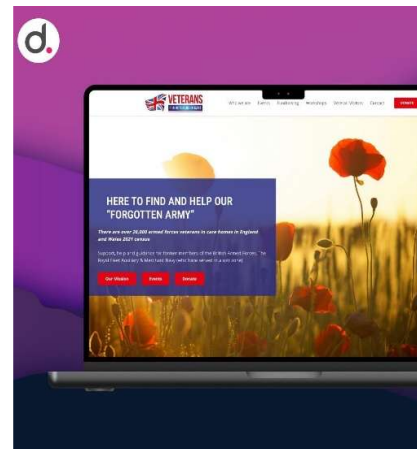
First ever fundraising night: was a great success. Huge thanks to everyone who came along and supported us. RA's WW2 talk had the room completely hooked, and Colin's stories from the Tower of London were just as fascinating. The whole evening was interesting, friendly, and full of people who genuinely care. On behalf of the "Forgotten Army", thank you for making our first fundraiser one to remember.



The VE Day 80 celebrations funded by Dogger Bank: The Iona Social Club brought together around 180 people, including veterans, their families, veteran carers, school children from two local schools, and members of the Durham Light Infantry Association. VFVIC were able to raise funds, and it was a brilliant mix of generations and supporters all coming together to mark the occasion.



Website Launch: On VE Day, we paused to remember the sacrifices made for peace and to honour those who fought for our freedom. It was fitting that on this day also marks the launch of the new website for Veterans for Veterans in Care, the new Veterans Diary brings all local veteran activities into one place, from Breakfast Clubs and Drop-Ins to association meetings and events across the Northeast. It also includes a direct link to our partner, The Red Bench Project, making support even easier to access.



On this day we were: Out at Bents Park for Armed Forces Day, marking our first public outing with our new branding, and it was a fantastic success. The event gave us a great opportunity to meet the community, share what we do, and raise awareness of the support we provide to the **Forgotten Army**.

We had a steady stream of visitors stopping by our table to chat, ask questions, and offer generous donations, all of which we deeply appreciate. We were joined by Bede's Helping Hands and The Red Bench Project, creating a strong sense of teamwork and shared purpose throughout the day.



We were also pleased to welcome the Mayor of South Tyneside, who took the time to visit our stand, and we're grateful to South Tyneside Council for arranging our table and looking after us during the event.



On this day a massive milestone was reached: We delivered our first “**What Makes Us Different**” Empowerment Workshop at Palmersdene Care Home. This session marked an important step in helping staff, carers, and families gain the confidence, insight, and practical tools needed to better understand and communicate with their veteran residents. The workshop focused on recognising the values, experiences, and sacrifices that shape veterans’ lives, ensuring these are respected in everyday care. This is the start of stronger connections and better support for those who served.



On this day we were proud to announce: Lieutenant General Robin Brims as the new Patron of Veterans for Veterans in Care. Born in the Tyne Valley, he served with distinction in The Light Infantry from 1970, with operational roles in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, and Iraq, followed by senior appointments within the Ministry of Defence. After retiring from the Army, he became Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kurdistan-Hawler before returning to the Northeast, where he has continued a life of service through a wide range of leadership and charitable roles. Now Vice Lord Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, he brings invaluable experience and regional commitment to our mission of locating, recognising, and supporting veterans in care.



We were honoured: That Veterans for Veterans in Care has been selected by Sunderland AFC as one of three charities to be supported, alongside The Bench Project and the East Durham Veterans Trust. The sale of the Remembrance training shirt will be split between all three charities, providing vital support for the work we each do within our communities. This recognition means a great deal to us and to the veterans we support every day. We are deeply grateful to Sunderland AFC for standing with our veterans, and we are proud to be part of such a committed and supportive local community.



On this day we branched out: As the Washington Branch proudly carried out its first visit, and we were honoured to meet Tom at the wonderful Holly House Care Home. Tom is an incredible gentleman, 102 years young, who served four years in the RAF during the Second World War. As a Halifax bomber crewman, he completed 36 bombing raids as part of Bomber Command, a remarkable record of courage, resilience, and dedication. **A living Hero!**

Spending time with Tom was a powerful reminder of why our work matters. His humour, warmth, and extraordinary life experience reflect the strength and spirit of the generation we are committed to supporting. We are grateful to Tom for sharing his story and for his service to our country.



We brought Remembrance to them: Palmersdene Care Home today as part of our ongoing support for their Veterans in Care. The home has recently achieved its Veteran accreditation status through the Veteran Friendly Framework, a brilliant recognition of their commitment to those who have served. During our visit, we had the privilege of presenting Tommy with his Veterans Badge. Tommy is 99 years young and served as a gunner with the Royal Artillery, and it was a real honour to see him again.



We were honoured: To be invited to the Mayor's Charity Presentation Night, joining several inspiring local causes. It was a pleasure to attend and to share the evening with such an amazing group of local charities.

We extend our sincere thanks to Fay and Stella, the South Tyneside Mayor and Mayoress for 2024–2025, for thinking of us and kindly making a donation. Their support means a great deal and directly strengthens the work we do for veterans across our community.



Veterans for Veterans in Care is founded on three pillars: To Locate, Engage and Integrate our “**Forgotten Army**” of 26,000 Armed Forces Veterans living in care homes, bringing them back into the veteran community and helping reduce isolation.

This Christmas event, hosted by the Mayor of South Tyneside, Councillor Jay Potts, truly reflected the impact of those three pillars in action.

We were honoured to welcome His Majesty's Deputy Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, Brigadier Bibek Banerjee, who presented Oaths of Allegiance and Veteran Badges to veterans from our local care homes, joined by their families and carers.

The event also brought together community and generations, with brilliant support from the local cadet forces and the South Shields St Oswald's Primary School choir.

Our veterans in attendance *were* part of that “Forgotten Army”, but today they stood surrounded by family, carers, volunteers, community and young people. On behalf of their military brothers and sisters, we say: **welcome back to your military family.**



Feedback

When Lee visited our care home wearing his suite, beret and medals, our veteran residents were thrilled. The support and companionship offered through these visits not only brightened their day, it also encouraged our veterans to share stories and experiences with fellow veterans. Our veterans found renewed purpose, as they reminisced over their shared experiences. It was a great reminder of the strength of the veteran community.

KH

Assistant Manager

The Lodge Care Home

Just to let you know my dad's Veteran's Badge arrived this morning, So I will take it down for him next time I visit him. Thanks so much for organising this as I had no idea about getting him this medal before you started going to see him.

"My Dad has been living in a care home for 3 years, he is 95 and suffers from Dementia with Alzheimer's, but he can always recall in detail performing his National Service in Berlin with the Royal Engineers in the early 1950s. Lee and his fellow veterans have been exceptional visiting dad and swapping stories about their shared military service. I'm so grateful to them for the time they spend with dad, it's a joy to see the smile on his face bringing back some wonderful memories."

GT

Son of BT

Veterans for Veterans in Care
Statement of Financial Activities

	31/12/2025	31/12/2025	31/12/2025
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
Charitable income			
Grants	3806.00	4500.00	8306.00
Fundraising		6260.16	6260.16
Invoicing		987.70	987.70
Donations		4635.61	4635.61
Refunds		276.00	276.00
Total	3806.00	16659.47	20465.47
Charitable Expenses	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
Fundraising expenses	1,000.00	1070.32	2070.32
Total	1,000.00	1070.32	2070.32
Administration Expenses	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
Staff mobile costs	34.65		34.65
Insurance	56.00		56.00
Printing & Stationary	1186.00	96.70	1282.70
IT equipment	384.00	645.00	1029.00
Website	90.00	450.00	540.00
Merchandise		2613.99	2613.99
Workshop Delivery		625.00	625.00
Postage		4.25	4.25
Veteran Gifts		117.27	117.27
Subsistence & buffets	29.97	43.97	73.94
Accommodation		161.00	161.00
Travel		276.50	276.50
Totals	1780.62	5033.68	6814.30
Surplus of funds	1025.38	10555.47	11580.85

Veterans For Veterans in Care
Breakdown of income

Grants

12.12.24	James Knott Trust	1000.00
20.01.25	The Ballinger Trust	1000.00
21.03.25	Karbon homes	806.00
03.04.25	Barbour Trust	1000.00
23.04.25	Dogger Bank	1000.00
12.09.25	Inspire	1500.00
13.10.25	Coalfield Regeneration	2000.00
	Total Grant Income	8306.00

Fundraising & Donations	10895.77
------------------------------------	-----------------

Invoicing

Workshops	350.00
Mileage	137.30
GNR Entries	300.00
Presentations	200.00
Total	987.30

Total income

Grants	8306.00
Fundraising & Donations	10895.77
Invoicing	987.70
	20189.47

Veterans For Veterans in Care

Balance Sheet

Business Current A/c	11184.18
Peti Cash	396.67
Total	11580.85

Assets	753.00
Liabilities	0.00

Funds	
Surplus Funds	11580.85
Total Funds	11580.85

Chairman Signature



Date 14.01.26

Trustee Signature



Date 14.01.26