



# Welcome to our May Newsletter

The really, RE.A.L.L.Y. Good news is we are almost coming to the end of the Lockdown...

## ...Good News...

*We will be reopening our Drop-In... On the  
second Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June from 10:00a am – 2:00pm*

*This may be subject to change depending on the Prime Minister's future announcements regarding lockdown and the lifting of Coronavirus restrictions. We will do our best to notify you, in the meantime please keep an eye on our website and social media for further information. We can't wait to see you all, but only when it's safe to do so.*



**RSL**  
**Australia**

WOW...

Has in the meantime our amazing communications team have arranged yet another interesting evening Drop-in on ZOOM, with guest speaker from the Australian Returned & Services League (RSL) Past Tasmanian RSL State President, as well as Past RSL Deputy National President - Ian Kennett OAM, on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 7:00 pm.

Ian is a retired Naval gentleman that has been a member of the league since 1980. In that time Ian has served as a sub-branch secretary for eighteen years. On the state executive from 1986 till 2006 the last three years as the State President as well as the Deputy National President. From 1981 Ian has been veteran's delegate managing applications for pensions through the Australian Department of Veteran's Affairs. Ian's service covers time in navy Vietnam also Middle East aboard HMAS Perth in 1981. Website <https://rslnational.org>

For your VIP ZOOM link email:  
**[veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com](mailto:veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com)**

12:00 pm on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May



The  
Wellbeing  
Project





# Time For.... HOT TOPICS & WORK IN PROGRESS

So grab a snack... & come on right back...

THE continuing pursuit of Northern Ireland veterans is grossly iniquitous and unfair.

I have first-hand experience of this. In Belfast in 1973 my driver, Private Raymond "Tapper" Hall, was kneeling by my Land Rover, acting as a sentry, and was shot in the back and killed.

Has anyone ever investigated his murder? No. He was a soldier and soldiers get shot on duty. But on my last day in the Army as Chief of the General Staff my last appointment was with two investigators from the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

They came to talk to me about an Irish gentleman who had been shot dead on that same day and in that same area. He had almost certainly been shooting at us. Another of my soldiers had been shot and wounded that day, too.

These investigators were not interested in following up the death of my driver. No one has ever taken a blind bit of interest in my driver.

All they were interested in was who killed a suspected terrorist. This shows the barrenness and complete lack of integrity of the process.

It is largely inspired by Sinn Féin trying to rewrite history to their own advantage as part of their tactics to achieve their strategic aim of getting Northern Ireland to join the Republic of Ireland as one country. It just will not wear.

Currently six veterans are being tried or facing trial over deaths in the Troubles, including Dennis Hutchings.

If I were him, I would be



Killed...Private 'Tapper' Hall

## COMMENT LORD DANNATT

Former Chief of  
the General Staff



hugely encouraged that the state of the evidence presented in the trial of Soldiers A and C was unacceptable.

It shows the weakness of this whole legacy business for the judicial system. How can you credibly and with integrity pick up cases that are 49 years old? It is not a level playing field. The Army kept detailed records; the terrorists kept none. No wonder the

investigators come running to the Army for information.

But if it turns out that Soldier A and C's trial was based in part on answers, they gave to questions to the Historical Enquiry Team in a process to give closure to the family of Joe McCann, that would be outrageous.

If that is the case, why would any sensible

veteran give any information to an inquiry team again?

I have seen the figure that 200 deaths allegedly caused by members of the Armed Forces during the Troubles are being looked at.

It means many more veterans face these investigations and possibly being charged and tried over events decades ago.

My advice to any veteran is simple: Do not say anything. Do not cooperate. You are in serious danger of being stitched up.

THIS week was shameful – one in which I felt genuine and deep shame at our Government. It was perhaps the lowest moment in our nation's record of how it treats its servicemen and women.

I was in court in Belfast. What was clear is that these two vulnerable gentlemen had been totally abandoned by their country, to the clutches of those who simply seek financial gain or a rewriting of history.

I have sympathy for the McCann family too. War is messy. People do things you don't expect. Actors pursue their beliefs to the point of no return. But they are victims in this too. Led down a garden path in the false hope of "justice", whatever that has come to mean in Northern Ireland – by lawyers and politicians who should hang their heads in shame.

The way our politics has become stuffed full of imposters with a belief in almost nothing. Who could not for one moment consider the human impact of their inaction. Imagine if Soldier A or Soldier

# COMMENT



JOHNNY  
MERCER

Tory MP and former  
Veterans Minister

C was your father. "Northern Ireland is a tinderbox Johnny; they'll collapse the Executive and return to violence," the stuffed shirts used to tell me when I was Veterans Minister.

I wasn't aware we lived in a country where our actions were dictated by those who threaten violence.

Enough is enough. This Government must move fast to implement legislation to end the vexatious pursuit of veterans for their service.

This Government – and others before them – have promised to tackle this.

Options are on the table. But the net result was what I saw in court in Belfast today.

A pathetic failure borne by some of this nation's finest people.





Lt-Gen Jonathon Riley, Maj-Gen Tim Cross and Col Richard Kemp

# Military leaders: Stop prosecuting British soldiers

SENIOR military commanders yesterday told Boris Johnson to stop the persecution of British veterans and serving troops.

A letter signed by three retired generals, an admiral and a former commander of British troops in Afghanistan, raised particular objection to the witch-hunt against Northern Ireland veterans.

The letter declares: "How can it be right to issue a blanket pardon for criminal acts committed by the IRA in Northern Ireland while persecuting those soldiers operating in support of the laws that those same IRA men set out to break?"

The letter is signed by Lieutenant-General Jonathon Riley, former Commander British Forces Sierra Leone, Iraq and deputy commander of Nato forces in Afghanistan; Major-General Julian Thompson, the Commander of 3 Commando Brigade in the 1982 Falklands War; Major-General Tim Cross, Commander Theatre Troops in Iraq; Rear Admiral Roger Lane-Nott, Flag Officer Submarines; and Colonel Richard Kemp, Commander British Forces, Afghanistan.

Most are Northern Ireland veterans.

In 2019 Boris Johnson made a manifesto pledge to end "vexatious" prosecutions of veterans.

But the Overseas Operations Bill, which this week imposed a five year time limit for prosecutions of soldiers unless there is compelling new evidence, does not cover Northern Ireland.

Legislation supposed to address so-called "legacy" killings has been delayed for years amid suspicions that the Government fears antagonising Republican Sinn Fein.

The letter suggests that

By **John Ingham**  
Defence Editor

frontline soldiers are being made scapegoats for operations approved by politicians.

The letter says no-one could condone service personnel who "deliberately" break the law.

But it warns: "The last five years have seen a steady stream of investigations, prosecutions and convictions of former and active service people for alleged wrongdoing in theatres of military operations... We must, however, reject entirely the persecution of service people for actions legitimately taken in the line of duty."

"In particular, we object to prosecutions over events in Northern Ireland."

The letter highlights the plight of "Soldier F" over Bloody Sunday in 1972 in which British soldiers shot and killed 14 civilians during a protest march in Londonderry.

The letter states: "The events that day involved a direct chain of command - starting at Cabinet minister level and descending through the Senior General in the Province, down

to the local brigade commander, commanding officer and company commander."

"Yet the only person being held to account is a solitary lance corporal."

The senior officers accuse successive governments of failing to honour the Military Covenant, which pledges support for military personnel in return for the risks they take.

It states: "Natural justice alone demands that those placed in harm's way by their nation and at the orders of a chain of command are entitled to the reciprocal support and protection of that nation."

The covenant, they say, "is being set aside for reasons that remain unclear".



Lane-Nott, above, Maj-Gen Thompson



## DAILY EXPRESS VOTE

**Q** Should all cases  
against veterans  
be dropped?

**YES: 0901 133 4440**

**NO: 0901 133 4441**

**Yes text DXYES to 84988**

**No text DXNO to 84988**

Texts and calls cost 50p plus network access charge.

You must have the bill payer's permission.

Vote closes at midnight tonight. The Daily Express may contact you by post, SMS and/or email with offers, goods or services that may be of interest to you.

To stop receiving SMS messages please text 'NSNOINFO' to the originating number.

SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390.



## Fancy being a superhero?

The Superhero Series is offering an at-home challenge this summer. It's mission is to create fun, full-throttle mass-participation sports events where people with disabilities – AKA Superheroes – call the shots and don't have to worry about cut-off times or equipment restrictions.



For all challenges you can either fly solo or team up with family and friends to do as much or as little as you wish, with as much or as little support as you need. If you want flippers or floats in the water or need to use your powerchair, we make it possible. In fact, as far as we're concerned anything goes!

For more details or to sign up, go to: <https://superheroseries.co.uk/>

# NOURISHED<sup>®</sup>

## ONLINE COOKERY COURSE

Create 4 simple and delicious dishes that are healthy and budget friendly

**When:** Every Thursday 15th July, 22nd July, 29th July and 5th August

**Time:** 4-5pm

**What will I learn:**

- Cookery skills
- Healthy Eating
- Nutrition
- How to minimise food waste

**Must be:** Residents of Hampshire (Excl. Southampton and Portsmouth)

**Where:** Zoom



**To register and receive your welcome pack**  
visit [www.ukharvest.org.uk/event](http://www.ukharvest.org.uk/event)  
or email [donna.martin@ukharvest.org.uk](mailto:donna.martin@ukharvest.org.uk) for more information  
*Please note, spaces are limited*





## Hundreds of thousands failed by lack of understanding of energy impairments – new report

Based on large scale quantitative and qualitative research, a new ground-breaking report “disrupts stereotypes and exposes the systemic failings that harm the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in the UK”.

The report is based on emancipatory disability research by the **Chronic Illness Inclusion Project**, part of the **DRILL programme**, supported by the Leeds University Business School, CERIC, LSSI, ESRC and published by the Centre for Welfare Reform. It presents the findings and recommendations from a study into social inclusion, employment and social security for Disabled people with **energy limiting chronic illness (ELCI)**.

People with ELCI have a range of medical diagnoses, and symptoms may vary and fluctuate, but the overall impact on their lives is of energy impairment. They have to carefully ration their energy every day in order to avoid aggravating symptoms.

Examples of ELCI include: ME/CFS (myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome), fibromyalgia, lupus, chronic pain, Ehlers Danlos syndrome, as well as conditions causing: respiratory failure, kidney failure, inflammatory bowel conditions, sickle cell disease, autoimmune conditions, neurological conditions, endocrinological conditions, and rheumatological conditions.

The new report is timely in addressing the circumstances of those **1.1m people experiencing Long Covid**.

According to the new research, people with ELCI experience high levels of social isolation, stigma, and lack of representation.

In its Executive Summary, the report says: "One in three disabled people of working age in the UK experiences impairment of stamina, breathing or fatigue. This is the current closest match to the concept of ELCI. Despite the size of this group, employment and social security policies and systems have not considered or been designed for the particular needs of this group of people."

It adds that: "Until now, policy makers have identified this group through various categories of medical diagnosis, or through the catch-all term 'long-term health conditions'. [Read more here.](#)

REF: Disability Rights UK E-Newsletter 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021



We have moved venue to  
the **High Cross Church**  
(HCC), Knoll Road,  
Camberley, Surrey; GU15  
3SY.



**EXCITING**

News on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 10:00 am V&F-LP will

be **re-opening**..... We know, how great is that!!!

Re-Opening...

There is **parking** at Knoll Road car park, situated at the rear of  
High Cross Church – Knoll Road, Camberley, Surrey; Camberley  
GU15 3TA.

We are just as excited as you are with the news!!

Then every it will

**2<sup>nd</sup> MONDAY** of each month

**10:00 am–2:00 pm**



We have PPE requirements too, which means that we have had to reduce the number of how many of us can actually meet - to **15\*** at the moment. This means you will have to email us to let us know that you want to attend beforehand:

[veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com](mailto:veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com)



What's that you smell.... Yup. THE best bacon baps in town by Colin down at HCC. As well as complimentary tea & coffee...

These will be available from 10:00 am – 11:00 am and will require pre-booking.

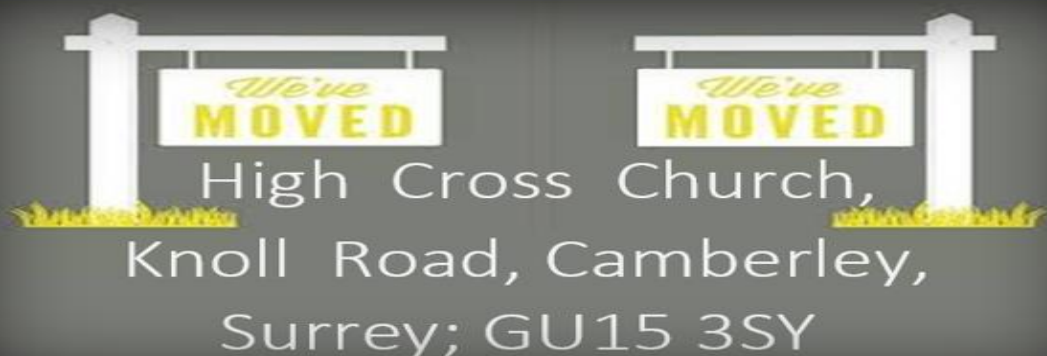
It's fantastic that we'll be meeting again, it will be really lovely to see you again and catch-up.

Remember you need

to

email: [veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com](mailto:veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com)

to book your place(s).





## What Veterans UK does

We provide free support for Veterans and their Families, Including a helpline, Veterans' Welfare Service and injury / Bereavement compensation scheme payments.

Veterans UK is part of the Ministry of Defence

Email: [veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk](mailto:veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk)

Freephone (UK only): 0808 1914 2 18

Telephone (overseas): +44 1253 866 043

Normal Service 10.00 am to 3.00 pm Monday to Friday

For more information visit their website:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk)

## Follow us today on:



[www.linkedin.com/in/veterans-families-listening-project-aa9a74b0/](http://www.linkedin.com/in/veterans-families-listening-project-aa9a74b0/)



[www.facebook.com/VeteransnFamiliesListeningProject](http://www.facebook.com/VeteransnFamiliesListeningProject)



@VnF\_LP



Veterans & Families – Listening Project  
email: [veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com](mailto:veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com)  
[www.vflp.org.uk](http://www.vflp.org.uk)

V&F-LP is an independent member of ASDIC.  
The association of Ex-Service Drop-in Centres,  
Linking Veterans' Drop-ins together across the  
United Kingdom.





**11:30 a.m., Saturday, 28th August, 2021**  
**Muster at Duke of York column, Horse Guards Parade, London.**  
**March to the Palace.**

## **Justice for Northern Ireland Veterans March**

**Justice for Northern Ireland Veterans Original Group, U.K.**  
**Veterans One Voice, Rolling Thunder & Million Veterans March**

REF: Seen on Twitter – 21.03.21

# **NOURISHED<sup>®</sup>**

## **ONLINE COOKERY COURSE**

Create 4 simple and delicious dishes  
that are healthy and budget friendly

**When:** Every Tuesday 7th Sept, 14th Sept,  
21st Sept and 28th Sept

**Time:** 4-5pm

**What will I learn:**

- Cookery skills
- Healthy Eating
- Nutrition
- How to minimise food waste

**FREE**

**Must be:** Residents of Hampshire  
(Excl. Southampton and Portsmouth)

**Where:** Zoom



**To register and receive your welcome pack**  
**visit [www.ukharvest.org.uk/event](http://www.ukharvest.org.uk/event)**

or email [donna.martin@ukharvest.org.uk](mailto:donna.martin@ukharvest.org.uk) for more information

*Please note, spaces are limited*



Supported by  
 **Hampshire**  
 County Council





Healthwatch Surrey is an independent organisation which gives people in Surrey a strong voice to help improve, shape, and get the best from local health and social care services. Having attended a few Veterans & Families – Listening Project Zoom meetings, Maria from Healthwatch Surrey heard a number of health and care experiences from the group. Issues raised in these meetings were fed-back to commissioners and providers, so GPs would be more aware of services for veterans. One of the issues highlighted was the Transition, Interventions and Liaison (TIL) Service pathway for former & current service personnel. Healthwatch Surrey would like to hear more experiences such as these and continue to feed back to health and social care providers and commissioners, so they can understand what is working well and not so well, and hopefully make changes where necessary.

If you would like to share your health or social care experience with Healthwatch Surrey, please get in touch with **Maria on 07805 225074**.

You can also contact Healthwatch Surrey's Helpdesk for information and advice via phone: **0303 303 0023**, text: **07592 787533** or email: **[enquiries@healthwatchsurrey.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchsurrey.co.uk)**. Healthwatch Surrey, in collaboration with Surrey Independent Living Council (SILC), provide an Advocacy service offering free, independent help and support on NHS complaints. Call 01483 310 500 (10am-4.30pm Mon-Fri excluding bank holidays) or email: **[nhsadvocacy@surreyilc.org.uk](mailto:nhsadvocacy@surreyilc.org.uk)**.



Did you know that Sainsbury's have a Veterans Association for their employees?

Welcome to the  
**Sainsbury's**  
Veterans Association

[Read More](#)



# Welcome to the Sainsbury's Veterans Association

[Read More](#)



## Our history

**The Veterans Association was set up towards the end of 1947.**

It followed the birth of the Sainsbury's Staff Association, which allowed all pensioners to be admitted free of charge. During the latter part of 1947 it was thought that many pensioners would appreciate the opportunity to renew contact with old friends through the SSA and that they might be pleased to assist at local SSA functions. Eight ex-colleagues expressed an interest in becoming involved and the Veterans Association was born.

## Why do we have a Veterans Association and veterans benefits?

Veteran colleagues have given an invaluable service to Sainsbury's over the years. The company values their contribution to its success and recognises this by enabling a range of benefits to be offered in retirement. Some of these will happen automatically, others are optional. Sainsbury's offers a wider variety of benefits compared with many other companies.

## What is a Veteran?

- A Sainsbury's 'Veteran' is an ex-colleague who has left the Company due to retirement, ill-health, or redundancy and who meets a qualifying eligibility criteria, at the actual time of leaving the Company.



- The eligibility criteria has changed several times since 1997.
  - The eligibility, since April 2006, is 25 years continuous service and leaving due to retirement, ill-health, or redundancy.
  - If a colleague qualifies to become a Company Veteran, membership is automatic.
  - If a current Company Veteran dies and leaves a surviving spouse, their spouse becomes the Company Veteran.
  - The Veteran benefits only apply to actual Company Veterans.
  - We do, however, invite ex-colleagues who have retired but may not have qualified to become a Company Veteran to join a local association.
- [www. https://www.sainsburysveterans.co.uk/tell-me-more/history](https://www.sainsburysveterans.co.uk/tell-me-more/history)



email: [veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com](mailto:veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com)  
to book your place(s).



News story

## **Veterans UK start an exercise to correct some Restored Widows' Pensions**

Veterans UK are conducting an administrative exercise to revisit commencing dates for restored widows' pensions under the War Pension Scheme, to identify and pay additional amounts where necessary, after a Court of Appeal ruling.

From: [Veterans UK](#)  
Published: 25 February 2021



We are now beginning to contact and pay widows and estates where we know pensions have been restored from an incorrect commencing date. Where we have any contact details recorded in cases where widows have died, we are writing to people to make them aware of how to apply if they think that there may be money owed because a pension was restored from the wrong date.

However, we do not hold full details of the estate for all those customers who are now deceased, so you should claim if you believe you have an entitlement. More detailed information about the exercise, guidance on eligibility and how to apply can be found on [Additional period of Restored War Widows/War Widowers Pension](#).

It is likely to take a considerable amount of time to work through contacting people and then deal with applications, we will provide updates on progress on GOV.UK.

