



**Veterans & Families – Listening Project**  
email: [veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com](mailto:veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com)



[www.vflp.org.uk](http://www.vflp.org.uk)



# **Welcome to our August 2023 Newsletter**

*Hello!*

We hope  
that you  
have been

enjoying the lovely sunshine and warm summer weather. Summer is one of our favourites seasons. It's warm, laid back, and may-be it's a perfect time to plan for the future. So we have put some information together for you to read, and pass-on to others, it may well boost your summer this year.

We're back.  
So grab a snack.  
It's time for...

# Hot Topics

## WHAT IS A VETERAN?



**2.4 MILLION**

Veterans in Great Britain

**40%**

16 - 64  
years old

The percentage of working age Veterans is set to increase to 44% by 2028.

**60%**

65+  
years old



**75%**

of Veterans own a home or have a mortgage

It is estimated that 3% to 6% of those sleeping rough have served in the Armed Forces.

**75%**

Healthy

**17%**  
Fair Health

**8%**  
Bad Health



**WANT TO LEARN MORE?**

**TUNE IN TO OUR 'BEING FORCES FRIENDLY' PODCAST.**

There are 2.4 million veterans in Great Britain. 40% of veterans are 16-64 years old. The percentage of working age veterans is set to increase to 44% by 2028. 60% of veterans are over 65. 75% of veterans own their home or have a mortgage. It is estimated that 3% to 6% of those sleeping rough have served in the armed forces. 75% are healthy, 17% have fair health and 8% have bad health. Want to learn more? Tune in to our 'being forces friendly' podcast'.

[Listen to our team of veterans talk about their experiences:](#) transitioning from the UK Armed Forces and what the word 'veteran' means to them.

28 July 2023 — Press release

## New medal design unveiled to honour veterans of Britain's nuclear tests



The design of the Nuclear Test Medal has been unveiled. The medal recognises military, civilian, and overseas staff and personnel who participated in Britain's nuclear testing programme in the 1950s and 1960s.



- Design for the commemorative Nuclear Test Medal unveiled.
- Production will begin shortly so veterans can receive them before Remembrance Sunday.
- Medal recognises significant contribution of those who participated in the UK's nuclear testing programme.

Many veterans of Britain's nuclear tests will receive a new medal in time for Remembrance Sunday, the government has announced today.

It comes as the design for the Nuclear Test Medal is unveiled for the first time today.

The medal was announced by the Prime Minister in November 70 years after the first British test of a nuclear weapon, and recognises military, civilian, and overseas staff and personnel who participated in Britain's nuclear testing programme in the 1950s and 1960s.



Since the announcement, the Government has worked hard to ensure that a fitting medal was designed, minted and issued to as many veterans as possible in time for this year's Remembrance events.

The medal will now go into production by Worcestershire Medal Services, with the first veterans set to receive their medal ahead of Remembrance Sunday this year.

SOURCE: [www.gov.uk/government/news/new-medal-design-unveiled-to-honour-veterans-of-britains-nuclear-tests](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-medal-design-unveiled-to-honour-veterans-of-britains-nuclear-tests)





# Ministry Of Defence Infiltrated Nuclear Test Veteran Groups



It has been the belief for 40 years since the creation of the British Nuclear Test Veterans Association by Ken McGinley that the Ministry of Defence spied on the group and potentially infiltrated it many times. It has never been proven, until today.

But who was the spy in the camp?

Researchers have found a file in the National Archives that is dedicated to the activities of the NTV Group.

Extracts from a memo from Alan Baker dated 16th July 1991. A Minister requested that they **'Spike Mr McGinley's Guns.'**

## NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION (NTVA)

1. We spoke yesterday about David Smith's submission of 11 July and Ministers' request that we should consider if there is some way in which we could seek to spike Mr McGinley's guns.

Norcross (Home of Veterans UK) had information regarding McGinley.

2. The danger, as I explained, is that we would thereby run the risk of giving Mr McGinley's cause a higher prominence and public profile than it might otherwise gain. It is a question of judgement where the balance lies, but I now have some additional pieces of information which Mr Smith telephoned to me this morning from Norcross - both of which are helpful in coming to a more informed view on the likely effect of Mr McGinley's present campaign.

Mr Dickson who described himself as the West Yorkshire representative, wrote to participants in his area advising them not to co-operate.

3. First, Mr Andrew Dickson, who describes himself as the West Yorkshire representative of the Nuclear Test Participants, has written to participants in his area advising them not to co-operate with Mr McGinley (a copy of his letter is attached). Whilst some of the reasons which he gives for not doing so are questionable he makes persuasively the point that mass applications could disrupt vital services for "genuine" applicants.

How did they get this information? A member of the BNTVA was the husband of a member of staff in Mrs Roger's support unit at Norcross and was passing all information to them.

4. Secondly, we now have information about the size of Mr McGinley's Association (NTVA). In his earlier submission Mr Smith referred to the 22,000 British servicemen who participated in the UK nuclear weapons tests between 1952-1967. We are now told (by a member of the NTVA - who happens to be the husband of a member of staff in Mrs Rogers' support unit at Norcross) that the NTVA has between 2,000-3,000 members.

The UK Government had an informant who was passing on all documentation sent out by the BNTVA and providing inside information on the association, but they were still worried.

Mr Baker  
Al

From: T Lowe PS/PSL

Date: 19 July 1991


Copies: Mr Boyle PS/SoS  
Mr Sadler PS/MoS  
Miss Edwards PS/PSC(AW)  
Ms Dudley PS/PSC(MJ)  
Mrs Andrews PS/PS  
Mr Montagu RMPG  
Mr Birch PG  
Mrs Maunsell A  
Mr Reardon INF  
Dr Castaldi PMO NX  
Mrs Rogers WPD NX  
Mr Sheppard N5 NX  
Mr Smith AlC  
Mr Adams AlD  
Miss Majekodunmi SOLA3  
Mr Beaumont AlC

Rec'd  
23/7/91

NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION (NTVA)

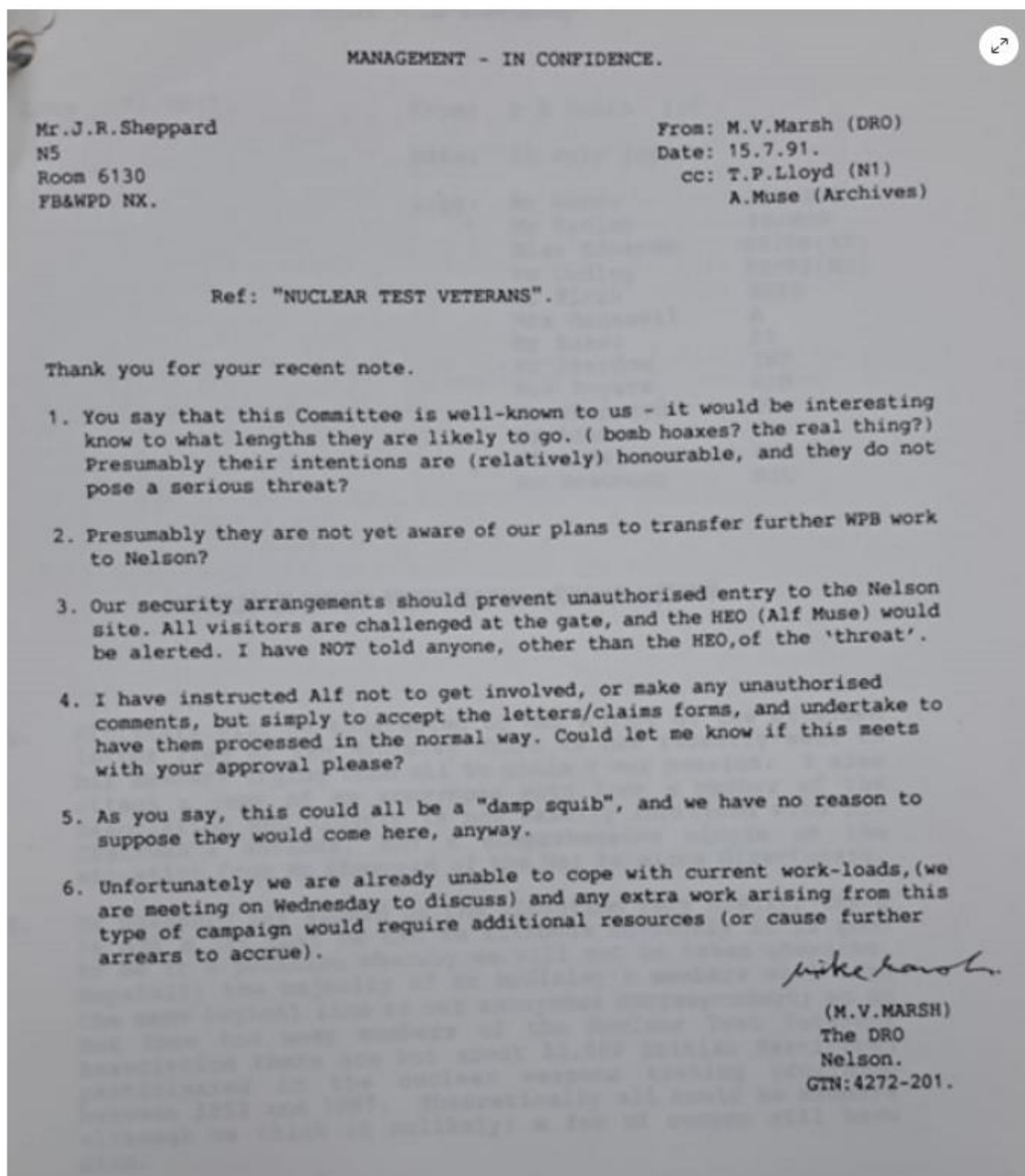
PSL is very grateful for your note dated 16 July, sent further to Mr Smith's dated 11 July, and is now more inclined to your view.

However before PSL decides on handling, he would like to consider WPD's assessment of the impact of the worst case scenario - presumably based on a maximum of 3,000 "claims", although could there be some spread to the 19,000 non-NTVA member test participants?

  
TREVOR LOWE  
415 RH Ext 5135

Just how worried? In a memo dated 15th July 1991, DRO Nelson was extremely worried:

## Bomb Hoaxes? The Real Thing?



The Prime Minister at the time was also concerned with the NRPB Report and a substantial amendment to an earlier draft in response to Terence Higgins MP.



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

20 August 1991

197/4

Dear Bryan

NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS

You will recall that we have discussed on a number of occasions the outstanding reply which the Prime Minister owes to Terence Higgins MP, in particular on the timing of the NRPS study. Despite the substantial amendment to the earlier draft the Prime Minister remains very unhappy about this. He feels it still looks as if we are sweeping the issue aside. In political as well as human terms we simply cannot afford to give that impression. There is a very real head of Parliamentary steam about it. The Prime Minister feels that the timescale proposed by the NRPS is continuing to move in the wrong direction. We should be doing all we can to ensure that the NRPS bring forward the publication of the report. I know that there is now a shift of NRPS resources on to the nuclear test veteran study. If that does not bring it forward then we do need to look again at the possibility of them hiring extra staff to accelerate the study. I think the Prime Minister is not persuaded by the argument that training the new staff would lead to delay rather than acceleration. (And intuitively it must be doubtful. One person could train five and had we started this training when this was first raised the staff would now be trained and working.)

Since the NRPS falls within the Department of Health's "sponsorship" doubtless they too will need to consider the question of resources. I should be grateful if you would urgently re-examine with them whether the study could be accelerated and advise the Prime Minister again. He will be looking for this advice on his return from China (i.e. at the end of the first week in September).

I am copying this letter to Stephen Alcock (Department of Health) and to Nicholas Holgate (Chief Secretary's Office).

*Yours ever  
Dominic*

(DOMINIC MORRIS)

Bryan Wells, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence.



At the time, the BNTVA was supported by the RBL, especially the Thornton Cleveleys branch.

Mr Lowe PS/PSL

From: D B Smith A1C


Date: 27 August 1991

Copies: Mr Woods PPs/SoS  
Mr Sadler PS/MoS  
Ms Dudley PS/PSC(MJ)  
Miss Edwards PS/PSC(AW)  
Mr Birch SSPG  
Mr Montagu RMPG  
Mrs Maunsell A  
Mr Baker A1  
Mr Reardon INF  
Mrs Rogers WPD  
Mr Sheppard N5  
Miss Majekodunni Sol  
Mr Adams A1D

NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION (NTVA)

1. Mr Manson's minute of 16 August refers.
2. You will be interested to learn that it would appear that the RBL involvement in the campaign may only be a local, rather than a national, initiative. WPD have established that it is the Thornton Cleveleys branch that is to "register" the completed claim forms and "represent" NTVA in the matter. The chairman of this branch, Mrs Olive Driver, who featured in one of the "Evening Gazette" articles copied to you, is well known in WPD circles as something of an activist; she was once employed as an AO in War Pensions Branch on appeals work.
3. Her husband also, apparently, worked there as a Chief Office Keeper. Our informant has been advised that "two senior ex-civil servants" in the local RBL branch are to examine the completed claim forms before they are despatched to WPD; we are assuming that the Drivers are the two involved.
4. We do not know precisely what RBL will do to the forms, what "supporting documentation" will be produced or how they will represent NTVA, although it would seem unlikely that the Thornton Cleveleys branch could undertake the latter on behalf of claimants from other parts of the country.
5. In the light of this information, PSL might consider that, rather than wait for October's deputation, an approach should be made now to Mr Michael Day, Secretary of RBL's Pensions Department. Should this be his wish I will, of course be only too happy to oblige.
6. PSL, prior to the Bristol meeting with WPC representatives, queried the number of nuclear test participants (and their widows) who have been awarded War Pensions as a result of

Multiple Myeloma and Leukaemia. A total of 19 awards have now been made ( 9 disablement, 10 widows ); 16 awards are currently in payment ( 7 disablement, 9 widows ).

  
D B Smith  
Room 11-09 ADI  
Ext 28072

The UK Government describes the RBL Officers involved as 'Activists'.

On the 16th of August, the UK Government involved itself in the Royal British Legions decision stating "***It is very sad that RBL is involving itself in this irresponsible campaign.***" PSL intends to make our views known to RBL when he meets them next in October.

Mr D B Smith  
A1C  
Room 11/09  
ADI

From: C J Manson  
APS/PSL

16 August 1991

cc: Mr Woods PPS/SoS  
Mr Sadler PS/MoS  
Ms Dudley PS/PSC(MJ)  
Miss Edwards PS/PSC(AW)  
Mrs Andrews PS/PS  
Mr Birch SSPG  
Mr Montagu RMPG  
Mrs Maunsell A  
Mr Baker A1  
Mr Reardon INF  
Mrs Rogers WPD  
Mr Sheppard N5  
Miss Majekodunmi SOL  
Mr Adams A1D

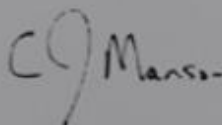
**NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION (NTVA)**

PSL has seen your note of 12 August enclosing a copy of the letter which has been sent to all members of the British Nuclear Test Veterans Association.

PSL has commented -

"It is very sad that RBL is involving itself in this irresponsible campaign."

PSL intends to make our views known to RBL when he meets them next in October.



Colin Manson  
Room 415  
RH  
Ext 5136

The Department of Social Security intervened in this support in August 1991, writing to the Pensions Secretary of the RBL, agreed by Mr Lowe PS/PSL:

Mr Lowe PS/PSL

From: D B Smith A1C

Date: 30 August 1991

Copies: Mr Woods PPs/SoS  
Mr Sadler PS/MoS  
Ms Dudley PS/PSC(MJ)  
Miss Edwards PS/PSC(AW)  
Mr Birch SSPG  
Mr Montagu RMPG  
Mrs Maunsell A  
Mr Baker A1  
Mr Reardon INF  
Mrs Rogers WPD  
Mr Sheppard N5  
Miss Majekodunmi Sol  
Mr Adams A1D

Mr W. J. Day was,  
Pensions Secretary,  
The Royal British Legion,  
48 Pall Mall,  
London  
SW1Y 5AE

*Don Miller*

NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION (NTVA)

1. My minute of 27 August refers; you advised that PSL agreed to an approach to Mr Day.

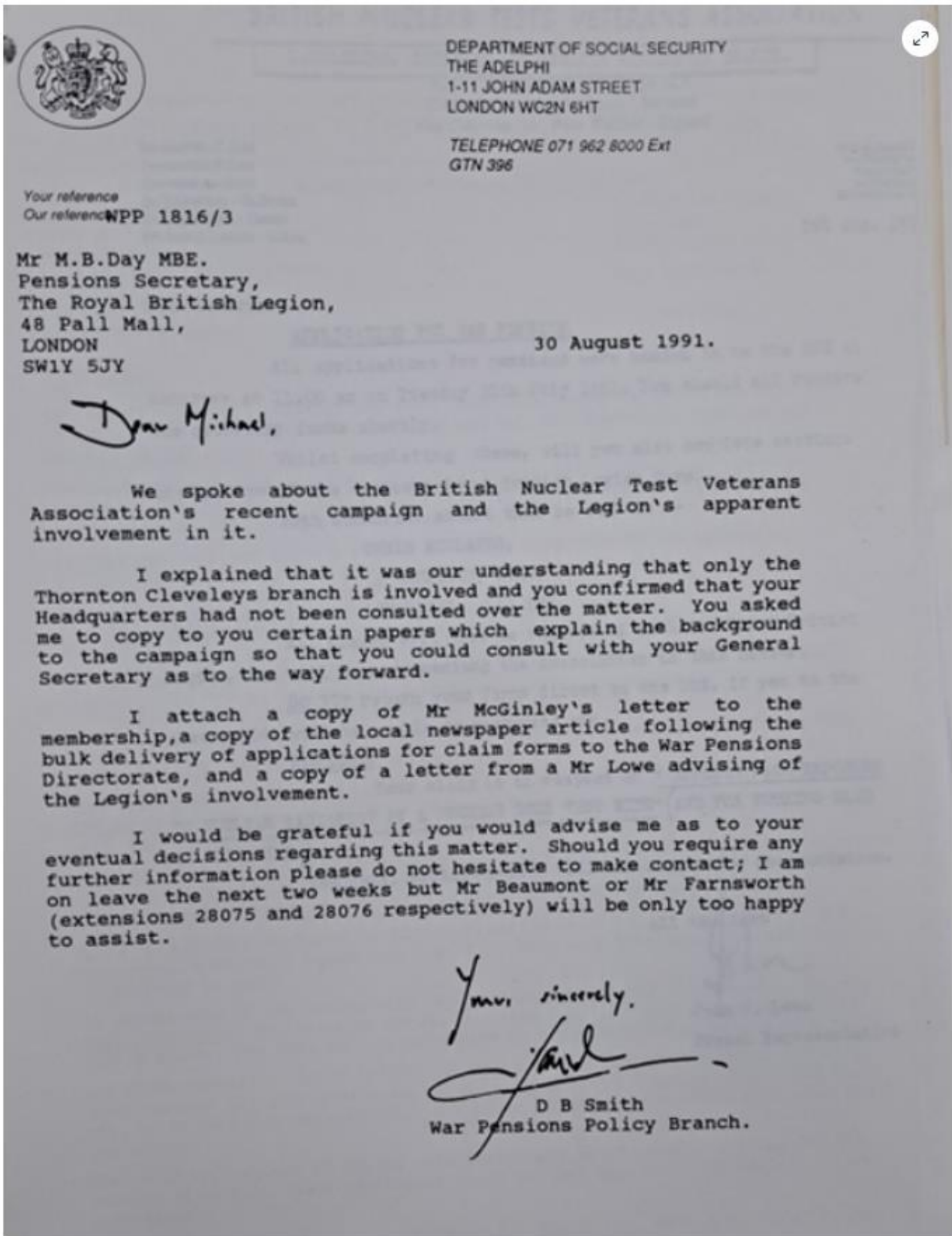
2 As you know, I have been in touch and agreed to write to him. I attach a copy of the letter and background details supplied.

*Jim Latham*

Room 21-09 ADI  
Ext 28072



The letter was sent from the Department of Social Security:



Following this letter, the RBL wrote to the Thornton Cleveleys Branch:

Mrs O. Driver JP  
The Chairman  
TRBL Thornton Cleveleys Branch  
17 Greenfield Road,  
Anchorholme  
Blackpool  
LANCS FY5 3SW

P/20

17th September 1991.

Dear Olive,

The General Secretary has suggested that I write to you concerning a letter we have recently received from the policy division of the DSS. This in turn relates to a letter from the British Nuclear Test Veterans Association (BNTVA) a copy of which is enclosed for your information. We have also been in touch with a Peter Fletcher Vice-Chairman of the BNTVA who has supplied us with further background information on the present situation.

The current 'claims' campaign which the BNTVA are involved appears to have the objective of putting further pressure on the Government to pay compensation to nuclear test veterans as a group rather than to prosecute cases of individual alleged disablement. Whilst the actions of the BNTVA are a matter in which we have no say and are essentially their own affair it is the question of the reference to The Royal British Legion and supporting documentation statement which is a cause for concern at this headquarters.

Over the last ten years, indeed since the late nineteen fifties the Legion has assisted a large number of nuclear test veterans and their widows with claims and appeals for war and war widows pensions based on death or alleged related conditions. As you are aware only this year at Annual Conference another Resolution was carried on the subject of the British Nuclear tests urging the Government to adopt a more humanitarian attitude to compensation claims.

I understand from both the DSS and from the BNTVA representative referred to above that the Thornton Cleveleys Branch appears to have been actively involved in this exercise and that the Legion reference in the BNTVA letter is in fact the Thornton Cleveleys Branch.

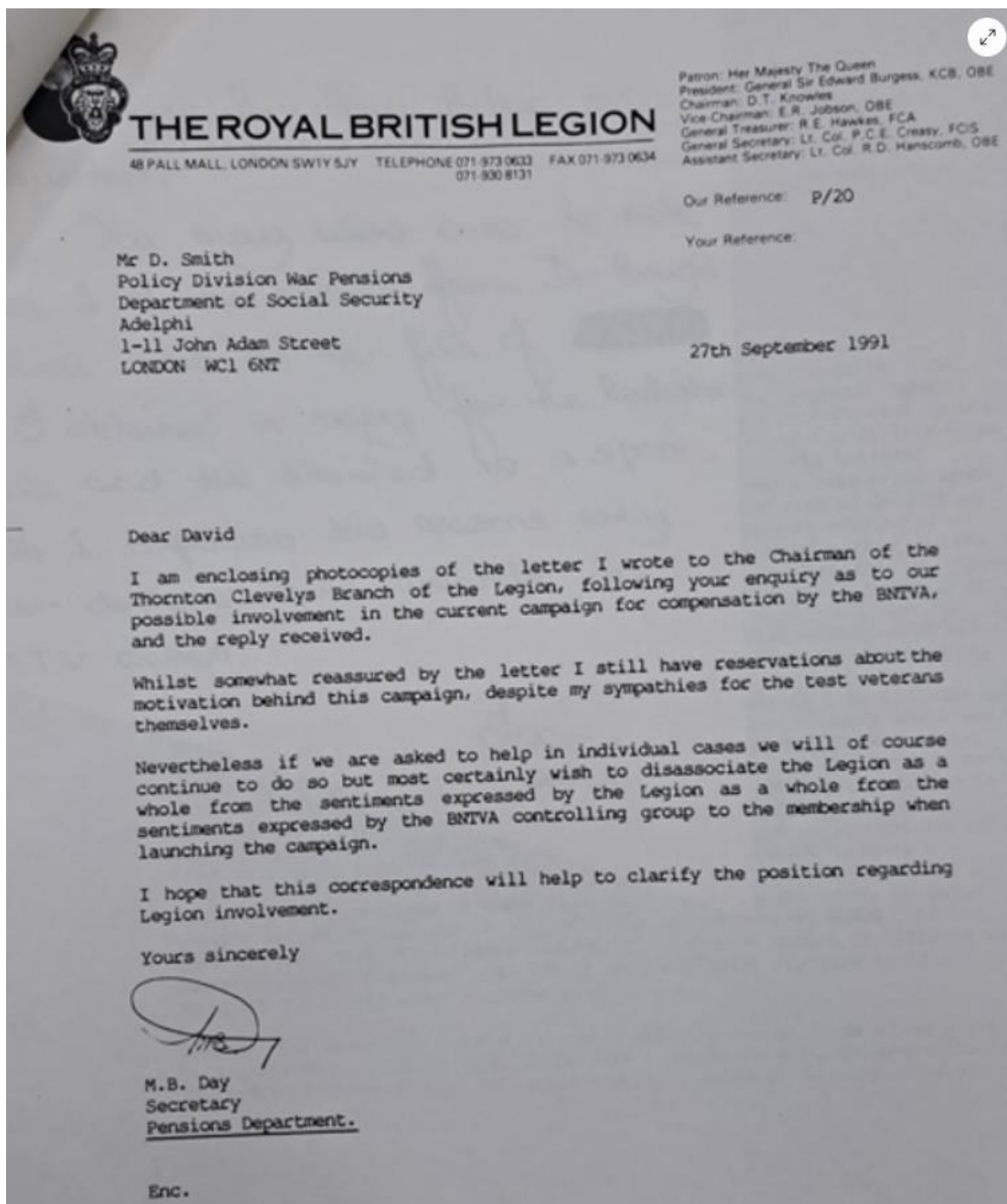
We certainly had no knowledge of this initiative at Legion Headquarters and are understandably concerned when this is brought to our notice by the authorities as appearing to be actively involved nationally in an operation of this kind.

I appreciate that the information we have received represents only one side of the circumstances of this situation and I would therefore be grateful to hear from you on this matter and will convey your response to the General Secretary, who will no doubt wish to write to the authorities on the issue, when I receive your reply.

Yours sincerely

M.B. Day  
Secretary  
Pensions Department.

And then disassociated themselves from the BNTVA campaign:



The BNTVA planned a publicity stunt to hand in hundreds of claim forms. The MoD was aware of it from inside information:

Mr Lowe PS/PSL

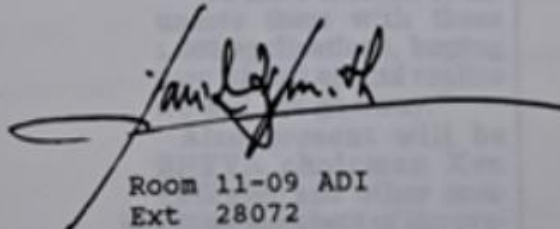
From D B Smith A1C

Date 25 July 1991

Copies: Mr Woods PPS/SoS  
Mr Sadler PS/MoS  
Miss Edwards PS/PS[AW]  
Ms Dudley PS/PS[MJ]  
Mrs Andrews PS/PS  
Mr Birch SSPG  
Mr Montagu RMPG  
Mrs Maunsell A  
Mr Baker A1  
Mr Reardon INF  
Mrs Rogers WPD  
Mr Sheppard N5  
Miss Majekodunmi Sol  
Mr Adams A1D

NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION [ NTVA ]

1. The saga continues. I attach a copy of an article from yesterday's Lancashire Evening Gazette.
2. We have inside information that Mr McGinley knows that we know about his "protest" [the article I think would seem to confirm that]. We have also been advised that the NTVA has only 1750 members rather than the 2-3000 we thought to be the case.
3. We also understand that only 800 applications for War Pension claim forms are held currently by NTVA. Any number, of course, will be unwelcome to WPD but at this stage at least things do not look too bad [ about a week's intake ]; appeals would cause problems later on.
4. Our information is that Mr McGinley does not intend causing any trouble on Tuesday.



Room 11-09 ADI  
Ext 28072

The informant must have known the number of forms that had been received. Even the local RBL Officials were providing the MoD with information (from a memo dated 24 July 1991):

Mr Lowe PS/PSL

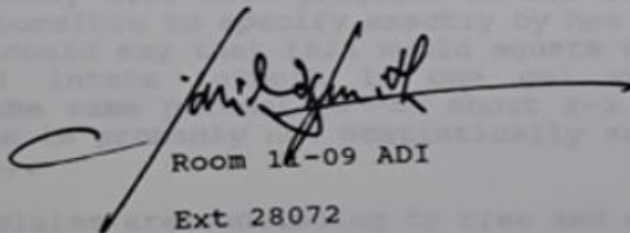
From D B Smith A1C

Date 24 July 1991

Copies: Mr Woods PPS/SoS  
Mr Sadler PS/MoS  
Miss Edwards PS/PS[AW]  
Ms Dudley PS/PS[MJ]  
Mr Birch SSPG  
Mrs Maunsell A  
Mr Baker A1  
Mr Reardon INF  
Mrs Rogers WPD  
Mr Sheppard N5  
Miss Majekodunmi Sol  
Mr Adams A1D

NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION [NTVA]

1. Minister will be interested to hear about some information which came WPD's way this morning.
2. This is that a local official of the RBL rang WPD Press Office to advise that NTVA are planning to come to Norcross on Tuesday 30 July [in the afternoon] to bring the applications for war pensions claim forms. NTVA are apparently trying to involve both the local press [ the Evening Gazette ] and Granada TV.
3. As promised, Mr Sheppard will let you have a response to your note of 18 July by noon tomorrow, or earlier if possible . I am working on a general " Line to take " for Ministers and INF; this, too, will be forwarded by noon tomorrow.

  
Room 1A-09 ADI  
Ext 28072



This officer is later identified as Mr Wyke, a local officer of the RBL:

8. If we get to the point of disallowing all of the claims, as Mr McGinley fully expects, the question of appeal rights arises and in work disruption terms this is potentially more dangerous than handling the claims. It seems that all these claimants have a right of appeal and if they choose to exercise it this could be the equivalent of more than 6 months intake, with considerable work required in preparing detailed statements for the Pensions Appeal Tribunal. PSL will know that the unacceptable clearance times and outstanding workloads for appeals were also addressed by the Scrutiny Report and again the progress now being made would be jeopardised.

9. As you know we now have information from a local RBL official which suggests that NTVA will launch their "coup" at Norcross on Tuesday 30 July (pm), hopefully with Granada TV and the Evening Gazette (the local paper) in attendance. We have made the necessary arrangements with the Norcross security group for a low key receipt of any papers.

A meeting was held internally in Room 8101A (Mr Sheppards office) to discuss the delivery of the forms by Chris Rowlands of the BNTVA:

FILE NOTE

From : J R Sheppard N5  
Date : 24 July 1991

NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION

1. I had a 'phone call this morning from Mrs Kuberski FBWPD Press Officer who had received a call from Mr Wyke, a local official of RBL.(0253 860813).

2. Mr Wyke said that NTVA are planning to come to Norcross on Tuesday 30 July (pm). They are trying to involve both the Evening Gazette and Granada TV.

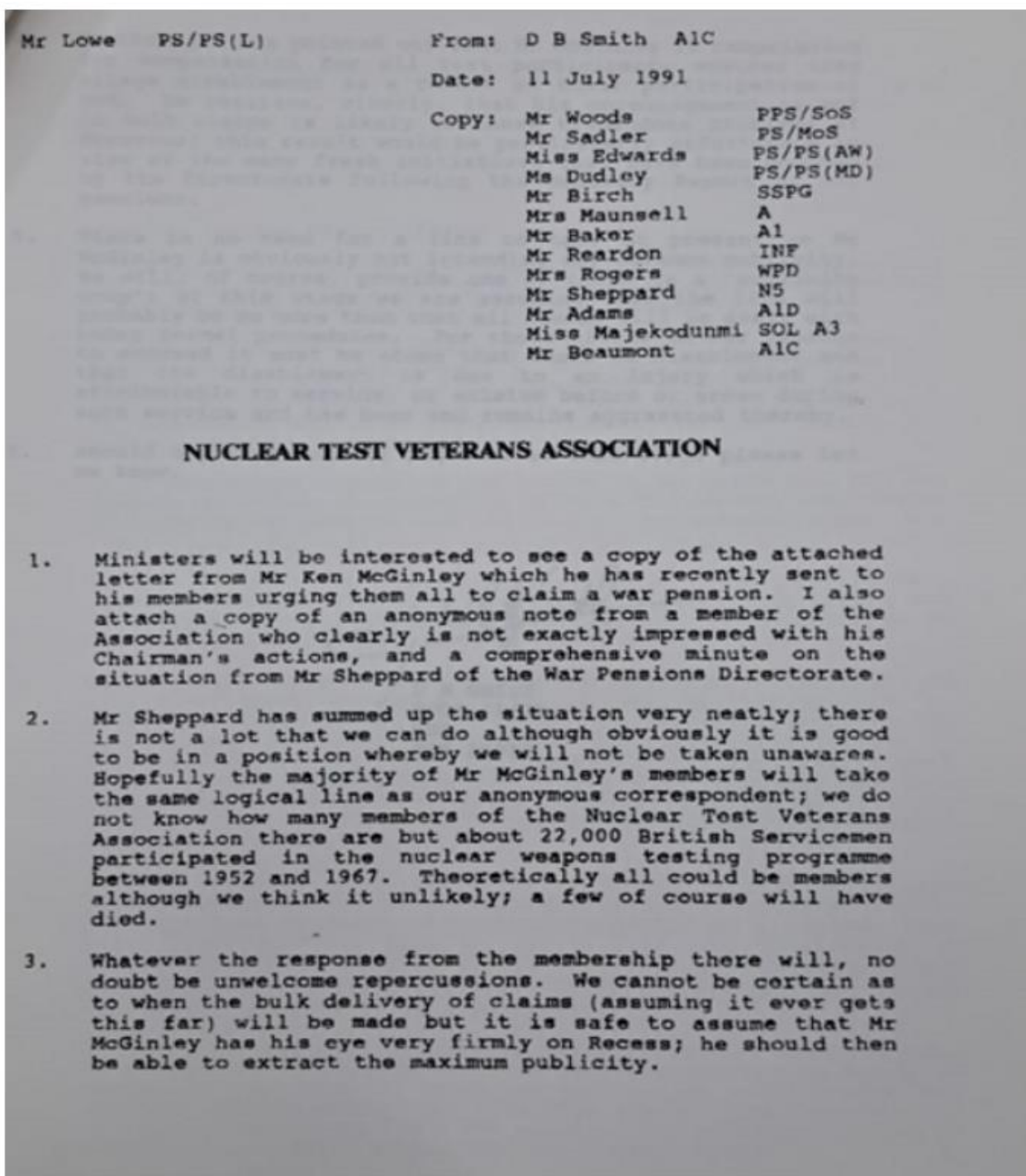
3. I have advised Mr Smith A1C, (who will contact Private Office and Information Division), Mrs Rogers' Support Unit, and Mr Dalby's office. N5 are contacting the Norcross Security section to forewarn them.

J R SHEPPARD

J R Sheppard  
N5  
R 8101A  
Ext 63481  
Norcross

cc : Mr Smith A1C  
Mrs Rogers WPD  
Mr Dalby FBWPD

Ministers involved were sent a memo containing the letter from Mr McGinley and an anonymous note from a member who is not impressed with the Association's actions:



This article can be accessed:

[www.labrats.international/post/ministry-of-defence-infiltrated-nuclear-test-veteran-groups/?s=04&fbclid=IwAR2cm5v3VqqLYRuLXRTnTXLXv2Dpelu-1woqJy0JK8\\_g8N-ddWbJDruQyCE](http://www.labrats.international/post/ministry-of-defence-infiltrated-nuclear-test-veteran-groups/?s=04&fbclid=IwAR2cm5v3VqqLYRuLXRTnTXLXv2Dpelu-1woqJy0JK8_g8N-ddWbJDruQyCE)

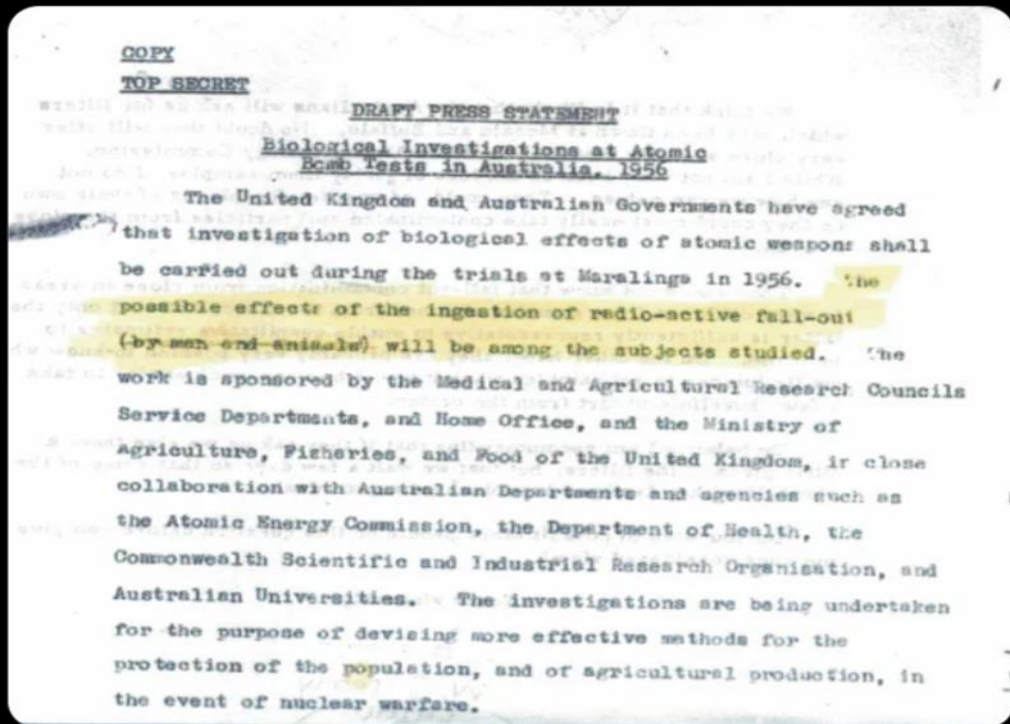
It is one of extreme disappointment, not anger. Since V&F-LP can remember, we (along with countless other Veterans & Families of our Armed Forces) have been loyal supporters of The Royal British Legion (RBL). We have always championed your services, but was really disappointed when this article 'Ministry Of Defence Infiltrated Nuclear Test Veteran Groups' appeared. We are shocked to learn of such deceitful deception from The Royal British Legion, who we have grown to trust. We TRUSTED you RBL...



**LABRATS International** @atomiclabrats · Jul 29

Just in case anyone doubts that the men involved in the UK testing program were part of an experiment.

The United Kingdom and Australian Governments have agreed that investigation of biological effects of atomic weapons shall be carried out during the trials at Maralinga in 1956.



SOURCE: Formley Twitter, now known as X |23.07.23



**LABRATS International**

@atomiclabrats

For 40 years, the Chairman and other people seeking truth and justice told people that they were being monitored by the MoD, everyone dismissed it. Yet these documents prove they had an informant and were spying on their activities.

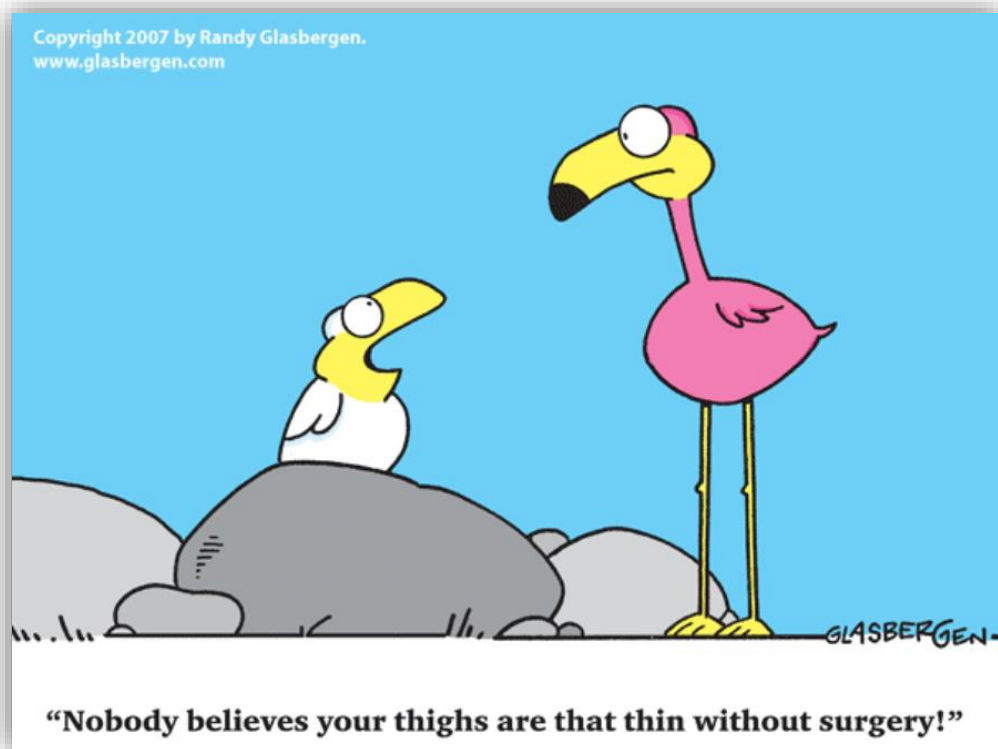
@BWallaceMP care to reply?

NUCLEAR TEST VETERANS ASSOCIATION [ NTVA ]

1. The saga continues. I attach a copy of an article from yesterday's Lancashire Evening Gazette.
2. We have inside information that Mr McGinley knows that we know about his "protest" [the article I think would seem to confirm that]. We have also been advised that the NTVA has only 1750 members rather than the 2-3000 we thought to be the case.
3. We also understand that only 800 applications for War Pension claim forms are held currently by NTVA. Any number, of course, will be unwelcome to WPD but at this stage at least things do not look too bad [ about a week's intake ]; appeals would cause problems later on.
4. Our information is that Mr McGinley does not intend causing any trouble on Tuesday.

12:00 PM · Jul 23, 2023 · **574** Views

SOURCE: Formley Twitter, now known as X |23.07.23





# Korean War veterans honoured at 70th anniversary event in Scotland

SOURCE: [www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/news/2023/july/28/20230728-korean-war-veterans-honoured-at-70th-anniversary-event-in-scotland](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/news/2023/july/28/20230728-korean-war-veterans-honoured-at-70th-anniversary-event-in-scotland)



## **Serving members of the Armed Forces and Korean War Veterans gathered at the Scottish Korean War Memorial to mark the 70th Anniversary of the end of the Korean War.**

Similar events took place around the country, with Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Tony Radakin leading tributes in London's Horse Guards Parade to remember those who served in the conflict. It is expected that over 1,000 people will attend the ceremony in London, where wreaths will be laid outside the British Army Headquarters.

Royal Navy, Royal Marines, British Army, Royal Air Force and Royal British Legion Scotland laid wreaths at the smaller, but no less significant event in Scotland. A small number of Korean War Veterans also attended the Service of Commemoration at the Korean War Memorial in a quiet corner of Beecraigs Country Park in West Lothian.

Among the Veterans who attended was Adam McKenzie who served with The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders in 1955 as part of the peacekeeping force which followed the war and is responsible for having the Memorial built, the only one in Scotland which is purely for the Korean War.



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



@VnF\_LP



Veterans & Families – Listening Project  
email: [veteransfamilies@yahoo.com](mailto:veteransfamilies@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.





## **‘One of our finest’ – tributes to D-Day marine Ted**

SOURCE: [www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/news/2023/july/25/20230725-one-of-our-finest-tributes-to-d-day-marine-ted](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/news/2023/july/25/20230725-one-of-our-finest-tributes-to-d-day-marine-ted)



**D-Day has claimed its ‘last victim’ with the passing of Royal Marine Ted Owens at the age of 98.**

The green beret thought he was the last man to be wounded in action on June 6 1944 to still be with us more than three quarters of a century later.

He and his comrades stepped off the gangway on their landing craft and into a hellish maelstrom of armour clanking, shells from warships crashing down, the clatter of machine-guns raking the shore, smoke, fire and an indescribable noise.

“If anyone wasn’t frightened, there was something wrong with them. I certainly was – and I don’t mind admitting it,” he recalled more than seven decades later.



## **'One of our finest' – tributes to D-Day marine Ted**

SOURCE: [www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/news/2023/july/25/20230725-one-of-our-finest-tributes-to-d-day-marine-ted](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/news/2023/july/25/20230725-one-of-our-finest-tributes-to-d-day-marine-ted)

His brush with death on D-Day was the first of three occasions when he was wounded helping to liberate western Europe from the Nazi yoke.

Ted spent more than two months recuperating from his D-Day injuries - his comrades thought at first he had been killed when struck in the chest, back and left shoulder by shrapnel... and his body carried more than a dozen pieces for the rest of his life.

Born in Pembroke Dock, Ted volunteered for the elite 41 Commando Royal Marines and was just 19 when he went into action with them on Sword Beach in Normandy on 'the longest day'.

Once recovered from his D-Day wounds, Ted returned to the front line for the final battles in Normandy, was wounded during operations on Walcheren in November 1944 (injured by a landmine) then again shortly before Christmas 1944 by a ricochet from a sniper's bullet which struck his windpipe and required a further spell in hospital.





Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund



## From Loneliness to Lifelong Friends

50% of armed service veterans say that exiting the Armed Forces caused them to feel lonely.

In a bid to help prevent social isolation and improve the mental health of veterans, the RAF Benevolent Fund have set up Group Breaks across the country.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR GROUP BREAKS](#)

SOURCE: <https://enews.rafbf.org/q/123guZMeCXjolPYSyw6b/wv>





## Providing accessible holidays for disabled serving and former members of the RAF and their dependents

The RAF Benevolent Fund is proud to support the RAF Disabled Holiday Trust as part of our **welfare offering** for members of the RAF Family. The RAF Disabled Holiday Trust believes everybody deserves a stress-free holiday, free from the worry of whether accommodation is accessible or not. This is why we have a wonderful selection of places to stay, all over the UK, which meet both yours and your families every need.

All our properties are specially adapted to be wheelchair accessible with wide door widths and level access showers - so all you have to worry about is what you're going to be doing during your break.





Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund

📞 Helpline: 0300 102 1919



# There are many ways the RAF Benevolent Fund can support you and your family

We always aim to provide a tailor-made approach to each individual situation ensuring you get the best support when you need it.

If you are looking for **financial support**, we can help you cover one-off costs to providing you with **benefits advice**. From therapy sessions and workshops to **breaks for serving families** and **Airplay**, our flagship youth support programme, we are here for the whole family.



**Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund**



## **Benefits advice**



**Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund**

The welfare benefits system can be difficult to navigate. Our friendly staff can help advise on which benefits you, or a loved one might be entitled to. We can also assist with disability benefit appeals.

 **Helpline: 0300 102 1919**



**Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund**

## Listening and counselling service



Our listening and counselling service provides free and confidential emotional support for RAF veterans, serving personnel and their partners.

# Youth counselling service

To support the children and young people of the RAF Family we have launched a specialist counselling service. Whether you or your partner are currently serving in the RAF or have previously served, we are here to help.

 **Helpline: 0300 102 1919**

# Telephone Friendship Groups



Our Telephone Friendship Groups support RAF veterans and their partners or widows(ers) to meet new people.

The calls connect up to six people at the same time each week for up to an hour with the aim of reducing social isolation and loneliness.

The calls are hosted by trained volunteers who are on hand to make sure they run smoothly, and we group people together with similar interests and experiences.

## Join a group

Our groups are safe and confidential and we would never share your details without your permission. You will not be charged for call costs.

To find out more, or just have a chat about the service, please give us a call on **0300 222 5703** or email [support@rafbf.org.uk](mailto:support@rafbf.org.uk) for more information.

**\*The Silverline helpline is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year on 0800 4 70 80 90.\***



# Living independently

We know how important it is to stay independent. Home adaptations and mobility aids can improve your quality of life and help you to continue living safely in your own home.

Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to help you or someone you know with a disability to live independently at home. They may be able to give you a Disabled Facilities Grant if they live in England or Wales, or a Home Improvement Grant if they're in Scotland.





## Research Spotlight on Anger among ex-Service members

**New editorial draws attention to the need to understand the experience of anger among ex-Service members**

Anger is the elephant in the room when it comes to understanding the mental health of Service members and ex-Service members. Such is the premise of a new editorial published in the *Journal of Anxiety Disorders* and authored by the Mental Health Research and Innovation Collaborative (MHRIC), a working group of military and veteran mental health experts across the Five-Eyes countries (UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand).

This editorial ([“Problematic anger in military and veteran populations with and without PTSD: The elephant in the room”](#)) focuses on two points right from the outset. First, problematic anger is not just an optional feature of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) but is an issue in its own right. Second, despite its disruptive impact, little direct attention in clinical practice, research and veteran policies focuses on problematic anger.





## Research Spotlight on Anger among ex-Service members

### New editorial draws attention to the need to understand the experience of anger among ex-Service members

The editorial draws attention to a number of important findings that have emerged from recent research on problematic anger:

- **Problematic anger is common:** almost one in three military veterans report problematic anger in the initial years following separation from the military.
- **Problematic anger predicts difficulty in life adjustment after leaving the military:** Problematic anger not only contributes to psychological distress in veterans but also contributes to difficulties with their adjustment to post-service life, including subsequent financial problems, employment and housing instability, and relationship breakdown.
- **Problematic anger is associated with high-risk behaviours:** Problematic anger is associated with significant risk in terms of suicidality and aggression and violence.
- **Problematic anger is independent of other mental health problems:** This research makes clear that problematic anger is associated with high-risk outcomes even after factoring in other mental health problems such as PTSD and depression. In other words, problematic anger can drive negative outcomes over and above the influence of PTSD and depression on the lives of service members and veterans.

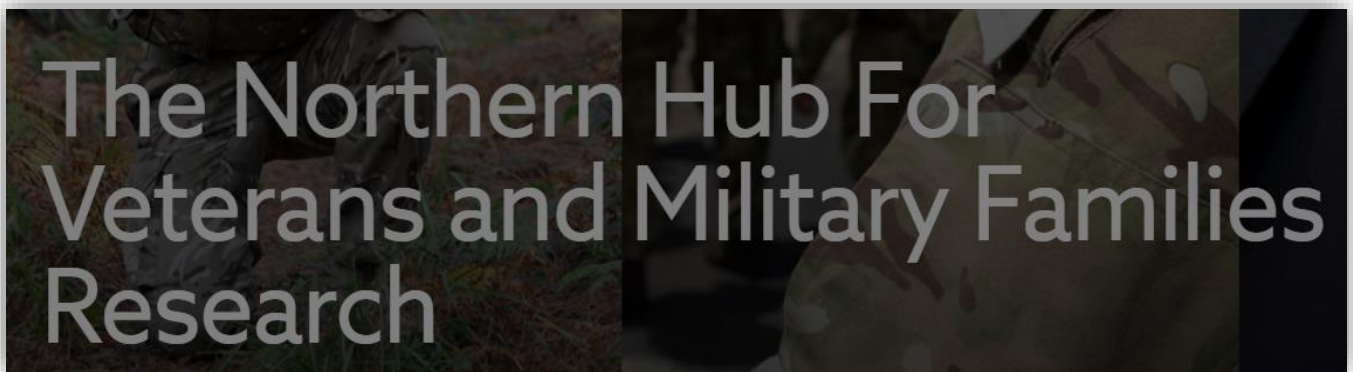


## Exploring alcohol misuse in ex-Service personnel: Current evidence and ongoing research.

Harmful consumption of alcohol is of particular concern among some members of the UK ex-Service personnel community. Evidence from the [King's Centre for Military Health Research \(KCMHR\)](#) found a higher incidence of harmful alcohol use in UK male ex-Service personnel population versus their civilian counterparts (11% v. 6%) [3]. There is an established and long-standing drinking culture across the UK Armed Forces that doesn't dissipate once a Serving individual leaves. [Researchers from the University of Liverpool and KCMHR](#) explored motivations for drinking in Serving and ex-Service personnel [4]. They found that social pressure to drink and drinking as a coping mechanism may be key motivators driving Serving and ex-Service personnel to potentially harmful alcohol consumption. [The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families' Research](#) at Northumbria University also observed the [normalisation of higher alcohol consumption](#) within the UK military context [5]. Specifically, they found that some ex-Service personnel may fail to establish a connection between this behaviour and other personal issues they may be experiencing. Therefore, this may delay them accessing or engaging with help.

# Additional Information Links

Developing an Integrated Model of Care for  
Veterans with Alcohol Problems



**Drinking motivations in UK serving and ex-serving  
military personnel**



# Veterans of Porton Down face 6% higher mortality rate but no increase in developing cancers

by Dr Gemma Archer & Prof Nicola Fear 2 months ago

PRESS RELEASE

# Save the Date – Veterans' Mental Health Conference 2024

by Prof Nicola Fear and others a month ago

VMHC2024



"Frankly, that is the sort of thing a cat would say."



## **MAVERICK: A Smartphone App to Predict Cannabis Use and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Symptoms in UK Veterans - Recruiting Now**

by Grace Williamson & Dr Daniel Leightley

We are seeking to recruit participants who have left service in the **past 2 years**, own a **smartphone**, own a **wearable device**, have used **cannabis in the last month** and have **symptoms of PTSD**.



Want to take part? [Click here to complete our eligibility survey.](#)



# UK Veterans' Experiences of Seeking Help for Self-Harm and Suicide Behaviours: A Qualitative Exploration

by Charlotte Williamson, Dr Sharon Stevelink, Dr Marie-Louise Sharp 3 months ago ⌚ 3 MIN READ

**Content Warning: self-harm and suicide behaviours**

*For immediate crisis help:*

## **NHS 111 Online**

Speak to health professionals for advice about mental and physical health. Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**Tel:** 111 **Web:** [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk)

## **Samaritans**

Someone to talk to 24 hours a day. Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**Tel:** 116 123 **Email:** [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) **Web:** [samaritans.org](https://samaritans.org)

## **Combat Stress 24 Hour Helpline**

Provides confidential help and advice on any mental health issues to the military community and their families. Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**Helpline:** 0800 138 1619 **Email:** [helpline@combatstress.org.uk](mailto:helpline@combatstress.org.uk) **Text:** 07537 404719 (standard charges may apply)



## **Veterans' Strategy Action Plan**

**VETERANS'  
STRATEGY  
ACTION PLAN  
2022-2024**

Veterans strategy action plan.



## GONG FOR CRISIS RESPONDERS

A NEW medal has been announced recognising humanitarian service in the UK and abroad.

King Charles approved the decoration, which will be awarded to troops and civilians deployed in response to the likes of conflict-related crises, epidemics or natural disasters.

Deputy Prime Minister Oliver Dowden called the step "a fitting tribute to heroes".



SOURCE: [www.army.mod.uk/news-and-events/soldier-magazine](http://www.army.mod.uk/news-and-events/soldier-magazine) 06.08.23



# INSPIRED BY VCS



ROYAL Irish Regiment soldiers past and present teamed up across several timezones to honour the deeds of their forebearers.

From Ireland to India at 1100 locally, a worldwide day of commemorations saw wreaths laid at the graves of 18 Victoria Cross holders from the formation's antecedent units.

Former CO Col (Retd) Tim Collins travelled to Khayat Beach War Cemetery in Israel, where Pte Norman Harvey of the 1st Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers is buried.

SOURCE: [soldiermagazine.co.uk](http://soldiermagazine.co.uk) AUGUST 2023 **11** 06.08.23

# INSPIRED BY VCS



Decorated for conspicuous gallantry on the Belgian front in October 1918 – aged just 19 – the Serviceman was later killed in Palestine during the Second World War.

Paying tribute to the infanteer, Collins said he represented “a great generation,” and had selflessly re-enlisted “in the face of the racist threat, knowing full well what to expect.”

## CALLING WW2 VETS

■ MEMORIES of those who lived through the Second World War – as well as photos of personal effects from the era – are being sought by Oxford University for a project aiming to present a digital showcase.

Matthew Kidd, leading the Their Finest Hour initiative, said: “It’s good to have stories – even if they are only a few paragraphs or a picture – for future generations.”

Visit [theirfinesthour.org](https://theirfinesthour.org)

Why not visit

THEIR  
FINEST  
HOUR

## What is *Their Finest Hour*?

Many of us have Second World War-related stories and objects that have been passed down to us from our parents, grandparents and other family members. *Their Finest Hour*, a University of Oxford project launched in July 2022 and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, aims to empower local communities to digitally preserve these stories and objects before they are lost to posterity.



[www.youtube.be/KII83sUQktQ](https://www.youtube.be/KII83sUQktQ)



## British Sign Language Tour

02/09/2023

For the first time, we are offering free British Sign Language tours of our flagship Tank Story exhibition.

# BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE TOUR

## 2 SEPTEMBER 2023

**For the first time, we are running British Sign Language guided tours.**

As a trial for 2023, we are offering free BSL tours on 7 July and 2 September. Tour attendees will also get free entry to The Tank Museum on their booking date.

The hour-long tour will take place in the Tank Story Hall. Our flagship exhibition, it features the 32 most important tanks in the history of armoured warfare, from Little Willie, the first working prototype, to the current Main Battle Tank, Challenger 2.

- 7th July and 2nd September
- Visitors can use their entry tickets all day (1000 - 1700)
- The tour starts at 1500 and lasts one hour
- 20 people maximum per tour
- BSL users only
- Under 16s can bring one accompanying adult (must be booked)

# BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE TOUR

2 SEPTEMBER 2023



BSL Tours | The Tank Museum



Watch Later



Share



and Saturday 2nd September.

Watch on YouTube

THE TANK MUSEUM



**FIZZIN'  
WITH  
FLAVOUR**



## Quiet Morning

30/09/2023

# QUIET MORNING

30 SEPTEMBER 2023

Join us for a quiet morning aimed at anyone who would appreciate a calmer visit to the Museum. From 9am - 11am all sounds, and interactives will be turned off to reduce sensory input.

I get the  
feelin' you're  
up to somethin'



Awe...Come-On!  
Ya big chicken...  
just put it on,  
it'll be fun...!





# REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Take these men as your example.  
Like them remember  
That prosperity can only be for the free,  
Who alone have the courage to defend it.

Pericles 490 - 429 B.C.

On 12 November, The Tank Museum will be hosting the Royal Armoured Corps Remembrance Sunday service within the Cold War Hall, followed by wreath laying.

The Museum is open from 10am to 5pm, and general admission is free.

Timings will be confirmed closer to the time.

Space at the service is prioritised for invited military personnel and their families and is likely to be full, however if there is capacity on the day, members of the public are welcome.

If there is no space at the service or you do not wish to attend, you are welcome to pay your respects at the Museum separately.



# ON TRACK 2023

## 5 OCTOBER 2023

**On Track is The Tank Museum's well-being event in support of World Mental Health Day.**

This event features talks, workshops and focus-groups designed to provide information of day-to-day techniques and useful contacts for individuals to help build their own mental resilience and for supporting those around them.

On Track is particularly tailored towards veterans, serving members of the armed forces, and emergency services workers, but is suitable for and open to all.

- 5 October, 9am-5pm
- Tickets available now – there is limited availability so booking is essential
- Free entry for serving military, veterans and emergency services staff, past and present, members and Annual Pass holders can also book free tickets.
- Programme coming soon
- Ticket holders will be contacted closer to the event to book into break-out groups and workshops
- Watch talks from 2021's event [here](#)

**Pre-booking is  
essential**

**We're looking for exhibitors**



## MILITARY SITE SOLD



WATERBEACH Barracks – a former home to Royal Engineers personnel – has been sold by the Ministry of Defence.

The 293 hectare Cambridgeshire site, which closed to the military back in 2013, will now make way for a 6,500 home development.

It has been bought by a company called Urban and Civic, part of the Wellcome Trust, which plans to develop the site in stages over the next two decades.



## Veterans' Gateway to be taken into the Office for Veterans' Affairs



# Office for Veterans' Affairs

The Government has launched a refresh of the Veterans' Gateway, which will improve access to welfare services for ex-forces personnel.

The Veterans' Gateway, which has already supported over a million veterans, will be run by the Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA), at the heart of government, next year.

The OVA will identify and carry out improvements to the service. The Gateway will benefit from being at the centre of government, utilising the OVA's skills and data to streamline access to support and make more efficient referrals.

During the course of the next year veterans will be able to feed into the improvement project, including testing the service to make it as effective as possible for the ex-forces community.

It enables veterans and their dependents to access state and charity support services in areas including physical and mental health, financial support, assistance with independent living, housing, and employment.

Since it began, there have been more than a million visits to the Veterans' Gateway's online guides, which offer advice on everything from financial help to housing and there have been around 100,000 contacts for support on issues such as living independently or getting back into employment.

The service has also referred around 16,000 people for additional specialist help from organisations such as the Royal British Legion since it began. The current Veterans' Gateway will continue to run as normal during the transition period.

**NEWS**

If you are in need of support, visit [www.veteransgateway.org.uk](http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk), call 0808 802 1212 or text 81212. 14 Jul, 2023



SOURCE: [www.questonline.co.uk/news/article/veterans-gateway-to-be-taken-into-the-office-for-veterans-affairs](http://www.questonline.co.uk/news/article/veterans-gateway-to-be-taken-into-the-office-for-veterans-affairs) |06.08.23



# Armed Forces Compensation Scheme and Veterans Welfare Reviews published

The reviews have offered recommendations to improve the experience of those requiring veterans' welfare or compensation services.

Today, the long-awaited publication of the Quinquennial Review of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (QQR) and an independent review of the UK Government's welfare services for Veterans is being announced by the government.

The recommendations of both reviews, which include strengthening the way we make decisions and communicate outcomes around compensation claims, and strengthening the delivery of veterans services, will be considered in full - with the Government's response to each published later in the year.

The reviews were commissioned by the Ministry of Defence and The Office for Veteran's Affairs to improve the way we support our serving personnel and veterans in a range of services and compensation claims.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Johnny Mercer MP said:

**These reviews offer a real opportunity to make a difference to veterans' lives, many of whom have made real sacrifices for their country. I will be considering the recommendations carefully and will work with the MOD to provide a response in due course.**

Minister for Defence, People, Veterans and Service Families, Dr Andrew Murrison MP said:

**I welcome the completion of these important reviews to help the Government understand where we can do better. It is essential that we appropriately support our Serving Personnel and Veterans who have served our country with courage and honour. The government will consider the recommendations and respond in due course.**



# Armed Forces Compensation Scheme and Veterans Welfare Reviews published

The recommendations of the reviews will build on the support the Government has already committed, including the newly announced pay award and financial support for serving personnel and a £40m digitisation project of pension and compensation services.

The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme provides compensation for injury or illness caused or made worse by service, with the Quinquennial Review assessing the effectiveness of administration and processing claims and to ensure, as time passes, the scheme remains fit for purpose.

Alongside this, the Veteran's Welfare Review examines the effectiveness and efficiency of welfare services provided by the Ministry of Defence to support veterans.

The recommendation from both reports includes the following:

- The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Quinquennial Review recommendations focus on six broad areas including; communications with applicants, case-working, and policy changes.
- The recommendations of Veterans Welfare Review focus on the roles, Governance and delivery of services by Government.

Government's support for veterans is wide-reaching which includes free support for veterans and their families, the Veterans Welfare Service, Defence Transition Services and injury/bereavement compensation scheme payments.

## NEWS

18 Jul, 2023



SOURCE: [www.questonline.co.uk/news/article/armed-forces-compensation-scheme-and-veterans-welfare-reviews-published-today](http://www.questonline.co.uk/news/article/armed-forces-compensation-scheme-and-veterans-welfare-reviews-published-today) | 06.08.23



## Progress made with digital verification service to apply for Veteran Card

Continued progress has been made towards the new digital verification service to apply for a HM Armed Forces Veteran Card

The Ministry of Defence and the Office for Veterans' Affairs are jointly delivering this service as part of ongoing improvements in veterans support.

The OVA led the initial Discovery and Alpha phases, establishing how the Veteran Card can be delivered in the most simple and effective way. The MOD has now taken on its development and will deliver the service. It is a significant technical project and has required highly skilled support from Defence Digital and Government Digital Service (GDS) experts.

The new verification service to support applications will include:

**online applications via GOV.UK**

**identity checks using GOV.UK's new One Login service**

**automated service checking to confirm veteran status for most applications using MOD service records databases**

**increasing MOD's secure card printing capacity to deal with the expected applications using a new high-capacity card printing machine**



## Progress made with digital verification service to apply for Veteran Card

The HM Armed Forces Veteran Card will allow veterans to quickly and easily prove their veteran status where required, thereby granting them simpler access to key support from government, charities, local authorities, and other organisations.

Roll-out will be in phases according to service years to manage the volume of requests and prevent any potential delays resulting from demand exceeding capacity.

With around 1.8 million veterans in the UK, we are focused on building the technology and processes to deal with large volumes of card applications accurately and securely.

Testing started this summer, and we expect cards to become available to veterans later this year. A paper-based application process will also be made available for veterans who are unable to use the online service.

Since December 2018, all Service leavers automatically receive a Veteran Card from the MOD as part of their discharge process and so do not need to apply. The new verification service will address how to replace a lost Veteran Card.

### NEWS

24 Jul, 2023



SOURCE: [www.questonline.co.uk/news/article/progress-made-with-digital-verification-service-to-apply-for-veteran-card](http://www.questonline.co.uk/news/article/progress-made-with-digital-verification-service-to-apply-for-veteran-card) |06.08.23




# Thank you **VETERANS**

HONOURING ALL WHO SERVED

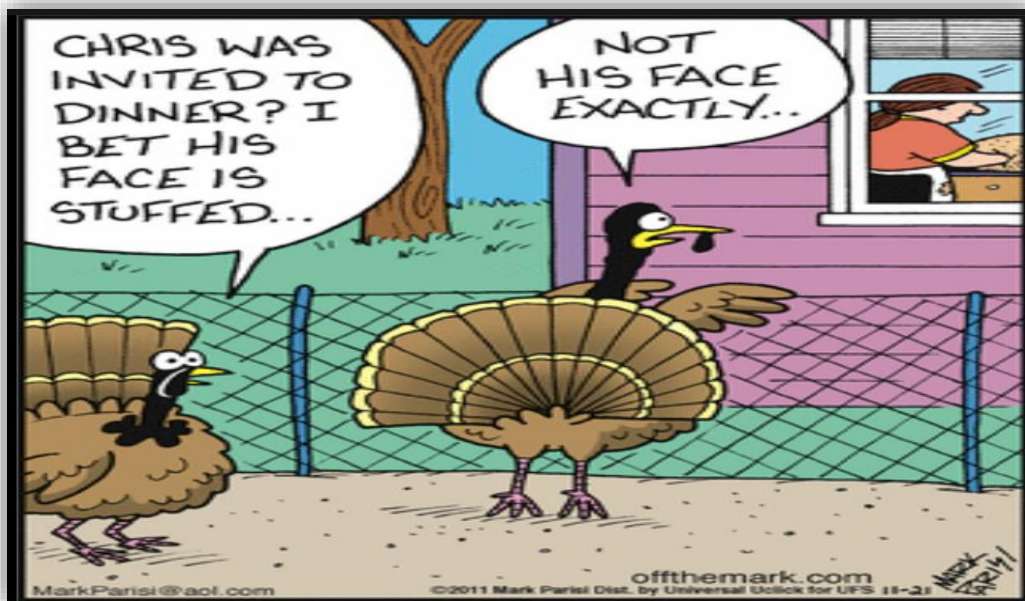


## About a Nurse

allnurses.com 



*“What did you think I meant when I said  
the doctor was a real turkey?”*





# The First Armed Forces Veterans Breakfast Club Takes Place In The Rugby World



The first Armed Forces Veterans Breakfast Club to take place at a Rugby Club, Houghton-le-Spring, Sunderland.

Sunderland Association Football Club was the first football club in the UK to host an Armed Forces Veterans Breakfast Club (AFVBC), when they held their inaugural event in October 2022.

Now following in their footsteps and approximately 6 or so miles down the road, is Houghton Rugby Club, who have become the first Rugby Club within the UK to host the ever growing network of social breakfasts, adding to North East England's vibrant forces and veterans scene.

Taking place on Saturday July 22, the amateur club which was formed in 1873, threw open their doors with a free brew and hearty breakfast at just £4.50, which goes back into the coffers of the AFVBC network.



SOURCE: [www.pathfinderinternational.co.uk/the-first-armed-forces-veterans-breakfast-club-takes-place-in-the-rugby-world/](http://www.pathfinderinternational.co.uk/the-first-armed-forces-veterans-breakfast-club-takes-place-in-the-rugby-world/) | 06.08.23



## Is it really a 'legal obligation' to have a smart meter fitted? Consumer rights lawyer DEAN DUNHAM responds - and explains your rights on chargeback refunds as he answers your questions

By [DEAN DUNHAM](#)

UPDATED: 10:42, 12 July 2023

*We have been told by Eon that our electric meter needs replacing and it is a 'legal obligation' to do so.*

*Eon says we should book an appointment for an engineer to fit a new smart meter.*

*Is this correct? Our meter was installed in 2003. We have had no problems with it, read it regularly and pay by direct debit.*

**Sylvia Hill, by email.**

**Dean Dunham replies:** Energy providers have been directed by the Government to take 'all reasonable steps' to install smart meters in homes and the energy firms are desperate to oblige.

While all providers deploy different tactics to convince consumers to get a smart meter, many readers tell me that they feel as though they have been bullied into getting one and made to believe it is compulsory.

Smart meters are not compulsory. You are perfectly within your legal rights to refuse your provider's offer or insistence to install one.

This is unless, as Eon claims in your case, your current meter is about to become obsolete and cannot be repaired or replaced with another traditional one.

Meters installed pre-2006 have a defined lifespan depending on the make and model so are deemed to be obsolete after this date.

## Dean Dunham The Consumer Lawyer on chargebacks and rejected



Meters installed after 2006 can be tested by taking a data sample to check for accuracy. Typically, such tests are undertaken every six years.

However, I have heard many stories where, while this was the excuse given by the energy firm, it was not actually true.

I've also been told about companies claiming that a traditional meter needs to be replaced due to 'safety issues'.

### **...Important...**

In either of these circumstances you are entitled to ask for evidence — and if Eon or any other energy provider cannot provide this, then you can refuse to have a smart meter installed.

If a smart meter is the only option and you are not happy with this, you can ask for it to be set up to work in 'dumb' mode, with all communications switched off.

This means that its 'smart meter' functions are disabled, and you would read the meter as normal.



*...Here's wishing you all well. Please feel free to share our newsletter...*



Take care  
From the team V&F-LP

All information is correct at the time of going to press & PDF  
Veterans & Families-Listening Project (V&F-LP)  
does not endorse any products or service(s) advertised

\*Subject to change

