



# Defence Medical Welfare Service

Impact Report 24/25



# Welcome

As I reflect on my first year as Chief Executive of Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS) I feel immensely proud of what our organisation has achieved. Entering my second year in the role, I remain continually impressed by the professionalism and compassion of our teams. They place those we support at the centre of everything that they do; our teams do this because they understand the dedication and tenacity shown by those who serve, their families, and the carers who support them. These are the people who give us the daily inspiration to achieve more, to do better, and to understand the successes and challenges that a life of service brings.

DMWS continues to support our beneficiaries with professionalism, intelligence, and commitment. We remain dedicated to evolving and developing our service to meet new and testing requirements placed upon us.

**In 2024-2025, DMWS supported 16,524 people who have served or are still serving on the frontlines. Behind each number is a story of someone we've helped, behind each of these numbers is a family, carer, or professional who we have had the honour to work with.**

As new expectations and challenges are placed upon our service, our work has developed and we have maintained and extended our footprint. Wellbeing and clinical services have evolved, and investment has taken place in infrastructure – all of this effort is to ensure our support is high-quality, evidence based, secure, and confidential. DMWS work in collaboration with statutory and third sector organisations to ensure the support we offer is tailored to the beneficiary and contributes to both short and long-term positive outcomes. We do this discretely and sensitively with an innate understanding of the exceptional people we deliver services to.

It is a privilege to lead a charity that serves those who so selflessly work in frontline roles. I look forward to continuing this work in 2025–2026 with the same integrity, collaboration, and focus that defines DMWS. All of what we achieve is only possible through the work of our staff, the commitment of our supporters, and the exceptional generosity of our funders and partners.



**Abby Dryden,  
Chief Executive Officer**

# A word from our Chair

2024-2025 has been a year of tremendous challenge and change, and of continued growth within our traditional sectors and now within several new environments. The team led by our CEO and our Directors have reacted and adapted magnificently to these pressures and have delivered a first-class service to our core audience across the country. As Chair of the DMWS Board, I am in the privileged position of being able to congratulate all our Team, wherever they work, on an outstanding year.

We continue to stay true to our strategic aims and core purpose: delivering medical welfare support to those who are serving, or have served, on the frontline — as well as to their families and carers. Over the past year, I have been truly inspired and humbled by what our teams have achieved and by the strength and resilience of those we support.

The context in which we operate continues to evolve and can often be extremely challenging, yet the commitment and compassion of our staff remains unwavering. Their professionalism, resilience, and dedication are the backbone of everything DMWS delivers.

The following pages offer just a glimpse of what has been accomplished this year, and I hope you find them as inspiring as I do.

**We are proud of the difference we make and remain steadfast in our mission to provide dedicated, person-centred support to the frontline — now and into the future.**



**Brigadier (Retd) Mike Griffiths CBE QPM,  
Chair of DMWS Board of Trustees**

# What we do

Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS) is an independent charity that delivers tailored wellbeing services supporting physical and mental health and wellbeing to those who work in frontline roles. This includes the Armed Forces Community (serving, reservists, veterans), their families/carers, Police, NHS staff and The Merchant Navy. DMWS has operated for over 80 years, at home in the United Kingdom and Overseas, in challenging frontline environments. We deliver discrete and confidential services to support those who make exceptional commitments to serve our nation.

We are there for people who serve or who have served. We provide a range of non-clinical and clinical interventions to support individuals, families, and carers through times of stress and uncertainty. Our support is a dedicated and comforting presence at the hospital bedside, back at home, and in the community or on deployed operations.

We provide practical and emotional support for complex and sometimes distressing issues, using our own expertise and collaborating with other statutory and non-statutory organisations to ensure the right care at the right time.



*“DMWS were brilliant throughout my hospital stay and helped to take the edge off a really stressful time. I struggled to get answers from some of the medical staff regarding my injuries and recovery but my Welfare Officer was outstanding in getting me the information I needed. A real friendly face when I needed it the most. My stay in hospital would have been far worse if they hadn’t been there to support me.”*

**RAF Serving Personnel**



### **Our Mission:**

To provide a high-quality professional and confidential medical welfare service to those who serve the nation.



### **Our Purpose:**

To help people during their most critical time of need, ensuring no one goes through the worry of injury or illness alone.



### **Our Vision:**

To be the most respected provider of welfare support for those in frontline services.



### **Our Values:**

Commitment - Integrity -  
People - Working Together

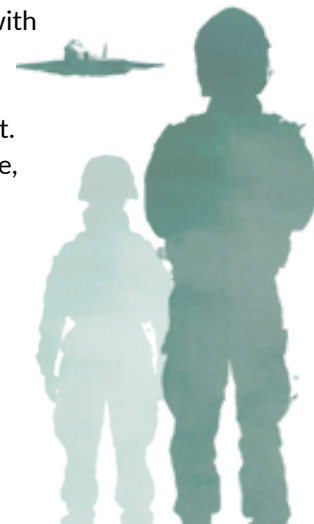
## **Our support is proven to help people:**

- Have better experiences of healthcare and recover more quickly.
- Understand, manage, and access treatment for physical or mental illness and injury, as an individual or as their family member/carer.
- Feel understood and acknowledged for their unique occupational service and the positive and negative impacts it can have on their life and the lives of those around them.
- Reduce negative habits and behaviours to improve quality of life.
- Access and navigate multiple options of support with confidence to promote sustained engagement and maximise positive short and long-term outcomes
- Feel valued and truly at the centre of service provision.
- Connect to their communities and feel less lonely
- Overcome alcohol and drug misuse.
- Feel less stressed and anxious.
- Seek support when dealing with thoughts of suicide or self-harm.
- Access financial support to reduce the stress of concerns about money.
- Find and stay in safe and sustainable housing.
- Seek meaningful employment or volunteering opportunities to use their skills after service.

# Our Unique History

DMWS has a rich history of over 80 years supporting those who work on the frontline. Our welfare services have adapted over time to best meet the needs of those we serve. Our journey over the years has seen us in unique positions that have developed our specialist knowledge and ability to respond to crisis.

- **International Deployment** – DMWS remains the only military charity and civilian welfare organisation to have deployed to areas of conflict with the Armed Forces, working alongside medical staff in the Field Hospitals in Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan.
- **National Crisis Response** – During Covid-19, DMWS maintained our operational status and responded to the urgent needs of the NHS, Emergency Services, and the MoD.
- **A Proud Heritage** – We were founded in 1913, originally known as the Service Hospital Welfare Department, and have since provided high-quality welfare support to meet the needs of those who serve.
- **Growth and Expansion** – Our welfare support has expanded to support further classifications of frontline staff, such as the Police, NHS staff, and more. We are continually seeking to grow our expertise and knowledge to respond to the need for dedicated frontline care.
- **Navigating Conflict** – DMWS responds with discretion, respect, and situational knowledge to provide welfare support that is appropriate to the political context. Our work in Northern Ireland for example, has been handled with integrity and consideration of the evolving landscape.



# Our footprint

- Embedded in over 46 NHS Trusts and NHS Boards across the UK, delivering support for the Armed Forces Community at the bedside, back home, and in local communities.
- UK-wide National Response Service helpline.
- Dedicated Ministry of Defence Hospital Welfare Service provider in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, and RCDM Birmingham.
- Op Restore delivery partner; Op Courage – two-way referral partner.
- Exemplar Welfare and Psychological support to Police, Forensic Scene Examiners, and NHS staff.
- Supporting accreditations from Veteran Covenant Healthcare Alliance and meeting the Armed Forces Covenant Duty.

# Our Strategic Aims

- 1 Put Our People and Beneficiaries First**

We will promote DMWS's values and commitment to our people to create an excellent place to work. We will continue to recruit, train, and retain highly professional and dedicated staff.
- 2 Sustain, Grow, and Innovate**

We will sustain effective projects and services while developing and expanding in areas of need, in response to our data and aligned to our skills, mission, and aims.
- 3 Maintain and Improve Operational Excellence and Infrastructure**

We will build on our systems, processes, and procedures to drive operational excellence underpinned by robust governance, confidentiality, high level security, risk management, financial management, and safeguarding.

From April 2024 - March 2025,  
we supported

**16,609**  
people across  
the UK and Cyprus

**6,100**

direct beneficiaries

**5,318**

family members/carers

**5,191**

NHS Staff



We helped **149 people** recover and see a future who had **attempted to take their own lives and/or self-harmed.**



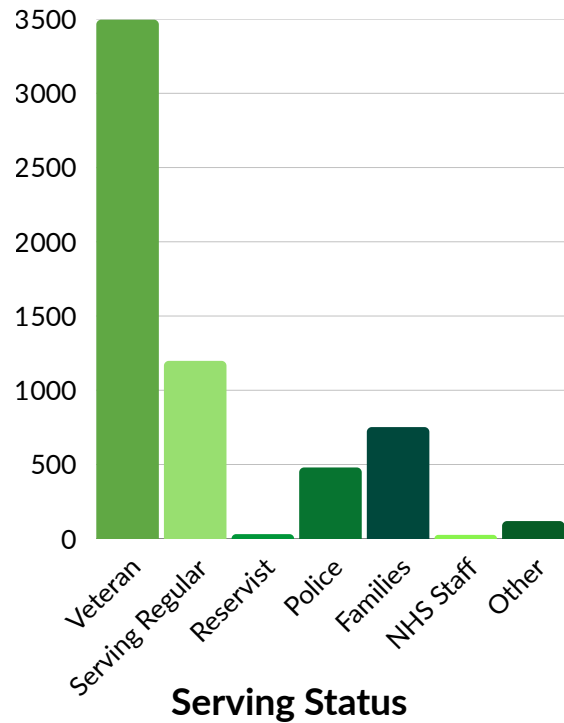
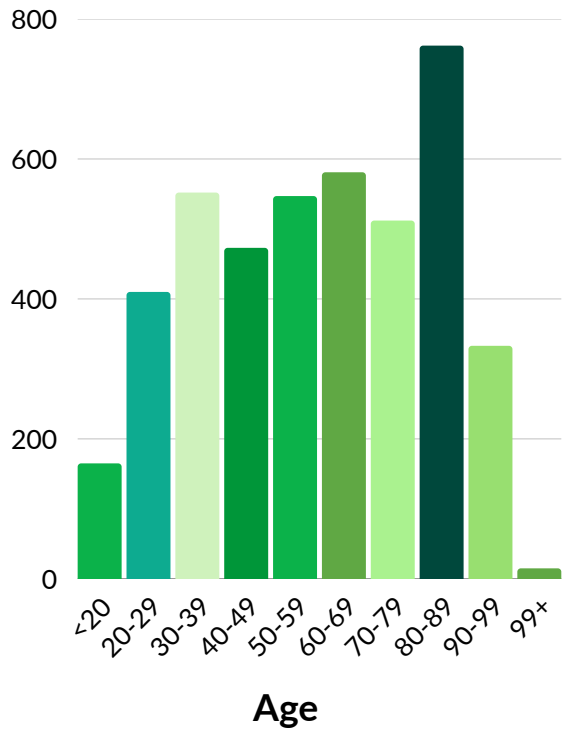
**1 in 4** cases had **high, severe, or exceptional** complexity



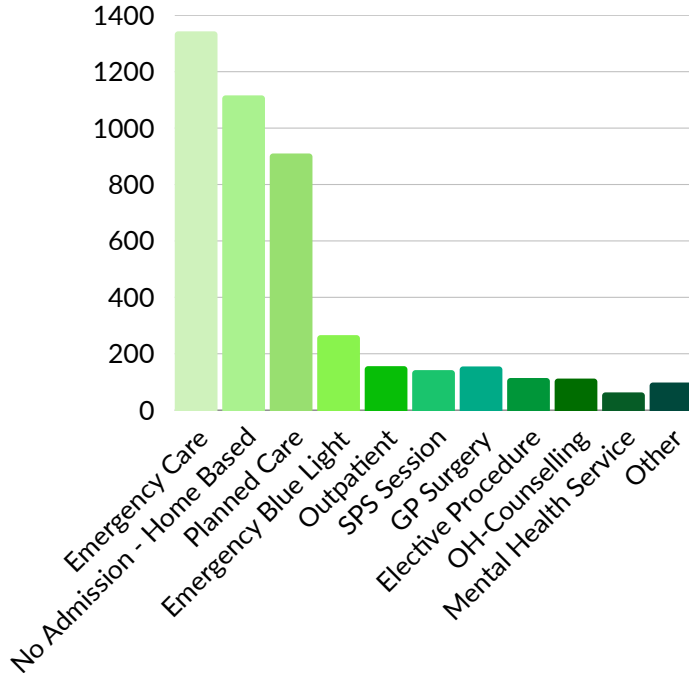
We provided intervention quickly, with our average response time being **less than 2 days.**



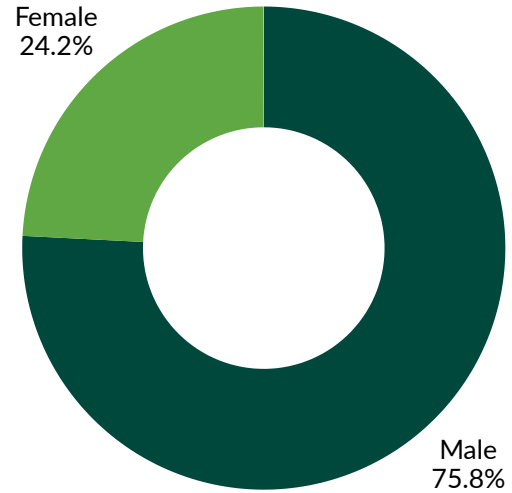
We supported **148 people** who were **homeless to find a safe place to live.**



## Referral Type



## Gender




# Grace's Story

Grace is a veteran in her mid-thirties who struggled through a very difficult childhood. She joined the Army at a young age to escape her home life. Due to her experiences, Grace severely struggled with her mental health. She tried to use alcohol to numb her feelings however fell into dependency. As everything got on top of Grace, she lost hope for the future and made multiple attempts to take her own life.

DMWS were introduced to Grace through a hospital referral after she had attempted to take her life jumping from a motorway bridge. She felt lost, misunderstood, and disconnected from the world and the help available to her. Our Welfare Officer spent time by the bedside with her, making the effort to get to know her and bond over their shared military connection.

Grace felt comforted by our Welfare Officer's support, and as trust was built between them, she shared more about her life and her current struggles. Together, they worked one step at a time to make positive change in Grace's life, starting with simple and achievable wins such as brushing her teeth and washing her hair. These first few successes inspired Grace to be proud of herself and raised her self-esteem, as it had been years since she felt she had set a target and achieved it.

\*Names and locations of all case studies have been changed or removed to preserve anonymity.



From here, Grace felt confident enough to engage with mental health services and a rehabilitation programme. With the support of her DMWS Welfare Officer, she made connections to various groups, keeping her stride, and was successful in her rehabilitation.

Grace is now going from strength to strength and breaking the cycle of declining into crisis. She is working hard for a brighter future for herself, and for her children, one step at a time.

*“7 weeks later from feeling the force of the ground after that 30ft fall I'm a different person and I see a future for me and my kids. I found my fighting spirit from my army days and DMWS were key to this.*

*You came straight to my bedside and changed my outlook of everything, you gave me what I needed to see things differently and since that day I've never skipped a breakfast or a morning wash.*

*I'm ready to tackle the world and march one day at a time to a better life. Keep doing your amazing work DMWS, you have helped me save my life!”*

**Grace, Army Veteran**

# NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Veterans' Support Service

DMWS is proud to be working together with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Glasgow's Helping Heroes to improve the health and wellbeing of members of the Armed Forces Community in Greater Glasgow and Clyde. This exciting collaboration was made possible thanks to the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Healthcare Charity.

The Veterans' Support Service provides veterans in acute care with additional support to overcome non-clinical issues impacting their recovery, health, and wellbeing by providing one to one person-centred support from our DMWS Welfare Officer. From April '24 to March '25, we tripled our service users from last year, highlighting both the crucial need for our service and the capacity to grow within this area.

*"It's been so rewarding to see this project grow and flourish. We've had fabulous support from the health board's Armed Forces Champion (past and present) but the best bit has been witnessing the difference the service has made for veterans and their families, it has been truly life changing for some. Whether it's a simple bedside visit in their time of need or sustained support over a long recovery, I'm proud of what has been achieved, and we will keep developing the service and this important partnership with NHSGGC."*

**Margaret Partridge, DMWS NHS GGC Veterans' Support Coordinator**



# Paul's Story

DMWS received a referral from the Discharge Team to support Paul, a 58-year-old male veteran, who had served in the Army. He had been admitted through the Emergency Department due to a serious infection in his leg and lower foot which sadly resulted in amputation. Paul was homeless when he was admitted to hospital and struggling with alcohol addiction and self-neglect. He could not remember his service number due to cognitive decline.

DMWS met Paul and spent time visiting him during his hospital stay, as he had no family contact. We built trust and ensured that he did not feel alone during this difficult time. Paul started to address his alcohol addiction and connect with various specialist support.

DMWS sought to secure housing for Paul and worked with a local charity to provide him with clothing and white goods for his new home, acting as a bridge of communication to ensure Paul's needs were met in hospital and long term.

Paul has now been safely discharged into his new home, a fully refurbished ground floor flat, which will support his mobility needs and independence. Paul now has a network of support to help him through his recovery and has a brighter future ahead of him.

\*Names and locations of all case studies have been changed or removed to preserve anonymity.



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# Adam's Story

Adam is a middle-aged Navy veteran who was struggling with homelessness and substance misuse. He had a long history of untreated mental health issues and was struggling to cope with daily life. He felt as if he had reached rock bottom, using up to £200 worth of cocaine daily alongside other prescribed medications.

DMWS received a referral from A&E after Adam was admitted and spent time getting to know him. Adam felt comfortable opening up and revealed he was currently homeless, struggling badly with debt, and was using drugs to mask his chronic pain. Additionally, he couldn't provide for his children and be the father he wanted to be.

DMWS listened without judgement and gave him a safe space to express his emotions. Our Welfare Officer used their knowledge and networks to find Adam the right support, such as referrals to Op Courage, Op Fortitude, and Turning Point to provide support with his mental health and substance misuse. We then contacted the Naval Children's Charity to provide support with Adam's family, which meant a great deal to him knowing they were also receiving support. DMWS also helped Adam to access PIP and claim all eligible benefits as well as complete 'Duty to Refer' for homelessness.



Untangling all of these issues and providing consistent support, effectively and with compassion, has helped Adam turn his life back around. Adam felt empowered to engage with the support being offered to him. DMWS encouraged him to utilise mental health crisis numbers when he felt panic instead of resorting to old patterns and worked with him to feel in control of his situation. Adam felt he had support that understood him, wouldn't leave him behind, and had a safe space to talk when he felt anxious or overwhelmed.

As a result of DMWS intervention, Adam continued to access the support offered to him and was able to secure accommodation. Adam is no longer using illegal substances and has secured a full-time job that gives him purpose. He has made successful changes in his life and is moving forward living a healthy, happy, and safe life for himself and his loved ones.

*“You’ve changed my life.  
I can’t thank you enough.”*

**Adam, Navy Veteran**



# Op RESTORE: The Veterans' Physical Health and Wellbeing Service

Op RESTORE is an NHS service that supports anyone who has served in or is leaving the UK Armed Forces and is struggling with continuing physical health injuries and related medical problems attributed to their time in service.


DMWS is proud to be a key partner in Op RESTORE, working together with NHS services to provide support for veterans and those transitioning from service. With our lived military experience, we can provide support that ensures beneficiaries feel heard and understood, whilst creating a pathway of tailored care.

Op RESTORE uses a network of both civilian and military consultants, along with welfare support from military charities, to support a veteran's health using a holistic approach. Whilst Op RESTORE cannot shorten NHS waiting times, it seeks to ensure the veteran 'waits well' and is seen by the most appropriate clinician for their needs.



*"I found the whole process very helpful in moving the GP referral correctly. Definitive guidance and recommendations were followed by the GP, and DMWS helped in getting the MRI required in good time, so I could get an NHS specialist consultant follow up. Help from my Welfare Officer was timely, relevant, and always professional. Good advice and relevant to my concerns."*

Op RESTORE Beneficiary



*“DMWS was a solid rock to lean on, listening patiently and offering good advice on a whole range of matters, probably some off brief. It's great to have that type of support.”*

**- Op RESTORE Beneficiary**

Op RESTORE will continue to accept only GP referrals; GPs can obtain a referral form by emailing [imperial.oprestore@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.oprestore@nhs.net).

*“OpRESTORE, The Veterans Physical Health and Wellbeing Service, have been partnered with Defence Medical Welfare Service supporting veterans with service-related physical health needs through the NHS since 2021.*

*We have had a truly collaborative relationship with DMWS and the welfare support they provide to veterans and their families has enabled us to evolve and shape our services over this time. The care and empathy that team members show is a testament to the charity, the team's own military connections, and an overwhelming desire to support those who have given so much for their country.”*

**Beth Lambert, National Service Manager, Op RESTORE**

\*Names and locations of all case studies have been changed or removed to preserve anonymity.

# Sheila & John's Story

*"Before I met my Welfare Officer, I was pretty much lost. My confidence was gone, I was in a constant panic, and unable to cope with my husband's complex conditions. Despite being married for 35 years we still hadn't really understood everything that was wrong with him. In simple terms, DMWS has been the catalyst that changed almost everything.*

*DMWS began by getting us in touch with organisations that could support us, they got counselling for John which months later is still ongoing. That has led to understanding that he almost certainly has cPTSD and its origins lie in both his early life and military service. This in turn is helping me to cope better with his emotional problems. They also gave me 4 weeks counselling.*

*DMWS put us in touch with Help for Heroes. We are only just beginning our journey with them but it feels like they have scooped us up and are carrying us along with them. DMWS also persuaded me to get a carer's assessment from the council and sorted funded counselling sessions.*

*DMWS run a carers group which is helping me enormously and enabling me to talk about my life with John and begin to understand just how much his dependence on me has affected my life, and also that I am important too.*

*John and I are still a work in progress. I know I've still got a way to go but I'm getting stronger and more able to cope. DMWS is still with us and encouraging me along the way. They never rush me or push me to do things instantly, just lets me absorb things and move at my pace.*

*There are so many moments that stand out about my experience with DMWS, but if I had to choose one it would be when my Welfare Officer simply gave me a hug when I needed one. I couldn't remember the last time I'd been hugged before that."*

**Sheila,  
Carer of Army Veteran**



## *“People like me need organisations like DMWS.*

*Since joining the Veterans’ Hub gang, I’ve begun to realise just how many Armed Forces personnel struggle with their mental and physical health. This in turn affects their relationships with their partners, children, and wider family. They are often struggling even to understand what is wrong, let alone how to deal with it.*

*DMWS understands and doesn’t simply hand out pieces of paper to people who can’t even think straight. The sort of support given by Welfare Officers makes a real difference because they make change happen when you are in no state to make it happen for yourself.”*

**Sheila, Carer of Army Veteran**

# National Response Service

Our National Response Service (NRS) is an independent and confidential helpline available to the Armed Forces Community. Through this service, we can provide support with welfare, wellbeing, and social care needs via phone. We connect beneficiaries with our local Welfare Services in the area if they require further support or support those who may not have a project local to them via continued phone communication.

NRS have provided a vast range of support from signposting useful resources to building trust and rapport to untangle complex issues. We construct person centred support packages to address an individual's needs. This is for all the Armed Forces Community, including families and carers, across the UK. Our service offers high quality support and is a place to turn to for those who may feel lost to talk about and tackle the challenges they are facing in their lives, regardless of their nature or complexity.



If you require support, please contact

**Call 0800 999 3697**

**Monday-Friday 9am-5pm**

This is not an emergency helpline  
If you are in crisis or need out of hours support  
please call 999 or the Samaritans at 116 123.



# Battleback - Invictus Games 2025

DMWS Welfare Officers Geoff Ingram and Arthur Evans travelled to Vancouver and Whistler in February to provide welfare support to the Invictus Winter Games as part of the Royal British Legion Battleback Centre.

Both provided support at training camps leading up to the event, asked to 'do what you do best' with the competitors, both quickly established themselves as a vital element of the team in the welfare, support and recovery of the competitors as they attended the training weekends.

Arthur and Geoff built an excellent rapport and bond with the competitors, attending events to be there whenever they were needed. The support extended from competitors to family and friends, helping to relieve stress and anxiety for all those involved. Both saw the great transformational journeys of the competitors and were blown away by their integrity, resilience, and dedication to the event and their own recovery.



*"The success of IG25 was huge and we are convinced it will have a life-long and lasting impact on all the competitors and their families. We hope DMWS will, once again, be invited to attend and provide the unique and exquisite support the organisation delivers."*

**Geoff Ingram, DMWS Welfare Officer**

# Northern Ireland

*“DMWS’s support was fantastic I can’t thank them enough. My Welfare Officer spoke with the hospital on my behalf and was instrumental in getting a date confirmed for my hip replacement. Without their help I’d still be languishing on an endless waiting list. They also helped arrange access regular physio. The support to me and my family has been top notch and has had such a positive impact.”*

DMWS Beneficiary

DMWS were proud to receive funding from the Office of Veteran Affairs to fund a project in Northern Ireland to better understand and support veterans who were facing long waiting times with physical and mental health concerns. With time and thorough collaboration, we have built meaningful and trusted connections with other organisations and stakeholders for the benefit of veterans in Northern Ireland. From the success of this pilot project, we developed a further programme of support for veterans and their families and carers with funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust.

The project has shown that through trusted DMWS expertise veterans can refer more openly to their health issues, concerns, and contributing psychosocial aspects that can be linked to their military background, which can be challenging to acknowledge. We are proud that our presence has made a considerable positive impact on veterans and their families and carers and that we have built numerous positive connections with other agencies and organisations.



# MOD

The unique challenges and demands of service life set the Service Community apart from many areas of civilian society. There are different expectations and needs to meet to “secure and improve the wellbeing of serving personnel and the Service community” and DMWS is privileged to respond to this.

We are proud deliver a Hospital Welfare Service (HWS) in three operational military theatres each face different prevalent issues. These projects contain exceptional staff members who are dedicated to providing high-quality support to those who serve. They are located in:

These locations are:

- Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, Birmingham
- Northern Ireland co-located with 38 Irish Brigade
- British Forces Cyprus



*“During an extremely stressful time, DMWS support relieved some of the pressures we were experiencing. From initial admission through to hospital transfer; the contact, translation assistance, knowledge and emotional support was a huge help to our family. Hospital trips are daunting enough yet when coupled with admission overseas with a toddler, I couldn’t imagined having done this without DMWS as the situation was very overwhelming. A huge thank you - we are extremely grateful!”*

**Serving Civil Servant**

# Collaborations: Veterans Housing Scotland

DMWS is proud to be working in partnership with Veterans Housing Scotland, the leading provider of homes for disabled veterans in Scotland. With great thanks to the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust's Reducing Veteran Homelessness programme, both organisations have been able to demonstrate and benefit from the power of collaborative working. Our professional teams combine their expertise to deliver holistic support to those in need.

The combination of a safe, secure home and tailored assistance with physical, mental, and welfare challenges is transformative. Together, we've supported veterans facing a range of issues, including PTSD, mental health concerns, alcohol misuse, financial difficulties, and the stress and anxiety associated with healthcare treatment and hospital visits.

*"Having a safe and secure home is vital for wellbeing and is closely linked to improved health outcomes. By combining Veterans Housing Scotland's housing expertise with DMWS's knowledge of health and welfare, we're able to provide life-changing support to veterans in need which will allow them to remain in safe and affordable homes"*

**Kevin Gray, Chief Executive  
Veterans Housing Scotland**



# Collaborations: Alabaré

DMWS work collaboratively with Alabaré, an excellent charity supporting vulnerable, homeless, and marginalised people. This project is focused on supporting accommodation for British Armed Forces veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming so in Wales. The pathway to ending homelessness is not just about accommodation; for many the first step is believing they are worthy of comfortable housing in safe communities.

This collaboration is a two-way process; Alabaré refer veterans to DMWS for professional military informed support with ongoing/more complex healthcare needs and DMWS identify veterans who may not otherwise access Alabaré's support, using their significant networks and expertise to engage veterans with other additional services. This combined support reduces homelessness, supports with other issues and concerns, reduces the likelihood of hitting crisis point, and increases the longer term sustainability of positive outcomes.



*“Alabaré, together with DMWS, worked together with veterans to provide a comprehensive package of support, helping them navigate the healthcare services, seek professional advice and help remove the barriers they face to secure stable homes. This partnership has supported nearly 300 veterans break these cycles, overcome anxiety and challenges, access medical services and transition well. Alabaré has been proud to work with DMWS within this funded partnership as we serve and support those who Served.”*

**Kirsty Scullion, Director of Fundraising, Alabaré**



# Thrive Together

DMWS understands collaboration is key to success and takes great pride in working alongside other organisations to ensure the Armed Forces Community have the welfare support they need. Thrive Together builds on the success of the Veterans People, Places, and Pathways Programme (VPPP). Thrive Together aims to build sustainable and resilient networks to ensure Veterans and families receive prompt, effective and tailored support. Whereas VPPP was fully focussed on Veterans, this new phase of the programme will also include support to families.

DMWS is incredibly proud to be the Portfolio Lead for Thrive Together North East & Yorkshire and Thrive Together Midlands. We are also delighted to participate in several other regions at project level, supporting veterans across the UK to find the right support to meet their needs.

## Our Objectives:



### Empower Veterans and families

Provide a nationwide network that offers seamless physical and mental health support.



### Create connections

Enhance Veterans wellbeing through collaborative support networks and community integration focusing on collaboration for long-term impact.



### Build futures

Build lasting partnerships and sustainable Veteran services for a stronger future.

*“DMWS is the portfolio lead for the Thrive Together Programme in both the Midlands and North East & Yorkshire regions. Building on the foundation of the Veterans People, Places and Pathways (VPPP) Programme 2021-2023, Thrive Together is demonstrating impact across the whole of the UK with the addition of holistic veterans support, the inclusion of families, **a focus on sustainability and a drive to step away from signposting and provide warm referrals.***

*Following an exceptionally comprehensive consultation phase in 2024, both the regional leads have been **working hard to make and strengthen regional connections and networks** with both funded and non-funded organisations to **ensure ease of access and joined up pathways** to support for veterans and their families.*

*The **success of driving forward true collaboration** is becoming evident across the regions and nationally, strong portfolios have been developed with the projects demonstrating that the needs identified in the consultation are being addressed.*

***As the funder, we are delighted to have seen the successes so far in this impactful programme and look forward to further developments until the conclusion of the funding in 2027.”***

**Lottie Ainsworth-Moore,  
Project Coordinator AFCFT (Thrive Together)**

# Police Support

DMWS is very proud to work collaboratively with Northamptonshire Police Service (NPS) delivering Psychological Services, bespoke training, and implementing new innovation strategies to benefit staff and officers. The service aims to support people at the lowest level of intervention. Our experienced team of psychologists, mental health nurses, counsellors and wellbeing advisors work alongside Occupational Health.

Innovative development has enabled us to introduce forward thinking ideas to support officers and staff in a variety of areas that help them to return to and remain in the workplace, recognising that they have a demanding job and at times may struggle with their mental health. Ongoing support and coping strategies are paramount and this area is constantly under review and development. DMWS has the flexibility and agility to adapt to the ever-changing environment of policing. Understanding the police force and all the services available ensures we are able to support people and get them to the right solution quickly. NPS and DMWS are committed to working together to support police officers and staff that do an incredibly demanding job, we are very proud of the progress that has been made so far but we are committed to being responsive and continuing to work innovatively to provide a valuable service.



*"We have been working closely with DMWS over the last 18 months to evolve our psychological support offer, they have worked hard to understand the needs of the organisation and are working collaboratively with us to trial and implement new innovative methods to meet our requirements."*

**Helen Cook, Head of Organisational Development, Northamptonshire Police Service**

*"I think the sessions we've had have been incredibly valuable... It's been an absolute pleasure and I can't thank you enough for such valuable insights you've offered"*

**Serving Police Officer**



# Scottish Police Authority



DMWS is proud to be continuing to support the Scottish Police Authority with their investment and commitment to provide psychological supervision for their Forensic Scene Examiners. DMWS's dedicated, professional support independently assesses current mental wellbeing and provides appropriate support for a national service of staff who are exposed to traumatic scenes daily as a function of their role.

This is a 3 year pilot programme to test the efficacy of proactive engagement with an independent counsellor as part of professional practice and to use appropriate measures to identify changes in the population's self-reported wellbeing using CORE-OM.

Both organisations are incredibly pleased that the programme is widely well received and delivering positive support and results in supporting wellbeing. A noticeable improvement in wellbeing is being seen which shows that people in challenging roles benefit greatly from specialist support. DMWS is excited to be looking forward to ongoing work with the Scottish Police Authority.

*“The commitment to building resilience in our scene examiners has been life changing for us and the passion and level of service that DMWS delivers for them has been exemplary.”*

Darren Tattersall, Forensic Services,  
Scottish Police Authority



# Layla's Story

Layla suffered from MS and PTSD. Her PTSD stems from being dismissed from the RAF due to her sexuality, with one particularly traumatic experience when she had to undergo a medical to evidence this. She was one of the four service personnel that took the MOD to court to change the law to allow homosexuality in the military. The recent MOD developments to review compensation for individuals affected, despite being positive, triggered Layla's mental health. Additionally, her wife had recently suffered a stroke heightening the stress of their situation and leaving them struggling to cope.

DMWS engaged with Layla to understand how we could best help. It was clear at this visit the couple were struggling to look after the house and needed bathroom adaptations to meet their needs. DMWS contacted the housing association to see what assistance they could provide and made regular contact to ensure the couple got the social support they needed and their case was forgotten.

Our Welfare Officer also made referrals to various other veterans charities, such as Defence Gardening Service, as Layla expressed how she finds gardening relaxing. Unforgotten Forces were also contacted to assist in checking the benefits that Layla could claim as she was now a carer for her wife. DMWS supported the couple and became a solid rock to lean on, helping the couple navigate and solve issues that were affecting their wellbeing and create positive change.

\*Names and locations of all case studies have been changed or removed to preserve anonymity.

Layla and her wife now have suitable housing adaptations, a clean and comfortable home, and they both feel confident to deal with the future, including the ongoing legal case regarding the MOD. Layla and her wife rest assured they have support they can rely on if they need it. Layla said that the involvement of DMWS gave her the courage to turn her life around and get the support and help she needed. We are proud to be a part of her journey.

# Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

We have successfully developed, progressed, and delivered impactful support across underrepresented Armed Forces Communities. Our ongoing work is deepening our understanding of the challenges faced by these groups and driving the development of effective, collaborative solutions with our partners in the military, third sector, and statutory health organisations. We remain committed to creating safe spaces and systemic change that improves access to health and wellbeing services.

We are incredibly grateful to the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust who funded this work through the Transformational Grants programme.

## Accreditations, Awards & Memberships

DMWS take pride in robust systems and process and quality standards. We are proud to hold ISO9001, ISO27001, and Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation, ensuring security and quality standards. We also celebrate securing Gold Defence Employer Recognition Scheme status, Veterans Mental Health Support Accreditation Fighting with Pride – Pride in Veterans Standards, and Disability Confidence Employer

- **Engaged with a wide range of underrepresented Armed Forces communities** across the UK through outreach, listening sessions, and targeted events.
- **Created safe, inclusive spaces** for open dialogue, where individuals can share experiences and challenges related to accessing healthcare and wellbeing support.
- **Completed a comprehensive EDI training audit**, identifying key barriers to healthcare access including cultural awareness, systemic learning, and involvement.
- **Piloted an innovative training programme** designed to improve access and responsiveness of services for diverse Armed Forces communities.

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# Working for DMWS

## Success & Service

DMWS is proud of all our staff and has a wide set of expertise including many individuals from the Armed Forces Community, Police, and NHS. Our workforce has lived experience of the challenges that people can face within the frontline, and are a shining example of the multi-faceted and unique skillset they developed in their previous roles.

Our workforce provides us with expertise and insights, as well as their unique perspectives and views, that enable us to truly connect one-on-one with beneficiaries and create tailored pathways of care that meet their needs.

*"Growing up my Dad served in the Forces, followed by my brother, so it's a lifestyle I know well. I currently serve as Sub-Lieutenant Training Officer URNU RNR. I feel recognised at DMWS for my skills and experiences, and privileged to help families a lot like mine. I've been able to develop and grow from a Welfare Officer to EDI Lead. It's fantastic to be part of an organisation that doesn't set limits on where my career can go and encourages me to take opportunities where I can."*

**Matt Jackson, EDI Lead**

*"Having over 30 years' experience in my military and civilian policing roles, my experience in these environments means I am both sympathetic and empathetic to the people I support.*

*This allows me to build rapport quickly, assess needs accurately, and act effectively. Service personnel, veterans, and emergency workers find a trusted bridge who fully understands the uniformed world and the difficulties between their culture and civilian healthcare and welfare systems."*

**Tony Chambers, Community Welfare Officer**

*"My husband served in the Army and when he transitioned into civilian life he faced some trials and tribulations we hadn't prepared for. This inspired me to use my skillset to support more people within our Armed Forces Community. Working for DMWS has changed my life, I'm inspired and confident to advocate for anyone who is suffering."*

**Holly Knight, Welfare Officer**

*"As an Army Reservist currently serving with 20 years' service in Scotland's Multirole Medical Regiment, I know what it means to serve and the impact this can have for service leavers and their families. This drives me in my role as a Welfare Officer. My lived experience often gives me an immediate connection built on a shared understanding."*

**Elaine McArdle, Welfare Officer**

*"I began my career in the army as a private soldier back in 1986 and made my way through the ranks, leaving after 35 years' service. At various stages in my career I was responsible for the welfare of my soldiers and knew before reaching the end of my military career that I wanted to work for a Military Charity. I started out at DMWS as a Welfare Officer working on the Police Project, then Complex Case Manager for Northern Ireland, to more recently as the Operations Manager for the MOD, Military, and Northern Ireland.*

*One of my main concerns on leaving military service was finding a career that would provide me with job satisfaction and the sense of belonging I had enjoyed in the army. I can safely say that I have found the golden nugget and look forward with anticipation to see what the future holds for DMWS as it continues to grow and support those who serve."*

**Andie Cole, Operations Manager MOD, Military, and Northern Ireland**

# Working for DMWS

## Reaching the Community

### Windsor Castle Showcase

Our Windsor Event was a fantastic opportunity to showcase the powerful work DMWS do. We were honoured to have our Patron Her Royal Highness, the Duchess of Edinburgh attend alongside many of our funders, partners, staff, and beneficiaries.

### Staff Recognition Awards

We were delighted to gather our workforce to celebrate their brilliant achievements over the last year.

### Victory Ball

We held a wonderful event in Plymouth to raise funds for DMWS and celebrate the 80 year anniversary of D-Day.

### Showcasing DMWS

Our Teams across the UK have been a passionate and proud presence at a variety of events, raising awareness for the organisation and shining a light on the unique needs of the Armed Forces Community. Whether engaging with service users, professionals, or the wider military community, our staff are exceptional representatives of our organisations.



# Our Supporters

We are grateful to all of our funders and partners who make our support possible.

## Funders

Army Benevolent Fund  
Army Central Fund  
Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust  
Baron Davenport's Charity  
BNA Charitable Incorporated Organisation  
CB & HH Taylor 1984 Trust  
E F Bulmer Trust  
Milton Keynes Community Foundation  
Queen Mary's Roehampton Trust  
Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund  
Somerset Community Foundation  
The Alan Boswell Group Charitable Trust  
The Eveson Trust  
The Grace Trust  
The Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust  
The MacRobert Trust  
The Nancie Massie Charitable Trust  
The National Lottery Community Fund  
The Hodge Foundation  
The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity  
The Valentine Charitable Trust  
Veterans Housing Scotland  
Veterans' Foundation

## Partners

Adferiad  
Alabaré  
Blesma, Military Charity for Limbless Veterans  
Bridge 4 Heroes  
Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust  
Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust  
Greater Glasgow and Clyde Healthcare Charity  
Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust  
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust  
NHS Devon ICB  
NHS Fife Health & Social Care Partnership  
NHS Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB via University Hospital North Midlands  
NHS England  
NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB  
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust  
Northamptonshire Police  
Ministry of Defence

Office for Veterans' Affairs  
Royal British Legion - RBL Recovery Centres  
Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust  
Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust  
Scottish Government  
Scottish Police Authority  
Somerset NHS Foundation Trust  
The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust  
The Scottish Wellbeing Alliance  
Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust  
Veterans Outreach Support  
Veterans Housing Scotland  
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Charity  
Unforgotten Forces



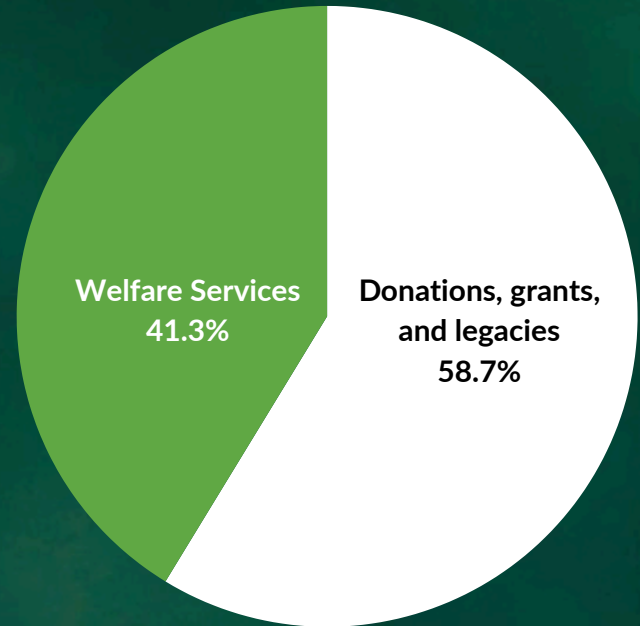
**Thank you!**

# Financial Overview

## Income and Expenditure



## Income Breakdown



# Support us

Any support you can give is gratefully received.

Our preferred method is an **online donation**. You can donate online at: <https://dmws.org.uk/donate/>

**Alternatively, you can donate by cheque/post.**

Please make your cheque payable to St John & Red Cross Defence Medical Welfare Service.

**Send your cheque to:**

DMWS, The Old Stables, Redenham Park, Andover, Hampshire, SP11 9AQ

Please include your details if you can as we would like to say thank you and let you know we have received your generous donation.

**Gift Aid:** If you are a UK taxpayer, you can increase your donation by 25% at no cost. If donating by cheque, please include a Gift Aid form which can be printed from our website: <https://dmws.org.uk/donate/>

## How does my donation help?

**£5** could pay for a Welfare Officer's hospital parking charge, meaning they are able to conduct more face-to-face support.

**£10** could pay for a series of phone calls by a DMWS Welfare Officer to a person isolated and in need of support.

**£25** could pay for a DMWS Welfare Officer to provide emergency support and source items to families whose loved ones are in hospital.

**£50** could pay for a DMWS Welfare Officer for half a day, enabling them to support several cases.

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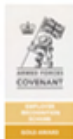
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