



Impact report

December 2023 - November 2024

We are a registered charity which raises funds for sport, challenge and adventure in the armed forces community in order to improve health, wellbeing and recovery

We help the best get better



“

Physical fitness and courage played major roles in the trek, but the resilience developed and the leadership shown at various points, pulling each other through and working together to get over the high passes was amazing.

Ex Everest Noctua leader, Lieutenant Olivia Critchley-Peddle

”

“

My hope is that this expedition will highlight that disability does not mean inability and no challenge is insurmountable. It's about confidence and self-belief.

Jonny Huntington, Disabled Antarctic Explorer

”



In 2024, Team Forces launched a podcast to showcase some of the remarkable individuals and organisations we support. They feature inspiring stories of extraordinary accomplishments and offer a compelling glimpse into the profound impact that a Team Forces grant can have.

Visit theteamforcespodcast.podbean.com



TeamForces
FUNDING MILITARY SPORT & ADVENTURE

teamforces.org



ABOUT US

We improve lived experience across the armed forces community through the power of sport, challenge and adventure. Our initiatives improve health, wellbeing, recovery and create equal opportunity by promoting excellence, equality and inclusion.

What we do

Our aim is to consistently meet and surpass our objectives, while maximizing our contributions to social value, sustainability, and prosperity. Our ongoing and scaling commitment to awarding grants is developing an increasingly diverse portfolio of beneficiaries across the armed forces community. Support from our growing industry partner base is the oxygen that drives the Team Forces heartbeat. Thanks to this collaboration, we've been able to accelerate our efforts and enhance our impact, reaching even more beneficiaries and creating greater social value.

We are proud to support serving, veteran and armed forces community groups, as well as individuals who undertake extraordinary and unique initiatives that inspire and motivate us all. By carefully balancing resources between these groups, and by focusing on initiatives with a broader social impact, Team Forces is making a significant contribution to the health, well-being, and overall effectiveness of the UK Armed Forces.



Our aims and objectives

- to support physical activities and challenges that serve a higher purpose and:
 - > improve mental health and wellbeing
 - > inspire others to be adventurous and to achieve
 - > promote equality, diversity and inclusion
 - > level-up the playing field for para athletes
 - > offer highly rewarding developmental and transformative experiences
 - > inspire and support vulnerable groups and the wider community
 - > Develop greater prosperity and opportunity for UK groups and regions
- to promote excellence and success by supporting the full breadth of armed forces representational level sports and by supporting individuals to compete at elite and international level
- to increase opportunity by supporting grass-roots activity, which maximizes participation and makes sport more accessible. By encouraging wider participation, we hope to inspire more people to get involved and reap the benefits of physical activity
- to enable recovery and rehabilitation by supporting wounded, injured and sick (WIS) servicemen and veterans to take part in competitive sport and challenges.

Our Good Causes fund

Our **Good Causes Fund** focuses on activities that inspire others, support mental health and increase individual and collective wellbeing. Our Social Impact portfolio also increases diversity and inclusivity and contributes to 'levelling up' where inequality of opportunity exists.

Our grants are carefully selected to ensure they make a meaningful impact on the lives of those we support and we objectively measure the contribution of each impact project to verify Return-on-Investment (RoI) for beneficiaries, trustees and our partners. Our Social Value Reports prove that by focusing on physical activities and challenges that serve a higher purpose, we are improving mental health and wellbeing, inspiring others to achieve, and supporting the wider community - Together, we are making a difference.



Social Value

Our 2024 Social Value Report summarises 35 impact projects (a 50% increase on 2023). The scale of contribution to Good Causes and charities within the portfolio has also increased as a direct result of the growth in partners and their contributions. Team Forces' focus in 2025 is to foster greater collaboration to sustain Social Value Return on Investment (RoI) for the Crown, the Armed Forces and our partners in challenging times for UK Defence and Security – without compromise to beneficiaries.

Continued support and project diversity has resulted in Team Forces significantly contributing to 100% of Missions and Outcomes and 97% of HMG's revised Social Value Model Award Criteria (MACs and Sub-MACs) year-on-year. The distribution of impact across all five Themes remains at an exceptional high and we continue to focus on refining the sponsors' experience in response to changes in their strategic environment.

For example, the 2024 Social Value Report has been calibrated to the revised 'Mission' criteria, aligned with His Majesty's Government's (HMGs) changes from Themes to recently published Missions within the Social Value Act 2012. At high level, the changes are a practical re-alignment from post pandemic recovery to more relevant 'Levelling Up' and prosperity goals (MACs are broadly unchanged in respect to Wellness, Fighting Climate Change, Diversity Equity & Inclusion and Equal Opportunity themes). New MOD policies have also been released offering a more flexible approach for front-line capability procurement where urgency and lethality for front-line capability are in focus.

2024's Social Value Report is our fourth and demonstrates Team Forces continued growth in support of the causes that matter to us all. As an ecosystem of 75 plus organisations we will continue to foster collaboration to extend our reach to beneficiaries, demonstrating true public / private partnership. We will plan on a sustainable footing and look forward to continued and incremental support. This will super-charge our collective Social Value contribution to MOD beneficiaries in response to the challenging times they will face in the near, medium and long-term.



Funders & Donors

While some companies make direct donations to the foundation, all our members donate to the Good Causes Fund. Our thanks and appreciation goes to all our funders and donors who help us to change the lives of those we support:





OUR IMPACT

A selection of beneficiary reports on the following pages help to illustrate our social value impact on sport, challenge and adventure within the armed forces community.

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AF Equine Charity

Equestrian therapy



In 2024 a Team Forces grant helped the Armed Forces Equine Charity support around 35,500 people from the Armed Forces Community by making equine sport, therapy and recreation available to them.



I cannot find the words to say how grateful I am to the Armed Forces Equine Charity who have been so supportive by giving me opportunities to get active again. Whilst my depression and PRSD is still up and down. I have a purpose; I have my life back and I have set realistic goals that keep me moving forward and enjoying life again.

Armed Forces Equine Charity beneficiary



The Armed Forces Equine Charity provides:

Proactive Support

We give people the opportunity to get themselves out and active and gain all the benefits that sport, recreation, and adventure training can deliver. Equestrian activity has the added advantage in that it involves connection to animals and the green environment.

"I never thought I would get the opportunity to play polo. AFEC gave me that opportunity and I love it. I simply cannot believe that after less than a year of tuition and learning I am competing for my Corps and hope to get onto the Army Team. It's improving my life in so many ways and has provided me a completely different challenging experience that is outside of the normal military activities. I am a better person as a result and a better person makes a better soldier."

Reactive Support

We take referrals from the MOD from those who support the Serving Wounded injured and Sick and from the NHS for those who are on the Government's Op Courage and Op Restore initiatives. We take referrals from Unit Commanding Officers' and from Forces families directly. Our active recovery pathways consist of a blended clinical and non-clinical series of interventions. The positive impact of human and animal interactions on health and happiness is immense.

"Having lost approximately 40% of my vision and trying to recover after a grievous illness and difficult operation, I was pleased to be able to participate in a new challenge. The learning of new equitation skills was perfect. The stables and instructional staff were excellent and immensely helpful. The experience did wonders for my confidence and was a key part of my recovery. I am very grateful to all for including me and helping me on the path back to semi-normality and working back in uniform again."

Wider Support

We also deliver to those who just need a place to go to take a break from social isolation and somewhere to share challenges. With professional support and welfare experts we have delivered hubs/cafés to sit alongside our centres which are geographically at the heart of most military stations, bases and garrisons. We recognise that it is often a chance meeting with a fellow spectator, parent, carer that leads to lifelong friendships and support networks.

"I met Natalie at the equestrian centre. Our children have riding lessons there and I hadn't realised that she only lived two doors down from me on our estate. Her husband is in a different unit to mine and was away for six months last year, and we supported her when needed. My husband is now away and Natalie has been a brilliant friend to me. I know there are many others who would feel very isolated had they not met and made friendships through the equestrian centre."



Equine Assisted Therapy - back from the darkness

It would be hard to describe the horrors that I went through and the dark places that I have been to on my 25-year injury journey. My whole life was completely destroyed by a combination of events; highly stressful operational flying and a cockpit fire which led to brain damage, chronic fatigue, depression and complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

It has taken me four years, three phases of non-clinical AFEC courses and two phases of clinical PTSD therapy to get to where I am now. The therapy has helped and has given me

the new tools with which to create a better life for myself ... just not waking up depressed is a blessing in itself!

There is a way ahead, I have found it now and my journey continues as I rebuild my life and create new positive memories. My participation as a mentor on AFEC courses, [now] enables me to talk to and show others the way out.



The course helped me immensely and I found that I had the courage to open up and tell those that needed to know about my experience and [the] challenges I was facing. Taking that step was immense for me but I am so glad that the course gave me the confidence to do so. I am now getting my life back again.

AF Equine Charity Participant

Atlantic Rocks

RAF Regiment row the Atlantic



On 5th March 2024, four intrepid RAF Regiment Gunners: Sgt Phil Angus, Sgt Dan Martin, Cpl Justin Wallace & Cpl Gary Binns arrived in Jolly Harbour, Antigua after rowing across the Atlantic Ocean for 61 days 19 hours and 13 minutes! Team Forces is very proud to have supported 'Atlantic Rocks' on their incredible expedition.

After two years of planning and training, Atlantic Rocks successfully completed the C-MAP Atlantic Dash, a 3,200-mile endurance race starting from Rubicon Marina in Lanzarote. The expedition put their physical fitness and mental resilience to the ultimate test. The team overcame significant obstacles during their journey such as, equipment failure, water leaks, vast fields of sargassum seaweed which impeded their progress, high seas and stormy weather conditions.

Throughout they demonstrated remarkable adaptability. One such situation involved the loss of power from their reserve generators which forced the team to hand-steer and manually navigate during daylight hours to conserve solar energy. This approach allowed them to use digital navigation systems at night powered by solar energy accumulated during the day.

Their trusty boat 'Sentinel' – a 29ft purpose-built ocean rowing boat with two sleeping compartments – was their world for over two months. Their rowing routine of two hourly rotations was brutal, especially when you consider

that during the rest period there were still a myriad of tasks to complete in addition to eating and sleeping. They had to wash salt residue and sweat off clothes which was really important to avoid unnecessary injuries and infections. They also allocated some time to make potable water using the onboard desalination unit which used reverse osmosis to convert sea water to potable water – achieved by the sea water being pumped at high pressure against a semi permeable membrane to force some water particles through, whilst the salt can't fit. This process also filters out bacteria making it safe to drink!

Scientific Research

During the row, Atlantic Rocks also support the University of Michigan's research on plastic pollution. The team collected water samples and recorded the latitude and longitude of where the samples were taken. These samples were sent to the university for analysis to measure plastic pollution levels across the South Atlantic.

"If we don't look after the ocean, rowing across the Atlantic won't be available for anyone."





Biathlon

Captain Marcus Webb

Team Forces continues to support elite athlete Captain Marcus Webb, currently the number one GB Biathlete, to continue his training towards qualifying for the 2026 Winter Olympics!

At the start of the season I raced in Finland, Sweden, Norway, Italy and Germany. The results before Christmas showed improvement on the season before but I decided to spend two weeks in Norway to have a solid training block before racing started in January with a 10km Sprint competition in the Italian Alps. I shot all 10 targets and finished in the top 60 of over 110 competitors which meant I was the first male GB athlete to qualify for the World Cup since 2016/17!

The next day I drove to Ruhpolding, Germany to join the premier circuit and race in my first World Cup event. This was an incredible experience and I'm pleased to say that my progress is still developing in the right direction for the Olympic Games in 2026.

Training has been in great flow as the next season approaches and I'm very excited to see what steps have been taken since last season.

Additionally, I have entered into an agreement with the Swedish Team for them to organise my race skis; to give me skis that they have already tested which greatly reduces my pre-race work and allows me to focus solely on skiing fast and shooting straight. An important step in the right direction ... especially with the Olympic qualification period starting in February 2025!

I'd like to extend my gratitude for your continued support. It has allowed me to purchase the rifle laser attachment to allow my coaches to better see how I shoot, as well as improving the competitiveness of my ski selection to close the gap to the lead nations in Biathlon.

Captain Marcus Webb, GB Team Biathlete

Captain Marcus Webb is half English and half Norwegian and has been skiing since the age of three. He joined the British Army in 2018 and first competed in Biathlon in 2019 at the Army Nordic Championships where he was selected for the GB Development Squad. In 2021 he made his first debut at the International Biathlon Union Cup as part of the GB Team.

Marcus was then selected by Team Blåne in Lillehammer, Norway to train full-time; Lillehammer is considered the world's capital of Biathlon and has some of the best facilities and support the sport has to offer. Performance measures show that Marcus is a rising star and he's on trajectory to qualify for the Winter Olympics in 2026!



Climb to Recovery

Climbing Courses for WIS Veterans

Team Forces has been supporting Climb to Recovery (C2R) since 2020, it supports seriously and chronically wounded, injured, sick, disabled and disadvantaged service people and veterans through a year-round programme of residential adaptive and progressive climbing and mountaineering courses.

Regular climbing has been proven to have tremendous physiological and psychological as well social and emotional benefits. Done regularly it also greatly compliments conventional clinical treatment, it can even succeed where conventional treatment struggles, and its overall therapeutic and rehabilitative impact, particularly for seriously and chronically wounded, injured, sick, disabled and disadvantaged veterans, can be enormous. This is why adaptive climbing is described in peer-reviewed published research as a 'near-ideal therapeutic activity'.

This defines C2R's approach - which is both evidence-based and proven in research. Most importantly though their

approach is 'therapeutic' without the need for 'therapy'; participants don't need to do, be or say anything ... they just need to turn up, get involved and have a laugh!

C2R offers a variety of medium and long-term courses for participants, including single and multi-pitch lead climbing, sport climbing, Alpine climbing and winter mountaineering. They also sponsor individuals through a hierarchy of outdoor and Mountain Training qualifications: rock climbing instructor, mountain leader and mountaineering & climbing instructor, as well as mountain first aid certification, self-rescue and industrial rope access IRATA training.

“ This year C2R has taken me from the darkest of places. It has used the outdoors and companionship to shine a light back into my life. C2R have given me the confidence and support to train for climbing qualifications, giving me fantastic goals and ambitions that I never thought I could do or be capable of. I have so much gratitude. ”

C2R Participant





In May 2024 they held a North Wales multi-activity course - a fantastic week in Snowdonia where they delivered a learn to multi-pitch, an advanced multi-pitch development, an introduction to the mountain leader course, and also enabled more experienced members to climb independently.

'An absolutely amazing time. I was welcomed, everyone was friendly and I was immediately put at ease. Everything was very well organised without being over officious. The instruction was clear and fun, and I learnt a lot. Thankyou very much!'

During the summer C2R held a 4-day Peak District course which delivered a learn to climb, a learn to lead, rock climbing instructor development as well as independent

climbing. They also welcomed a small group from another of our beneficiaries the Forces Wives Challenge. *"It was a fantastic week of adventure in the outdoors, with great people and instructors, good food and accommodation, and lots of laughs and friends made along the way."*

"A first-class experience all round. The ethos of C2R is unique in that it meets people exactly where they are, with no pressure or need to conform to any preset expectations. The main ingredients for me are the connection with others and the privilege of witnessing the progress of those facing adversity with such courage, determination and tenacity."

Annually, C2R delivers 1300-training days, supporting over 140 members from the Royal Navy/Royal Marines, Army and Royal Air Force.



Climbing Out

Wellbeing support for Veterans



Climbing Out courses give military veterans the tools they need to manage their own mental wellbeing ... and help them learn how to be happy again. Team Forces is proud to be helping this inspirational organisation deliver life changing courses to our military personnel and Veterans.

Kelda Wood MBE, Founder of Climbing Out sent us this update:

It's been a busy year and we've run more programmes, reached more people and offered more support than ever before. We've run courses in the Lake District, North Wales, the Peak District and Scotland, and the combination of outdoor activities and mind management coaching, alongside the benefits of building a network of friendship and support, have continued to prove invaluable in meeting our objective – **to empower life after trauma.**

This year we also ran our second ever overseas trip - the Italian Haute Route. The expedition was a seven day glaciated trek circumnavigating the Monte Rosa Massif, crossing from Switzerland into Italy and back again, and summiting three mountains over 4,000m.

During the expedition altitude took its toll, plans had to change because of the weather, there were successes and failures, and participants had to manage the chaos of the huts ... all of which was often more difficult than the mountains for those with PTSD.

It was much more challenging than the team expected, but they pushed through, adapted to changes in the plan, conquered summits, survived on minimal sleep, didn't give up, and worked as a team!

One of the group said on returning, *"For me, the defining moment of the expedition was summiting the two 4000m mountains, initially Breithorn and later Pyramide Vincent. I found both to be an extremely emotional moment, but particularly the latter. Reaching the summit provided an incredible moment of calm, a huge sense of achievement and the realisation that I can achieve whatever I want. I will try to hold onto that feeling for the rest of my life."*

We can't thank Team Forces and Microsoft enough for funding three places on this trip for military veterans. The expedition enabled them to step further away from the traumas they had encountered in the past and grow in resilience every day.



Our programmes continue to give participants the tools to feel able to move forwards in life, and to empower them to feel in control of their own mindset, emotions and actions. The ethos of Climbing Out is not to fix people, but to give people the confidence, motivation and tools to fix themselves.

Thank you for everything you do to support us.

Kelda Wood MBE, Founder of Climbing Out



Italian Haute Route Expedition - Reflections



Jamie Detheridge, Italian Haute Route participant:

I first came to Climbing Out in July 2022. Previous to this, my quality of life was extremely limited due to depression and anxiety. I had 6 months off work, medication from my GP, counselling and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, whilst some of these appeared to help somewhat, I knew it was going to be a long road to recovery.

My initial program with Climbing Out accelerated my recovery journey more than I could have imagined. I subsequently completed a Level 2 program and then I was selected to be part of the Alps Team for July 2024.

I was ecstatic to be selected for the Alps Expedition and I had around 18 months to prepare. This kept me focused and goal oriented, as well as being accountable for my own fitness levels.

The Alps Expedition was much tougher, both physically and mentally than I could have imagined. Being affected by the altitude, the unknown of the mountain huts, lack of comforts (washing/toilet facilities) and poor sleep. In the first couple of days, I was surprised to be affected by the altitude with headaches, some dizziness and shortness of breath.

Through self help, these eased over the first two days and I was surprised at how adaptable the human body is. I was also aware that even though I was no longer feeling the effects of altitude, due to my heart rate, my body was still under stress and pressure, in these conditions. I recall a day where the distance between me and the person in front was widening. I found this difficult as I was pushing myself to my physical limits, exhausted and feeling like I can't do it.

I realised at this point not to focus on the position of others, or what other people are doing, but to focus on what I need to do, which was the next step. I continued to focus on looking down, exactly where I am and putting one foot in front of the other. Rejoining the team was a big moment for me as I understood how this is relatable to everyday life. If I had have continued to compared myself to others and looked at the widening distance, my internal voice would have became louder and more powerful. This control over my thoughts is what Climbing Out have taught me and enabled me to keep pushing and keep going, when things get tough.

Returning home, I aim to use this analogy for future conflicts and difficulties. I am not going to dwell and overthink, I am not going to be looking at the whole problem in front of me. I am going to take decisive action at tackle the obstacle that is immediately in front of me, knowing that these small steps will get me to where I want to be.

I am proud of myself for going to the Alps when I felt like everything was telling me not to. I am proud that I dug deep and kept pushing on, even when my mind and my body were telling me to stop. I would certainly not be where I am now without the continued support from Climbing Out.



Moving forward, I feel that the lessons I learned about myself and how my role affects others will help me in my everyday life. I don't think I will ever stop trying to help others as it's just who I am, but I now realise that it's ok to put me first if I need to. My values and focus will remain with my family as they are the foundation of my life and my happiness.

Tim Viner, Italian Haute Route participant

End2End

Lexi Chambers



A Team Forces grant helped Lexi Chambers complete her End2End challenge - an exhausting journey from John O'Groats to Land's End using her everyday wheelchair.

Army veteran, Ex NHS nurse, and a below-knee amputee Lexi Chambers has fibromyalgia and complex regional pain syndrome - the latter resulted in her leg being amputated three years ago. She has since broken multiple world records, including the fastest half and full marathons using a non-sport wheelchair.

Since her amputation, Lexi has dedicated herself to raising vital funds for local charities through endurance events. Lexi started the End2End challenge in August and reached Land's End in October after covering 874 miles (1,407 kilometers) in 45 days - a marathon every day in her standard wheelchair!

The route from John o'Groats to Land's End is one of the most iconic journeys in the United Kingdom, spanning the entire length of mainland Britain from the northeastern

tip of Scotland to the southwestern corner of England. Her chosen route wasn't the easiest as it took her over the Glencoe Mountains, Cumbrian hills, the Mendips and the highest hills in Devon and Cornwall.

A fervent admirer of rugby and inspired by the determination embedded in the women's game Lexi visited rugby clubs along the way, passing on a signed rugby ball from club to club with the aim of connecting grassroots and professional clubs nationwide.

The sheer magnitude of Lexi's achievement cannot be understated. Lexi commented *"My journey, despite physical challenges, serves as a testament to overcoming the seemingly impossible. I hope to motivate others to surpass their perceived limitations."*



Through this challenge, I aim to encourage participation in sports with whatever equipment one has, emphasising that expensive gear isn't a necessity. I hope to motivate others to surpass their perceived limitations.

Lexi Chambers



Ex Atlas Enduro

Motorised Adventure

A grant from Team Forces supported Ex Atlas Enduro which enable military wheeled enthusiasts to tackle a 2,000-kilometre quest in Morocco that included the Atlas Mountains and Sahara Desert, traversing Namibia's Skeleton Coast on motorbikes and 4x4s.

This is us restarting something that we have always done very well and which goes back to the long-range desert group. It has all the characteristics we wish to develop in soldiers, and it improves operational vehicles, in which they have to navigate, recover and repair – it is everything that is required of an expeditionary force.

Lt Col Nick Foulerton (Scots DG), Chair of Army Motorised Adventure

In October 2024, British Forces Gibraltar (BFGib) delivered Exercise ATLAS ENDURO 24, a motorised adventure expedition through Morocco. It involved over 2,000km of riding through the mountains, deserts, and varied terrain between the Mediterranean and the Sahara, principally on motorcycles but supported by 4x4s. The exercise was led by Maj Shaun Brown (AGC (ETS) and was the biggest military adventure motorsport expedition staged this century, with 26 tri-Service regular and reserve personnel taking part.

They embarked on a gruelling loop from Tangier, tackling canyon trails, mountain passes, deserts, rocky roads and highways that stretched from the Mediterranean to the Sahara. Participants were organised into three teams of six riders, each with a 4x4 support crew. Each team was grouped by experience levels, so that novice, intermediate

and experienced riders would travel at a challenging but safe pace among their peers. These teams were led by an experienced adventure rider and included team members with medical and mechanical skills.

The 2,000km anti-clockwise loop was split into three multi-day stages:

- Stage 1 from Tanger Med in the north of Morocco, through the Middle Atlas to the High Atlas Mountains.
- Stage 2 from the High Atlas Mountains south to the Erg Chebbi Dunes, and north-east through the empty quarter.
- Stage 3 west through the Rif Mountains and north-west along the Mediterranean back to Tanger Med.





Ex Everest Noctua

1710 Air Squadron

A Team Forces grant helped military personnel from Portsmouth to swap helicopters for the Himalayas on an arduous 15-day trek to Everest base camp.

A 14-strong team – from able seaman to commander – normally responsible for recovering and adapting military helicopters, monitoring and assessing their engines/ systems, spent 15 days being guided by two expert instructors through the Himalayas.

The adventurous training expedition took the air engineers of 1710 Naval Air Squadron to iconic locations as they tackled the ‘Three Passes Trek’ – and challenges posed by altitude sickness and temperatures – down to -26 Celsius. The trekkers slept in tea houses which offered very basic facilities: no running water or electricity. Maintaining sanitary conditions so high up is a major challenge: all the water – including for washing hands and toilets – was frozen. The only heating is from a stove in the dining room, lit only in the evening and fuelled by dried yak dung.

The team conquered Renjo La and Cho La passes, vast glaciers, battled snowstorms and poor visibility before making a 12-hour hike to Everest Base Camp (5,364m/17,600ft) and back, which proved to be well worth the effort for the combination of the views offered and the fact that the engineers were the only ones there out of season. Wintry conditions forced the engineers to skip the

final pass of the trek, Kongma La, and head back down the valley – a sobering trek as they passed the memorials to climbers who’ve lost their lives climbing Everest and other mountains in the region rising above 7,000 metres.

Avionics specialist Air Engineering Technician Matthew Edwards said despite the exertions, the expedition was ‘pure joy’. *“Every step felt like an adventure and I couldn’t get enough of it. The most challenging aspect was becoming ill the night before the first and most challenging pass. I had to push my body to the limit, running on very little energy and an empty stomach (due to being ill). I felt a huge sense of accomplishment once that day was over – it was the most mentally and physically challenging day of my life so far.”*

Exped leader Lieutenant Olivia Critchley-Peddle said that beyond the experience of a lifetime, her squadron would benefit from the skills learned in the mountains - and the determination needed to overcome adversity.

“There were multiple times and prolonged periods that our resilience was tested. To keep trekking day after day, setting off at 0500 on some days and in such low temperatures, the entire team deserve all the credit I can give them.”

[text and images from Royal Navy website 22/3/24]



Physical fitness and courage played major roles in the trek, but the resilience developed and the leadership shown at various points, pulling each other through and working together to get over the high passes was amazing.

Exped leader Lieutenant Olivia Critchley-Peddle





Ex Himlung Himal

Pre Everest Team Training

A Team Forces grant helped the HAC to become the first British Army unit to summit Himlung Himal (7126m). The Team are now striving towards an extraordinary goal - to become the first mixed Reservist team to summit Mount Everest whilst also spreading awareness on microplastic research.

In November 2024, 20 mountain climbers from The Honourable Artillery Company climbed Himlung Himal in Nepal. The mountain provided a perfect training ground for the team to prepare and train for the Everest expedition in the spring of 2025.

Phu Village is the last stop before the Himlung Himal base camp. It's part of the restricted Nar-Phu Valley, which opened to tourism in 2002, making it relatively untouched by modern influence. A beautiful trek from there took them to base camp at 4,800m before then climbing to camp 1 at 5,500m. The 700m ascent through rocky moraine and glacier terrain tested their endurance and focus, but the journey was unforgettable.

The next step was an acclimatization climb from camp 1 to camp 2 and back. The goal was simple yet essential: to help their bodies adjust to the thinning air while minimizing the risks of altitude-related illnesses. This involved climbing higher to expose themselves to reduced oxygen levels, spending some time at camp 2, and then descending to camp 1 to sleep. It's the tried-and-true "climb high, sleep low" principle of high-altitude mountaineering.

After acclimatizing, they climbed to camp 2 at 6,200 meters to position themselves for the summit push. The route was steep and challenging, with icy slopes and thinning air testing their strength and determination. It was a grueling climb, navigating through -30°C temperatures and a daunting 150-meter vertical ice wall in complete darkness. Then dawn broke and the Himalayas revealed their beauty, fueling them for the final push. After 13 relentless hours, they stood on the summit of Himlung Himal at 7,126m - exhausted, frozen, but victorious!



The journey isn't complete until you're safely back at base camp. Summits are fleeting, but getting down safely is what truly defines success in the mountains.

LCpl Calum Matthews HAC

Microplastics Research

Critical to the purpose of the HAC Everest Expedition is their focus on sustainability. By taking samples from glaciers around Everest and Himlung Himal, they will support the global effort to understand how microplastics degrade the environment.

To deliver this objective, they are part of the Global Atmospheric Plastic Survey - the first and largest project of its kind to collect microplastic samples from across the planet. So far, 10 of the

50 expeditions needed have been deployed to glaciers across Antarctica, Asia, the Himalayas and Africa, with all teams buying their own equipment and paying their own costs.

Results from this analysis have already revealed plastics from car tyres were the most common source of nano-plastic in glacial snow in the European Alps.

Ex Leviathan

Cadet Expedition



In 2024 Team Forces proudly supported Exercise Leviathan which is an annual adventurous training exercise for Combined Cadet Force (CCF) Army units within Inner London, organised in conjunction with the Tall Ships Youth Trust.



This was such an amazing opportunity, I've loved every minute, thank you so much.

Cadet Lance Corporal Abody



Exercise Leviathan aims to provide army cadets from under privileged backgrounds and also those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) with a new and challenging opportunity that they would not normally have access to. In doing so cadets achieve a Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition credit, a Royal Yachting Association Qualification and of course all the skills and memories of crewing on a ship at sea for the first time.

This year, the exercise welcomed its first guest crews outside of the owner unit, JFS CCF, for a five day race from

Portsmouth Harbour, around the Isle of Wight and south coast of England. Cadets had previously been selected by the invited units having completed applications and water safety tests in order to represent their unit in the competitive exercise.

JFS were joined by the Ronson Jewish Community Secondary School of Barnet as well as a selection of South Sector ACF cadets accompanied by their section commandant. All crews met in Portsmouth Harbour below the iconic spinnaker tower, ready for their training. Each





I've learnt things I never thought I'd be able to learn, I want to come back next year as a leader!

Cadet Lance Corporal of Horse Wolchover



crew was introduced to their skipper, watch leader and their 72ft Challenger Class yacht which would be their home for the near future.

After training in rope handling, safety procedures and movement around deck, all three ships departed Portsmouth Harbour for their first taste of the open water with the yachts under engine power. A night in Yarmouth and preparation for the first day under wind power, as well as some well earned rest and time in the galley followed.

Day two saw all crews practicing their teamwork and putting skills into practice as they took on the long sail to Weymouth along the South Coast. The weather was wet but consistent wind gave excellent practice conditions for the cadets' first day fully under sail. Raising the main sail, the two front yankees as well as tacking to the wind was followed by man over board drills and an acclimatisation to life below deck at 45 degrees to the horizon...

Day three saw the start of competitive exercises with all crews raring to go. From Weymouth to Lymington cadets were judged on their quality of jibbing, pole raising knot tying and points of sail with their experienced crew taking notes and achievements down to see who was in the lead

for the Leviathan Cup. A mainsail raising race was the culmination of the day with the South East Sector ACF crew taking an early lead overall.

Day four saw a refinement in seamanship skills, leadership and teamwork as cadets climbed the 29m main mast, deep sea swimming races and a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) -inspired egg drop task from the top of the main mast. The afternoon was spent planning a night navigation under the stars for the early hours return to Portsmouth Harbour. A short night's rest, clean up of the vessels and preparation for departure followed before the presentation to the overall winner.

After 5 days of travel, training, preparation and competition the South East ACF Sector were crowned champions for 2024 with all cadets achieving Royal Yachting Association qualifications. Some cadets were highlighted by the TYST to attend future expeditions with them, such as their quality of leadership.

JFS CCF look forward to welcoming two new crews for 2025 and four in 2026 as the exercise looks to continue in the long term to provide inner London army cadets with new opportunities and experiences.



I can't believe in five days I've gone from never being on a sailing boat to helping one into harbour!

Cadet Lance Corporal Tash



Ex Pegasus Frost

Commemorating WW2 Op Market Garden

Supported by a grant from Team Forces, on 14 Sep 2024 nine members of the Reserve and Regular Army from all over the UK, set off from a beach in Essex to kayak across the North Sea to Holland and then inland on the waterways to Arnhem a total distance of 320 KM. This endeavour was conducted to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Operation Market Garden, an audacious attempt to shorten the Second World War.

"A plan was developed which involved paddling a kayak from Colchester to Arnhem across the North Sea and then through the Dutch waterways to Arnhem with a view to arriving on the main day of the commemorations 21 Sep 2024.

The kayak crew, Brigadier Matt Cansdale CBE, Maj Frank Gargan MBE and WO1 Doug Herbert (all seasoned paddlers), started training in June, initially on the Thames at Reading and then in the North Sea just off the Essex Coast.

We set off on the 14th September, luckily with some time in hand, because after only a few miles on day 3, whilst paddling too close to the riverbank, we grounded the boat badly and damaged the rudder to the extent that the boat was impossible to steer. Throughout the remainder of the day the team did a fantastic job, purchasing repair equipment and visiting Dutch marine repair companies who were very helpful, carried out much of the work for free and enabled us to be on our way early on Day 4.

After the disaster of the damaged rudder, we made great progress. Apart from the North Sea, Day 4 proved to be the hardest day of the journey navigating our way through the Rotterdam main port area. Tides played their part, but we also had a number of wide rivers converging, a very busy shipping lane to contend with, and high winds, all of which made the paddling much more difficult. Early in the day we were approached by a large port authority vessel who asked us what we were doing and where we were going. They fell about laughing when we told them we

were paddling to Arnhem and then laughed even harder when we told them that we had crossed the North Sea from England. They then directed us to cross the channel which we knew would be a bit of an ordeal, but we had to comply and they kindly offered to guide us across.

We then pushed hard to get through the shipping lane and the rough water. When we were nearly there, we could hear the loud hailer on the Port Authority boat open and we thought the worst, as in, they might be asking us to get out of the water because it was too dangerous. To our surprise and relief, they loudly played the music from the Battle scene of the movie Gladiator. We laughed so hard we nearly capsized.

Over the next few days, the remainder of the journey was physically demanding, into very strong head winds but it was really pleasurable paddling. We paddled all day and rested up at night, all the time being extremely well looked after by the road support crew.

On the evening of Day 7 we laid up in a Forming Up Point to the West of Arnhem on the riverbank. ready to arrive at the famous John Frost Bridge on Day 8 at whatever time Regimental Headquarters and the dignitaries required us to be there.

Day 8 was a very proud day for all of us. There were Pegasus and regimental flags everywhere. It was sad that this great adventure was coming to an end, but it was a great feeling to arrive at Arnhem on time having completed this incredible journey from Essex."



Endurance and navigation were tested throughout the journey especially overnight on the North Sea, through difficult seas and on one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world.

Major Frank Gargan MBE PARA – Crew Member

Flying For Freedom

Microlight Courses for WIS Veterans



Flying for Freedom aids Wounded Injured and Sick (WIS) recovery through microlight flying training.

Flying For Freedom (FFF) has around 30 team members and four aircraft which are positioned in three bases across England. It's vision is to become a world class microlight flying WIS recovery organisation.

There are no special dispensations made for disabled pilots. The Civil Aviation Authority syllabus and standards they follow are exactly those applied to the able bodied: Through flight training they rebuild the self-esteem and self-worth that is lost following a life-changing incident, building a positive self-image for the future.

FFF has had a difficult few years following COVID but has been slowly rebuilding the organisation and plans are afoot to mount an exciting round Britain expedition in 2025. This ten-day event will provide long-distance flying experience, route planning practice, and advanced navigation training for WIS pilots.

The Team Forces 2024 grant enabled:

- **New pilot training** - one new pilot trained with 10 hours of flight training, plans to continue development into 2025 to reach full qualification.
- **Training Weekends** – two dedicated training weekends for FFF members to aid ongoing recovery.
- **WIS Air Experience Flights** - 30 WIS participants flown on microlight air experience flights across the UK.
- **Ongoing Flying Programme** - regular flights provided for FFF members to maintain skills and engagement.
- **Airfield infrastructure** - plans with Popham Airfield to build a bespoke hangar and FFF HQ with clubroom and training facilities, reinforcing FFF's role as a focal point for the veteran aviation community.

With support from Team Forces, Flying for Freedom empowers WIS veterans through aviation by providing opportunities for adventure, skill development and community.

James Harris, Chair of FFF Trustees



Forces Wives Challenge

Community Interest Company



Team Forces is proud to be supporting such a fantastic initiative as Forces Wives Challenge (FWC)

Open Water Swimming in Devon



2024 was a pivotal year for FWC, marked by significant expansion in both membership and the variety of challenges offered.

Thanks to the support of Team Forces, FWC successfully delivered a range of adventure experiences, including sailing, swimming, climbing, walking, and scrambling. Many of these activities were part of the DISCOVER Series, a program designed to introduce beginners to outdoor challenges in an accessible and supportive environment.

DISCOVER Sailing in the Solent



These low-barrier adventures provided members with the confidence to step outside their comfort zones, embrace new experiences, and forge lasting connections.

2025 looks set to be another exciting year with membership approaching 2000 and demand for FWC events frequently exceeding supply. With 30 additional challenges planned for 2025, this momentum shows no signs of slowing down!

DISCOVER Scrambling in North Wales



DISCOVER Climbing in the Peak District



I was fortunate to participate in several FWC challenges last year and I can honestly say the experience has been transformative, I've discovered strengths I thought I'd lost after leaving the military, and formed connections that will last a lifetime.

Emma Cliff, RAF Veteran and Military Spouse

Forces Wives Challenge (FWC) is a Community Interest Company (CIC) dedicated to uniting women who have partners in the Armed Forces through adventure and challenge. Using a military-inspired adventure training model, FWC builds confidence, strengthens resilience, and fosters strong connections, empowering its members to navigate the unique demands of military life together.



Gwennili Trust

Respite Sailing for Military Veterans



“

Offers such as this provide our sick service personnel a unique opportunity to get away from the military environment, interact with others in similar situations and focus on what they can do to get better, rather than what they cannot. They are a wonderful tonic to those with mental health issues and courses like these are often the turning point for our sick sailors whilst on their recovery journey

Royal Navy Personnel Support Group

”

The Gwennili Trust gives Personnel on Recovery Duty and disabled veterans the chance to sail. Though sailing, beneficiaries gain; a sense of purpose and adventure, community & camaraderie, personal achievement & self confidence, health & self reliance as well as learning & skills.

Since 1995 the Gwennili Trust has provided for the relief of the physically and mentally disabled, in particular ex-Service people, offering respite and educational opportunities on board yachts. The Team Forces' grant in 2024 equipped us to provide 23 yachts for the benefit of Personnel on Recovery Duty, veterans and the armed forces' family.

Our sea-going volunteers supported the Defence Recovery centres at Tidworth and Catterick and, for the Royal Navy, the Personnel Support Group at Plymouth and Portsmouth. We also provided opportunity to veterans from BattleBack, Blind Veterans UK, Blesma the Not Forgotten Association and the Forces Wives Challenge.

Key Achievements in 2024

- 162 members of the military community sailed with the Gwennili Trust.
- 5 Solent flotilla cruises.
- Sailing Vision Week.
- Round the Island Race.
- 23 Yachts sailed by our volunteers



For further information visit gwennili.org.uk



“Life is all about adaptation. We have shown once again that nothing is impossible.”
Hari Budha Magar MBE

Hari Budha Magar

7 Summits - Mount Denali

In 2023 Team Forces supported double above-knee amputee Hari Budha Magar to achieve his boyhood ambition of climbing Mount Everest. This year we helped him gain another world first when he summited Mount Denali - the fourth step on his journey to conquer the highest peak on all seven continents!

The veteran Gurkha, and his support team, spent two weeks on the challenging ascent of Denali in Alaska, the highest mountain in North America, before reaching the summit at 20,310ft (6,190m) on Friday, June 28 (having set off from Base Camp on June 17th)

While Denali doesn't reach the altitude of Everest – which Hari conquered in another world-first in May last year – it presented its own unique challenges.

With only just over half of attempts proving successful, according to US National Park Service statistics (1903-2023) it is one of the toughest climbs Hari will encounter in his seven Summits journey.

Because of the depth of soft snow on its lower slopes, Hari had to travel to a US training camp in March ahead of the expedition to learn how to snowshoe efficiently on his adapted prosthetics and the build the other skills and teamwork for this climb.

At just three degrees south of the Arctic Circle, changeable pressure systems also led to unpredictable and relentlessly cold weather, dropping to minus 26 degree celsius.

At higher altitude, the team also had to cope with high winds, which slowed their progress, delayed their final push for the summit and risked supplies running dangerously low. On a particularly technical section, they spent 8 ½ hours climbing.

Having already climbed Everest (Asia), Mont Blanc (Europe) and Kilimanjaro (Africa), the successful ascent of Denali leaves Aconcagua in Argentina (South America), Puncak Jaya, Indonesia (Oceania) and Mount Vinson (Antarctica) as the final three peaks to complete Hari's ambitious goal.

Hari was given a boost ahead of this expedition by being awarded an MBE in the King's Birthday Honours. This was in recognition of his world record-setting Everest climb last year and continuing mission to raise disability awareness.

About Hari Budha Magar

Hari was born in a cowshed in a remote area of Nepal before joining and serving for 15 years in the Royal Gurkha Rifles. Having lost both legs to an IED while on patrol in Afghanistan in 2010, he has battled back to gain independence and show what is possible for people of disability. He now lives in Kent with wife and children.





Team Forces is so proud to be a supporter of HMS OARDACIOUS. This is the third time a team of submariners has taken on the World's Toughest Row to raise funds for mental health, wellbeing and resilience projects in the submariner community.

The 2023 team won the world's toughest row – 3,000 miles from La Gomera in the Canary Islands to Antigua – in 35 days 4 hours 30 minutes!

They were the first of 37 teams over the finish line and also the fastest military team on record to cover the gruelling distance, beating their predecessors, the 2022 HMS OARDACIOUS (4man) crew who crossed last year in 35 days 17hours 19minutes. They are the first five-man team to win this brutal race (the race is typically won by teams of four due to the weight advantage).

Their boat Captain Jim – named in memory of a former colleague (Captain Jim Simpson) who tragically took his own life in 2020 – left La Gomera in the Canaries on December 13, 2023, one of 37 craft in the race, some rowed by individuals, most by teams. The submariners have rowed

in shifts of 2½ hours on the oars, followed by 90 minutes' rest in the tiny cabins at each end of the boat.

They've burned through over 5,000 calories every day (the figure for the average adult is around 2,000 calories). Each rower lost about 12kg on the crossing and needed to drink ten litres of water per day. They all had to jump into the ocean en route to scrape barnacles from the hull – marine growth can slow the boat down by as much as half a knot, a massive drag when the men have been propelling Captain Jim through the Atlantic at speeds of around 3½ knots – and they've been battered by 20ft waves.

Captain Jim's team raised over £15,000 during their row, contributing to over £80,000 now raised for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity!



We're trained for it, when we deploy we're with other submariners who are literally in the same boat... but our families haven't signed up for it necessarily, certainly the children haven't. Charities and organisations like HMS Oardacious are there to help look after your family and to support them through a difficult period.

Cdr Matthew Main, Marine Engineer Officer and Skipper of HMS OARDACIOUS

For further information visit hmsoardacious.com

Photocredit Atlantic Campaigns

Jon White

GB Para Kayaker



Team Forces is proudly supporting triple amputee Jon White - a top-level para-athlete representing Great Britain in both Marathon and Ocean Racing Kayaking (SurfSki).

With only one spot available, Paris was always a longshot. Unfortunately, I failed to get selected for the 2024 Sprint World Championships and as such I was no longer eligible for selection for the Paris Paralympics. While disappointed, I have always been realistic that this was a stretch target.

I am now targeting the Los Angeles Paralympics in 2028, developing at a four-year plan to ensure the qualifying time is achieved and that I am absolutely competing for that one precious spot.

I'm still experimenting with my sprint kayaking setup, which gives me grounds for increased optimism. For example, by the end of this year, I should be in a boat that reduces my total weight by at least 4kg. This will make a significant difference.

I also hope to have achieved a prosthetic setup that is as power transfer-efficient as my current setup, and also allows me to steer too. I'm still learning how to optimise my training for sprinting, but I am making progress in this area and feel better for it

Jon White

Following Jon's success at the Marathon World Championships in July where he secured a Bronze medal in the KL2, Jon ended the year with an epic 3-month racing and speaking tour of the US, Hong Kong and Australia. Taking on both the legendary Hong Kong Dragon race and the Western Australia Race Week.

The Hong Kong Dragon Run attracts some of the world's best ocean paddlers. The 23km course is renowned for being technically challenging and 2024 was no different. A super typhoon 400km to the South meant that the running of the race was touch and go; it just sneaked in before the government issued a warning stating that they had banned water activities. The result was confused waters for the first 5km as swells rolled into the ring of islands and rebounded in all directions. The downwind section of the course was then spectacular as 2m swells rolled across the racing line, making nearby paddlers appear and disappear in an instant.

This cross swell did lead to Jon suffering sea sickness midway through the course, but he continued and finished. There were no other para-athletes in the race, so positions were meaningless to Jon, but he was proud when he saw other able-bodied athletes crossing the finishing line 20 minutes after him.

The Western Australia Shaw and Partners Race week is officially 8 days long with 5 races, but there is an extra race a few days before the week starts which Jon competed in too. The Fremantle Doctor is the name for the local afternoon wind that blows in from the Indian Ocean most summer afternoons in Perth. This year it was blowing regularly for all but the final race. The result was Jon enjoying two of the best downwind paddling weeks he has had and seeing his times and average speeds steadily improve as he dialed in the conditions and improved his skills.



Jonny Huntington

South Pole Expedition

In November 2024, with a grant from Team Forces, Jonny Huntington, 38-year-old stroke survivor, began his world-first Antarctic expedition to become the first disabled person to ski solo and unsupported to the South Pole!

Having completed his final preparations at Union Glacier, Jonny set off from Fuchs-Messner on the edge of the Antarctic landmass on 21st November at 21:15hrs UK time. The challenge is a landmark in Antarctic exploration – no one with a disability has ever attempted a solo, unsupported expedition to the South Pole. Jonny is aiming to ski 911km across frozen Antarctic tundra climbing 3,000m on his way to the pole. Expected to take 40 days, Jonny will be battling minus 40 degree temperatures and vicious winds, all whilst pulling a 110kg sled and managing his physical limitations.

“This is a massive undertaking for an able-bodied person. Add my restricted movements, especially my lower leg, and it takes the challenge to a whole new level,” says Jonny Huntington. *“I’ll be skiing in 24hr daylight, which is really nice, but the winds can get up to 50 or 60mph which will be challenging, especially when I’m trying to pitch my tent alone, but I just need to keep putting one foot in front of the other towards the finish line.”*

“Through the expedition to the South Pole we are breaking boundaries within the disabled community and pushing the idea of human potential. For me, this expedition is about challenging myself, about pushing myself further than I’ve ever pushed my body before. I believe that going through the process of being injured, going through rehab and then having to pick life back up after that meant that, for me, there was a serious conflation of being disabled meant that I couldn’t do things. My hope is that this expedition will highlight that disability does not mean inability and no challenge is insurmountable. It’s about confidence and self-belief.”

I’m under no illusion; this is going to be tough. Just living in temperatures of minus 35 comes with its own challenges – let alone the epic journey I’ll be undertaking. The motivation that drives me to reach the Pole, and get home, is that I really want to show that no matter what life throws at you – with enough determination everyone can fulfil their own potential.”



“My hope is that this expedition will highlight that disability does not mean inability and no challenge is insurmountable. It’s about confidence and self-belief.”

Jonny Huntington, Antarctic Explorer

Jonny joined the British Army in 2013, training at Sandhurst to become an officer. In June 2014, just eight weeks after commissioning, Jonny was in the gym when he suffered a devastating stroke. The neurological damage left Jonny paralysed down one side. After years of intense rehab, today Jonny lives with permanent brain damage resulting in a significant lack of strength, mobility and control down his left

side. During his recovery Jonny became a member of the Armed Forces Para-Snowsport Team (AFPST), which fuelled his love of cross-country skiing. This led to Jonny becoming one of the first athletes in a new GB Para Nordic ski team, where he competed from 2017 to 2020 at international level at World Cups in Lviv, Ukraine and Vuokatti, Finland, as well as the inaugural European Paralympic Committee Games in Poland in 2020.

Little Troopers

Supporting Military Children



Little Troopers is a small charity with a big heart and the support from Team Forces helps us to keep providing the support all military children deserve.

Louise Fetigan, Founder & Operations Manager, Little Troopers



In September Little Troopers, with a grant from Team Forces, orchestrated the first fundraising climb of Scafell Pike. Over 30 people from the military community, including some little troopers, battled the strong winds and rain to scale the mountain - raising over £6,000 for the charity!

Little Troopers is a national registered charity supporting children and young people with one or both parents serving in our British Armed Forces (regular or reserve).

These children often face unique challenges including frequent house and school moves, as well as regular periods of separation from their serving parent(s) due to exercises, training, operations and other service commitments.

Last year, Little Troopers directly supported more than 16,500 military children through its core work as well as launching

two major new projects including the LittleTroopers Therapy Programme and the all-adventures weekend training which supports military children aged between 14-18.

Through targeted resources, programmes and events, Little Troopers supports thousands of military children each year. A large proportion of the work we do involves providing materials that empower families to support their children at home, particularly during deployments and house moves. It is important to us that families can access this support self-sufficiently wherever they are based, whether that's overseas, on a UK military base or in a civilian community.

Little Troopers is run by a small but dedicated team who all have first-hand experience of military life and the challenges it can bring.



Scafell Pike is the tallest mountain in England. I already climbed Snowdon with Little Troopers last year so I thought it would be easy but due to the wind and rain it was tough and at times I got very cold, but I was determined to do it and I did!

Little Trooper Isabella Barnes, aged 7



I have two daughters and Little Troopers has provided days out and online resources, which I have also sent into school, which really helps the girls feel special.

Amy Cooper, Royal Navy veteran



Military Jockeys

UK Armed Forces Horse Racing

Team Forces started supporting the Grand Military Race Committee in 2017; since then many military jockeys have been able to 'enjoy' the adreneline rush of racing over fences at over 30mph!

Military races have existed for over 150 years, with the first running of the Grand Military Gold Cup taking place in 1841. Throughout its history, military racing has attracted diverse participation with a mixture of Regular and Reservist personnel, from all three single Services, with both male and female jockeys competing on an equal footing. There are currently eight serving, qualified jockeys and the training pipeline aims to introduce a new jockey to the sport each year; there are currently fourteen personnel from all three services in the pipeline.

The Armed Forces Equestrian Association has developed a training pathway designed to introduce new military jockeys to racing. Team Forces funding, which enables key training events, is crucial to enabling new riders to take part in the sport.

The initial phase, a training day designed to introduce potential jockeys to the world of military racing, took place in late 2024. This event allows potential jockeys, who often have extensive experience in other equestrian disciplines but lack racing knowledge, to understand what is required to become an amateur jockey. Potential jockeys are lucky enough to benefit from National Horse Racing College (NHC) support to this event, funded by the Team Forces annual grant. The NHC provide qualified jockey coaches who instruct aspiring jockeys using a state-of-the-art racehorse simulator. The coaches can then offer video analysis of each jockey's riding position and suggest follow up training to enable further improvement. Our home-grown British Horseracing Association qualified jockey coach, and serving jockey, Sergeant Nathan Rahman (Royal Welsh), also attends the training. Nathan keeps in regular contact with aspiring jockeys from start to finish of the training pipeline, providing valuable mentoring and encouragement.

An important subsequent phase of the pathway is an annual training camp held at the British Racing School, a purpose-

built training centre on the outskirts of Newmarket, the headquarters of British horseracing. Military jockeys, across all levels of experience, benefit from the best jockey coaching in Britain, use of immaculate facilities and cutting-edge race simulation and analysis software.

New jockeys are generously supported not only by racehorse owners willing to risk their valuable horses and high training fee investment, but also top trainers who not only provide horses to ride in the races but also trust and encourage military jockeys to come and exercise their horses in their routine work, gaining further valuable experience.

This proven route has produced riders in the past such as Bombardier Jody Sole, who has gone on to win both the Royal Artillery Gold Cup and Grand Military Gold Cup on several occasions.

During the 2024 season several new jockeys rode in races for the first time. For example, Captain Izzy Harrison, a serving Section Commander at The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, had her first ever ride in the McCreery Military Amateur Jockeys Hurdle at Wincanton where she finished second!

Horse racing provides excellent personal development opportunities for jockeys. Race riding requires high levels of fitness and riders must show confidence, determination, and motivation. Competing requires months of physical and nutritional preparation and early mornings of riding out for trainers ... all on top of fulfilling challenging roles in the Armed Services.

The funding from Team Forces helps servicemen and women turn their dream of riding a racehorse at 30mph over 4'6" steeplechase fences into reality and achieve the ultimate prize – being led into the winners enclosure to receive their trophy from a member of The Royal Family.

Military jockeys and on their behalf, the Grand Military Race Committee, are hugely grateful for the financial support provided by Team Forces. This funding is crucial to enabling both the annual training camp and other rider training events.

Grand Military Race Committee



Mission Motorsport

The Forces' Motorsport Charity



"Mission Motorsport, the Forces' Motorsport Charity, was established to help those affected by military operations through engagement in sport. From day one Team Forces has been a true partner, understanding the important role that sport plays in providing an exhilarating conduit to break down barriers of silence.

Motorsport is unique in that people with disabilities compete against the able bodied on a level playing field – there is no separate category for disabled, with advanced engineering allowing the adaptation of a wide range of vehicles. Motorsport helps us to reach those who may be

resistant to traditional 'welfare' approaches and connects them with our amazing opportunities for peer support, referrals to other complementary help, volunteering, training and employment."

From 2022 to 2024 Mission Motorsport engaged with:

- 1,200 veterans
- 300 serving or service leavers
- 300 spouse/partner/family member



Team Forces has been a key supporter of Mission Motorsport for 13 years, providing funding that is instrumental in helping us to deliver a comprehensive programme of recovery sport for those transitioning out of service, veterans in need, and their families, introducing them to the community and camaraderie that they have often missed since the end of their armed forces career.

James Cameron, CEO Mission Motorsport





Mission Spiritus

Scientific Expedition to the South Pole

Mission Spiritus is a multi purpose expedition helping the further understanding of human behaviour and performance in combination with providing vital climate data and research for the greater good.

The Mission Spiritus Antarctic expedition was the first in a series of seven campaigns committed to inspiring and educating the next generation of environmental stewards. Through adventure, research, education and with a simple global narrative, it will drive sustained cultural change.

After an absolutely epic 58 days on the polar ice, battling some of the earth's most extreme conditions, former Royal Marines, Alan Chambers MBE and Dave Thomas travelled from Hercules Inlet to the geographic South Pole. Through their expedition they are advancing research into micro and nano plastics and understanding the physiological response of the body in remote, isolated areas.

Mission Spiritus Antarctica conducted a climate ice core study, in collaboration with Columbia University NYC, researching nano plastics in Antarctica to determine how far from the coast nano plastics have reached. During the expedition, three types of snow samples were collected by the team (about 470mL of surface snow), five short snow cores every 10 days and five field blank samples about 300ft upwind of their sleep sites. A stainless-steel spoon cleaned by nearby snow at depth was used for the collection. The

475mL of snow is about 166g, and the tin container is about 66g, this the daily sample weight is 232g. For the whole trip, the weight of samples sourced were approx 12kg.

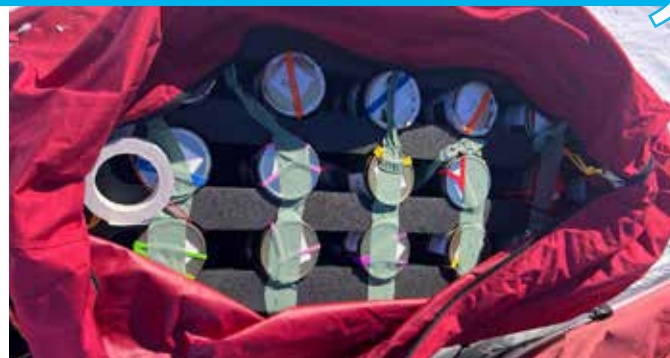
These samples were sent to Columbia University and will fast track their learning by 15 years! Columbia University has now collaborated with Hull University to share the findings and work together on the outcomes.

Mission Spiritus team members also worked with Professor Andy McCann and Manchester Met University conducting a physiological and psychological study into working in extreme remote isolated areas. The biometric results of their 58 days on the ice will provide a greater understanding of stress levels and functional capabilities under duress. This data will be transferable to other people who conduct their daily jobs under similar conditions, for example doctors surgeons blue light staff and military personnel.

As if the above wasn't enough, during the expedition Alan and Dave also managed to raise vital funds for the Royal Marines Charity to help ongoing support and care for serving military and veterans, and their families, who are struggling emotionally and mentally.

By collecting samples on behalf of our scientists, Mission Spiritus will be able to accelerate the pace of our research.

Professor Maureen Raymo, Director and Co-Founding Dean of Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory, Columbia University



Para Snowsports

Armed Forces Para Snowsport Team



The season has been filled with incredible achievements from our inspirational athletes whilst training and competing around the world! Outside of our normal winter programme many have also taken on epic adventure challenges all aimed at raising vital funds for charity.

The Armed Forces Para Snowsport Team is deeply grateful to have partners like Team Forces who understand the importance of empowering individuals through sports. On behalf of the entire team, I extend our heartfelt thanks to Team Forces and all the organisations you represent.

Elizabeth Winfield, Chief Operating Officer AFPST



Team Forces has been supporting the Armed Forces Para Snowsport Team (AFPST) for over a decade and the support they offer to our military personnel is truly life changing:

- It was a busy start to 2024 as AFPST athletes attended the RAF Snowboard Championships, Army Alpine Championships, Royal Navy Snowboard & Alpine Championships and the Inter Service Biathlon and Nordic Ski Championships.
- In February we had athletes attending the Inter-Service Alpine and Snowboard Championships.
- March saw us heading out for our annual event to Winter Park, Colorado USA to train and compete. There were 90 participants, including 14 Athletes from Nigeria, Columbia, Ukraine, Netherlands and USA.
- April was time to reset from the Winter Season and ensure our team was fully prepared to head out to Everest base camp. 18 AFPST Staff and athletes took on this incredible fundraising challenge.
- May was a time to celebrate with our supporters at the Gala Dinner, as we welcomed home our successful Everest Base camp team who all successfully made it to base camp and raised £60K for the Charity!
- June, July, August - summer training and UK competitions including the Laser-Biathlon roller ski series and parallel lines Alpine and Snowboard indoor.
- In September it was our largest ever Newcomers events with lots of new faces including those on their Winter Invictus journey!
- October - two-day Castleford Race Camp.
- November - another two-day camp and Nordic Coaches supported the Team UK Training Camps for those athletes competing in the first winter Invictus Games.
- Moving forward. - with just over a year to the Paralympics we have athletes training hard to secure their place across the Nordic, Alpine and Snowboard disciplines.



AFPST specialise in providing adaptive Snowboarding, Nordic and Alpine skiing instruction to those with a physical or psychological condition, where tangible success can be achieved in a competitive sporting environment. By motivating, engaging and inspiring their athletes, they can help restore their physical and mental health. For further information visit afpst.co.uk

Rebecca Foran-Coutts - AFPST Athlete



“ I write with a heart full of gratitude for the profound impact that AFPST has had on me over last few months. The ‘snow family’ has quite literally saved me during some of the most difficult periods I’ve had to face in recent months.

When I first arrived in Colorado, I was struggling – both physically from my injuries sustained in service, and mentally as I grappled with deep vulnerabilities I had long suppressed. But the AFPST community embraced me with open arms, offering me not just the familiarity of a supportive training routine, but the invaluable gift of reconnection – to myself, to my passions, and to a new found sense of purpose.

The mountains demanded that I push my limits, and in doing so, they gently encouraged me to confront the fears and doubts that had been holding me back. Colorado cracked open my heart, exposing wounds I had buried, but it also revealed the strength and resilience that lay dormant within me, waiting to be unlocked.

And when my world came crashing down in July with the sudden end of my ten year marriage, it was my AFPST “snow family” who were there to catch me. Dave Rose, Lisa Johnson, and Johnathan Dukes - they did not merely offer me support, but rather they became the very foundation upon which I could focus on rebuilding my life (again). Their friendship, camaraderie, and unwavering belief in me has been an unprecedented source of healing and inspiration. Not the kind that you would find readily available on civvie street, I would argue. This situation has led me to relocate to North Yorkshire in the coming days where I know I will be closer to the snow family and training opportunities.

The friendly competition over the Parallel Lines race series this summer gave me the reason to not only show up for myself and the Team but it also gave me determination to consistently improve in a sport that I have come to love.

Quite simply, AFPST has given me the will to live, the motivation to grow, and the courage to keep moving forward, even on the darkest of days. This sport, this community, this purpose - they have become the light that guides me through the storm and for that, I will forever be grateful.

So I share this not merely as an expression of gratitude, but as a testament to the power of AFPST’s work. For anyone struggling, whether with physical, mental, or emotional challenges, I implore you to reach out and experience the life-changing magic of this remarkable organisation. They have quite literally saved me, and I know they can do the same for others.

”





Rowing solo across the Atlantic

Zara Lachlan attempts world record row

Team Forces is supporting Zara Lachlan, an aspiring technical officer in the Army, as she currently attempts to row the Atlantic solo and unsupported from mainland Europe to mainland South America.

Zara Lachlan is hoping to inspire other women and set multiple world records by being the first woman and youngest person ever to row 3600 nautical miles solo and unsupported from mainland Europe to mainland South America.

The gruelling expedition will see 21-year-old Zara rowing for 15 hours per day from Portugal to French Guiana and is predicted to take 90 days from start to finish, ending in January 2025. Zara will take on a number of challenges during the expedition, including encountering orcas, marlins and sharks and battling 20ft waves.

Her journey to French Guiana will pass in an unrelenting cycle – row for five hours, sleep for 20 minutes – that she

will break only to clean her boat or, in the case of a fierce headwind, deploy her parachute anchor and take a longer break. Each day she will burn about 7,200 calories which is far more than the 5,500kcal her body is able to absorb. With this daily deficit Zara at 5ft 8in and 64kg could possibly lose up to a third of her body weight.

Zara is aiming to set two world records:

- First female to row from mainland Europe to mainland South America solo and unsupported.
- Youngest person to achieve this feat.



While I have rowed as part of my university team, I've never been in an ocean rowing boat, but I really wanted to take on a big challenge. I think the most daunting part for me so far is the thought of getting out of my boat and into the ocean every two days to clean it and do any maintenance.

Zara Lachlan



Zara Lachlan is a 21-year-old physics student at Loughborough University who is joining the army in September 2025 as a technical officer. She has competed internationally in cycling and started rowing at 16 at Welbeck the Army's 6th Form College. Zara is a highly determined, tenacious and motivated young woman, and is comfortable pushing her mental and physical boundaries. She firmly believes that life's most rewarding moments lie in the challenges we embrace.

Sally Orange

Everest Marathon

The Everest Marathon is an annual international high altitude event held on May 29 from Mount Everest Base Camp - celebrating the historic ascent by Tenzing Norgay Sherpa and Sir Edmund Hillary in 1953.



Thanks to a small Team Forces grant, our Ambassador, Sally Orange MBE, had the incredible opportunity to participate in the world's highest marathon. Sally, a dedicated mental health campaigner, used this challenging race not only to push her own limits but also to raise awareness and funds for mental health charities.

The former Army physiotherapist, took on the international high-altitude sports event in her distinctive lemon costume, which she said embodies the phrase "*when life gives you lemons, make lemonade*". For more than 25 years, Sally has been tackling depression and chronic anxiety. She believes

physical activity can help mental wellbeing regardless of age, gender, or background and wants to break the stigma associated with poor mental health.

"Although it was my 84th marathon, this was certainly my most difficult. I'm often asked how do I do it? But believe me, how I feel during a marathon is nothing compared to how I felt when I was really unwell with severe depression and anxiety. Those feelings are still so vivid to me but the thing with a marathon is that it's not life or death, whereas poor mental health can be."

"a massive thank you to you all for your ongoing support, it really does mean the world to me and allowed me to complete the challenge and shout about mental health from the top of the world."

Sally Orange, Team Forces Ambassador and mental health campaigner



For further information visit [sallyorange](https://www.sallyorange.com)

Scotty's Little Soldiers

Charity for bereaved British Forces children

Last year a Team Forces grant helped **Scotty's Rugby** to raise vital funds for Scotty's Little Soldiers - a charity dedicated to supporting children and young people who have experienced the death of a parent who served in the British armed forces.

The Team Forces grant had a profound impact on Scotty's Rugby by facilitating participation in the Dubai 7s which enabled the team to raise over £12,000 for Scotty's Little Soldiers!

The financial support, combined with the players' dedication, raised both crucial funds and awareness for Scotty's Little Soldiers. More than just a rugby team, Scotty's Rugby embodies the spirit of service, support, and fun – a legacy that continues to positively affect all those involved.

The grant contributed to managing the overhead costs of competing at the prestigious Dubai 7s tournament. For the first time in the team's 10-year existence, Scotty's Rugby fielded three teams: a Men's 7s, a Women's 7s, and a Veterans 7s.



About Scotty's Little Soldiers

Inspired by the experience of Army widow Nikki Scott, following the death of her husband, Corporal Lee Scott, in Afghanistan in 2009, the charity, which was set up in 2010, provides support and guidance to hundreds of bereaved military children and young people throughout their childhood.

When a young person joins Scotty's, they become a member and are supported until their 25th birthday. Whether it be 1:1 bereavement support, a respite break with the family, an opportunity to meet others in a similar situation, or access to extracurricular activities, Scotty's is always there for its members to ensure they don't feel alone.

Last year, Scotty's supported over 730 bereaved military children and young people and services are delivered through three Family Programmes, available to all members:

- The SMILES Programme is about fun and engagement and includes activities, gifts, respite breaks and group events. The aim is for bereaved military children and young people to form friendships, benefit from peer support, heal with their family and feel part of a supportive community.
- The SUPPORT Programme looks after emotional health and wellbeing and includes 1:1 bereavement support.
- The STRIDES Programme focuses on education and development needs, removes barriers to learning and helps young people gain confidence that can be lost after a bereavement.

This support makes a significant difference, with 100% of parents reporting that they saw improved communication, belonging and connection in their child after support from Scotty's.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Team Forces for their generous support. Your contribution has made a tangible difference in the lives of bereaved military children and strengthened the community bonds within and beyond Scotty's Rugby.

Nikki O'Donnell, Scotty's Rugby



Honouring Sergeant Thomas Pike

How Scotty's Little Soldiers supports his family's future

On the 22nd of November 2021, Sgt Thomas Pike died from health complications caused by COVID-19. The 42-year-old Aircraft Engineer served at RAF Coningsby and was known for his love of rugby, Star Wars and, above all, his family.

Tom's wife, Amanda, and their children Isabella (13), Oliver (11) and Evie (5) share how support from Scotty's Little Soldiers, the charity for bereaved British Forces children, has helped them learn to cope without their much-loved husband and father by their side.

The Power of Support

Experiencing the death of a parent who served in the British Armed Forces can leave children and young people feeling isolated and alone. Scotty's ensures they never have to face that journey without support. From gifts on difficult days to respite breaks and fun activities with others who understand, the charity creates a sense of belonging. Specialist 1:1 bereavement support is also available for families who need it.

"Scotty's have offered so much support. Being able to contact them any time and have the kids speak to somebody if they're struggling makes such a difference. As well as being around peers that have all experienced the same thing.

Then there's the Scotty respite breaks, which are always lovely, and knowing it's provided by Scotty's gives the whole thing another little boost. We've had this awful, awful thing happen to us, but the holidays give us a chance to enjoy some special time together and fun memories we wouldn't have been able to otherwise."

Scotty's provided respite breaks for 166 families in 2024, with 78% saying it helped them feel more connected as a family.

Educational Support for Bereaved Military Children

It's common for bereaved military children to experience issues in their education setting, from dealing with

challenging death-related topics to overhearing insensitive remarks. Scotty's STRIDES Programme focuses on education and development needs, removes barriers to learning and helps young people gain confidence that can be lost after a bereavement.

"They really helped with Isabella's transition to secondary school, and when Oliver starts in September I know there will be that support for him as well. Scotty's also send us the most amazing packs to share with the schools, reminding the kids' teachers that they're bereaved military children, that talking about things like war and Remembrance might affect them differently. I know that the head teacher for the children's primary school was really impressed by the support that was in place, and so grateful to us for sharing it as it was something they hadn't considered before.

The Military Community

"Scotty's reminded us that we're part of the military family. For so long, you take it as a given that you're part of this military community, but when your partner dies, everything changes. You have to leave your military home if you're in one, and you leave behind so many of those links to your previous life. It can feel very isolating. But then Scotty's came along and brought us right back into this new military family. It's a massive support for the children and so gratefully received. Just seeing the smiles on their faces and the effort that Scotty's go to for them is incredible."

Scotty's supports a lot of kids that are like me, with parents who served in the military but aren't alive anymore, so it's filled with people that I can relate to. It makes me feel like I'm not so alone.

Isabella, daughter of Sergeant Thomas Pike

Shooting Championships

Military Adaptive Target Rifle Shooting

Team Forces has been supporting the annual Military Adaptive Shooting Championship since 2019, this event underscores the significance of adaptive sports for individuals with disabilities, particularly within the military community.

The Military Adaptive Shooting Championships which is jointly hosted by the National Rifle Association (NRA) and Army Rifle Association (ARA), serves multiple purposes: it promotes rehabilitation, fosters camaraderie, and celebrates the perseverance of serving and veteran military personnel. The gathering of nearly 60 wounded and disabled shooters at the historic Bisley ranges in June 2024 exemplifies the growing interest and impact of such competitions.

Adaptive shooting, have been shown to provide numerous psychological and physical benefits for individuals with disabilities. From a psychological standpoint, participation in competitive events can boost self-esteem, reduce feelings of isolation, and promote overall mental well-being by providing a sense of achievement and belonging. For

veterans, who may struggle with the transition from military to civilian life, adaptive sports can offer a new source of pride and purpose.

Physically, adaptive shooting can aid in the rehabilitation process by improving balance, coordination, and muscle strength. It also serves as a form of physical therapy, allowing participants to set and achieve personal goals that can translate into other areas of their lives, contributing to their overall reintegration and recovery.

The free entry fee for the competition is a strategic approach to reducing barriers to participation, as economic constraints can often prevent individuals with disabilities from engaging in such activities.

From the on-the-day comments I can safely say that the Adaptive is a highlight for many each year, including competitors and organisers. Although we only welcome a small proportion of the UKs injured servicemen and women, those who attend for the first time, or for the 10th time, appreciate the support of our sponsors who are key in facilitating an inclusive day of competitive marksmanship.

Lauren Jordan, National Rifle Association



Spencer Whiteley

CrossFit Athlete

A Team Forces grant assisted Spencer Whiteley to compete at the 2024 CrossFit Games Finals held in Alabama USA.

"In 2024 I qualified to compete at the CrossFit Games Masters finals in Birmingham Alabama. In my division, the field was whittled down from 20,000 to 40 male athletes aged between 45-49.

I'm so grateful for the grant I received which allowed me to have what might prove to be my last opportunity to compete at this level. This sport has given me life and rehabilitation that I never thought possible, it's allowed me to build a mental toughness and fortitude that's bled into my recovery, my life, my job and my gym and coaching business.

My goal was to try and make the final cut on the last day of four gruelling days of challenging workouts ... to ultimately try and find the fittest age group master on earth! I had plenty of ups and downs and suffered a little with the heat on day two which was a little disappointing,

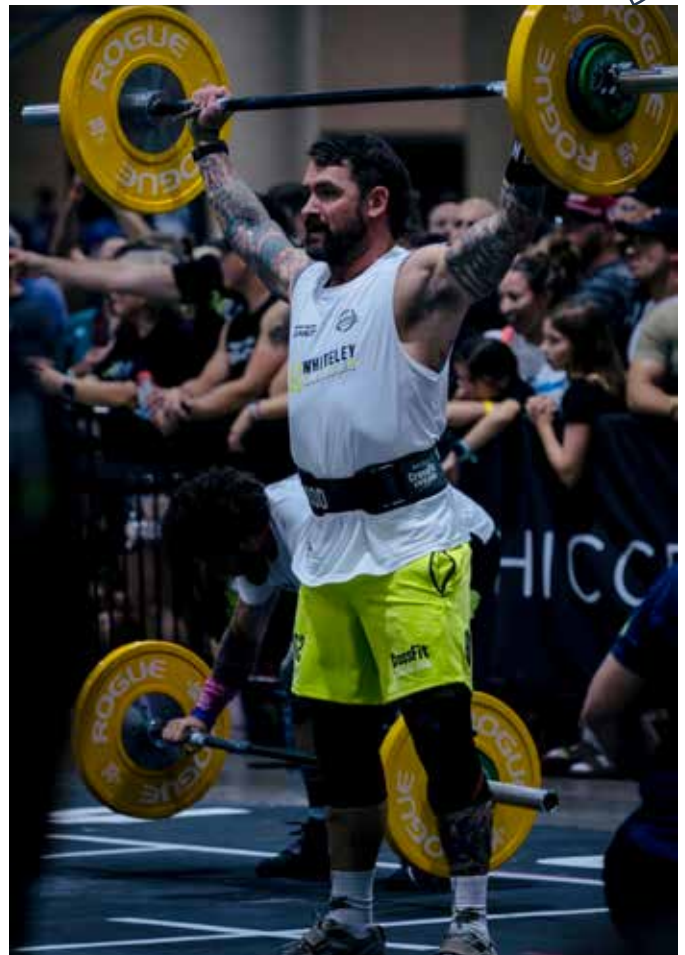
but I gave my absolute all and managed to make up a load of points on day three to make it into the top 20 athletes enabling me to progress to the final day. That consisted of two brutal workouts where I finished in the top ten on both, securing me a top 20 finish overall! All said and done I was happy with that.

The trip is an expensive undertaking having to arrive a week early to acclimatise to the incredible Alabama heat and get over the jet lag. The support from Team Forces and the REME charity was fundamental in me being able to compete for what might well be my last time.

Since my return, as a consequence of injuries sustained in Iraq back in 2007 on Op Telic 10, I have had to undergo major surgery on my right femur which will take me a year to recover from. I may never get back to this level of fitness again but I will certainly try."

This sport has given me life and rehabilitation that I never thought possible, it's allowed me to build a mental toughness and fortitude that's bled into my recovery, my life, my job and my gym and coaching business.

Spencer Whiteley





Taniya Morris

Solo Cycle from UK to Ukraine

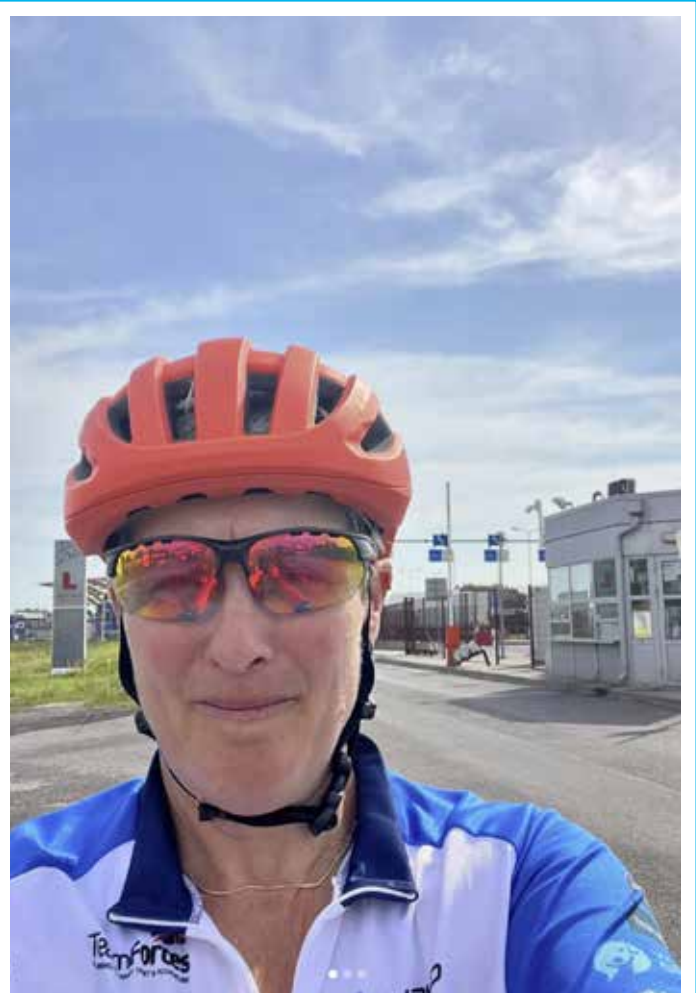
Team Forces provided a grant to an inspirational fundraiser - Lt Col Taniya Morris MBE (ex- Regular and now Reserve) who took on the arduous challenge of cycling 2,600 kilometers solo from the UK to Ukraine.

I cycled 2600km solo from UK to Ukraine to raise money for a foundation that provides amazing support to the innocent victims of war in Ukraine - the children. Voices of Children, established in 2019, has a mission: No child should face the war experience alone. They work in Ukraine to deliver psychosocial rehabilitation & assistance, targeted humanitarian assistance, and advocacy in direct support of the children and families living through these most difficult of times.

Taniya Morris, Army Reserve Officer

Taniya started her challenge on 16th June 2024 from Middle Wallop. She carried all her own equipment and cycled 8 to 10 hours a day on a fully loaded touring bike weighing about 30kg. Travelling an average 100km each day through UK, Holland, Germany, and Poland Taniya reached the Ukrainian border at Chelm in under a month on 12th July!

Taniya posted on her Instagram account, *“Sadly the Polish border guards wouldn’t let me cross to the Ukrainian side - I’m gutted to be honest as that felt symbolic. But I’m immensely proud and humbled by everyone’s generosity in supporting this wonderful cause which has raised nearly £10,000.”*





Team BRIT - Paul Fullick

Endurance Car Racing

Team Forces provided a grant to enable Paul Fullick to attend pre season training and testing in Portugal before he went on to compete in the British Endurance Championships in 2024.

Paul Fullick from is a former member of the British Army. He survived a life threatening diving incident which left him with limited walking ability, reduced strength, problems speaking and communicating and forced his early retirement from the Army.

He began working for himself, buying and restoring cars as a qualified mechanic, and taking on incredible charity challenges. In 2008 he drove to the Gambia in a car that cost less than £100, raising £20,000 for charity. In 2011 he organised a World Record attempt travelling with friends from John O'Groats to Land's End on eight 50cc mopeds. Another £25,000 was raised for the neurological hospital in London and whilst the record was set it was not official!

Paul began riding motorbikes as a teenager but on a touring trip to Wales in 2021, he was involved in an accident which resulted in the loss of his right leg.

He was in hospital for a month and just a week after being discharged was back riding his bike. He was introduced to Team BRIT and had his race licence within a matter of weeks. He raced a BMW 118i in the Britcar Trophy Series in 2022 alongside Tyrone Mathurin and in 2023 he returned to the championship alongside Tyrone driving a BMW M240i. In 2024, Paul competed in the British Endurance Championship as a GT4 driver, racing in a McLaren 570S GT4 alongside Aaron Morgan.

"Motorsport can be seen as quite an inaccessible industry for so many. There are very few disabled drivers and riders on the grid, and I want to be part of the movement to change that. I'm also passionate about championing inclusion for the LGBTQ+ community. There are only eight openly gay professional racing drivers in the world and that has to change."



My aim is to always inspire those who come after us, not only in motorsport but whatever you set your mind to, disability is life changing - but that change can bring new life.

Paul Fullick, Team BRIT Racing Driver

To follow Paul's racing next season visit [instagram.com/paul.fullick.racing](https://www.instagram.com/paul.fullick.racing)

Team Endeavour Racing

Powerboat racing for veterans

Team Endeavour Racing UK is open to wounded, injured and sick serving personnel and veterans. They offer sport recovery events within the powerboating environment; empowering team members into future employment, training & education.



As members learn new skills, engage in camaraderie, peer support and friendly race rivalry, so they set goals, and in turn aid their own recovery and find a sense of belonging. To say that our sponsors and supporters helped make this possible is an understatement and we sincerely thank you all.

Team Endeavour Racing



Early in 2024 Team Endeavour Racing (TER) moved to new premises on the border of Gosport and Fareham, Hants, after the facilities at Southwick Park had to be relinquished for military use.

The process of moving and refurbishing a new hangar and yard was a mammoth logistical feat, and one that many beneficiaries assisted in by bringing their skills and energy to fitting out the new premises. The new premises are better tailored to Team Endeavour Racing's needs in allowing a larger area for storage, as well as a formal training room. The training room has already been put to good use for the beneficiaries with didactic input on boat skills and safety, as well as a place for regular debriefing. During the year there was incredible personal progress from both new and existing beneficiaries. The latter stepping up to the plate to help teach the new beneficiaries driving, co-piloting and capsizing drills.

On the racing front, although it was a tentative year that was heavily focused on training for future racing, two of the

teams entered the OCRDA (Offshore Circuit Racing Drivers Association) race event held in West Bay, Dorset, and placed a respectable 4th and 6th. This is exceptional, and especially so since they were first timers racing against very seasoned racers, and one team member is also an amputee!

Later on in the year three teams took part in the 52nd Annual Speed Record event at Coniston Waters. One team broke a speed record – a hugely impressive feat!

In 2025 Team Endeavour Racing will be launching a number of teams into a full season racing calendar with ORCDA (Offshore Circuit Racing Drivers Association). To take place at various locations throughout the UK at an average of one racing event every 4 – 6 weeks.

Beneficiaries will also be attending training sessions between events, and the leadership team are also in talks with European race organisers with a view to extending into racing the European Circuit as well.



Team Endeavour Racing has helped me to gain stronger mental and physical health. I'm so much happier now being able to focus positive things, and being part of a team helps my wellbeing and encourages me to be a better person.

Brian McGuffie – Team Endeavour Racing CIC beneficiary (Army veteran, amputee)

Team Endeavour Racing is open to wounded, injured and sick (WIS) serving personnel and veterans. It uses entry-level power boating to create an enjoyable and stimulating environment to develop, inspire and challenge while transitioning from the Armed Forces into a secure and rewarding civilian career. The project is solely managed by WIS personnel and veterans. For further information visit teamendeavourracing.co.uk





True Heroes Racing

Motorcycle Racing for Recovery

Formed in 2012 by a Royal Navy Warrant Officer, True Heroes Racing is a truly unique organisation formed around the competitive motorcycle racing arena. The organisation is dedicated to supporting Wounded, Injured and Sick UK Service personnel & Veterans by enthusing and refocusing them among their peers with hands-on involvement in all aspects of motorcycle racing. At the same time they aim to assist them to gain a renewed sense of direction, improved social skills and exposure to new experiences and technical skills among a likeminded demographic. Whether racing, maintaining or transporting the race bikes all beneficiaries gain direct, hands-on involvement and teamwork as part of a motorcycle racing team competing at all levels, including the National Championships around the UK.

In the early days, when the Military were still engaged in combat operations in Afghanistan, the individuals they were supporting were those with life changing physical injuries sustained on the battlefield. Since then the demographic they support has shifted more towards mental health and

disenfranchised Veterans requiring support. True Heroes Racing provides beneficiaries with a support network through a shared love of motorcycles and the high adrenaline sport of racing. It's difficult to really quantify the output of their beneficiary program, but if you speak to any of those involved they will tell you it has changed their lives for the better; which has to be the only mark of success worthy worrying about.

For the 8th year running direct support from Team Forces in 2024 enabled True Heroes Racing to consolidate its beneficiary activity program. With the addition of even more race bikes within their grassroots and National racing programs they were able to provide an even greater number of unique opportunities to those from the UK Military and Veteran communities within the peer group therapy environment that is True Heroes Racing. It also enabled them to provide the opportunity for RM Veteran, Charlie White, to compete and win the 2024 Sound of Thunder Championship.



Thanks to True Heroes Racing I have a new focus and something to aim for, gaining my race licence was a real milestone for me. Every time I go out, I close my visor and forget about all my stresses and strains to focus on the track ahead. I might not be the fastest, but I'm definitely the one with the biggest grin after every race!

True Heroes Racing Beneficiary



Turn to Starboard

The Forces Sailing Charity



Case Study - Ronnie Cooper

Ronnie joined the Army (Parachute Regiment) at just 16 years old and served for 4 years, in Northern Ireland and Belize. Ronnie's time in the Army was difficult. He struggled with his relationship with alcohol and acted disrespectfully towards superiors. In hindsight, experiences from his childhood, further compounded by experiences whilst in the Army, contributed to mental health challenges that impacted his service. ***"At the time I didn't realize how I was affected. Lots of people joining the Army are searching for something or escaping."***



Ronnie left the Army under Administration discharge and was later diagnosed with CPTSD. After leaving, Ronnie experienced homelessness and hospitalisations. In January 2024 Ronnie made the decision to leave Scotland and find a way to focus on his personal development, he reached out to Venture Trust to discuss options for support. The lady he spoke with signposted him to Turn to Starboard.

Before his first sail, Ronnie initially felt anxious. He was unsure what to expect – what he might learn and the type of people he might find himself around. He had also just come off medication and wasn't really looking after himself but wanted to start feeling things more. Since that first sail, Ronnie has never looked back. He describes having just started therapy when he first visited T2S, but that being out on the water was better than any form of therapy. ***"I had a stupid smile on my face all that summer. Previously, I would have found some kind of substance to get that high. I was fortunate to be sailing alongside another Parachute Regiment guy – a Falkland's veteran like my dad – he took me under his wing and helped me."*** In terms of others in the group, there was no one Ronnie didn't get on with, which was unusual for him; historically, he has often clashed with people and struggled to be part of a team.

In terms of the immediate benefits of sailing with T2S, Ronnie enjoyed feeling safe in a friendly, kind and positive environment and being able to speak with other veterans who have been through similar experiences to him. He is also appreciative of the T2S Team's encouragement for him to find new, healthy habits; since his first sail, he has completely stopped smoking and is trying to improve his fitness – every day he is making small but positive decisions that are helping him to stay grounded and get mental clarity.

Thinking about his future, Ronnie has no set plan. Right now, he is focused on completing his Yachtmaster and feeling more confident in his abilities. ***"I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to sail with T2S, and I am here to make the most of it. I have been running away from myself since the Army. This is me getting my life back. I just feel happy and grateful."***

As a Yachtmaster student, Ronnie is a regular in the T2S office. The team are confident that he will successfully complete his Yachtmaster Offshore qualification, and what comes next ... we are all excited to see!

" I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to sail with T2S, and I am here to make the most of it. I have been running away from myself since the Army. This is me getting my life back. I just feel happy and grateful. "

Ronnie Cooper

Since its inception in 2012, Turn to Starboard has provided over 6000 sailing opportunities to those impacted by their military service. Year on year we see an increase in need, and the measured outcomes that accompany those numbers reassure us that we are consistently changing lives as well as saving them.

In 2024 Turn to Starboard offered and successfully ran 467 sailing weeks for veterans, sailing 189 different beneficiaries multiple times, and completing 7 RYA Yachtmaster Offshore qualifications.

Within this number we supported more women veterans than ever from within the veteran community including veterans from Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC), Fighting With Pride and Royal Military Police (Women's Provost) which in turn has had a positive impact on women veterans signing up for RYA courses individually for this coming year.

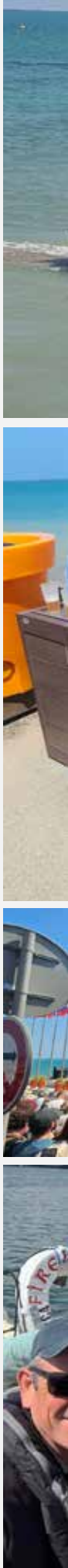
D Day Expedition

(supported by Team Forces)

This year, Turn to Starboard sailed a group of veterans and a flotilla of yachts to France to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day. Normandy will forever be marked by the D-Day Landings and the Battle of Normandy that led to the liberation of France and Europe.

2024 marked the 80th Anniversary of this historic event, and with it, a momentous occasion to celebrate peace, liberty and reconciliation at some of the many historical sites around the coast.

We sailed a group of veterans to France and conducted visits to as many of the historic beaches as we could over a two-week period. We also participated in the official celebrations that were taking place during our visit including the large-scale celebrations at Arromanches.





Case Study - Andrea Ford

I served in the Army from 1975 to 1988 in the WRAC Provost. I joined at the age of 17 years, a very naive, immature country girl. When I joined the Army, I had never heard the words, gay, queer or homosexual and didn't even know what they meant!

My first posting was to London District. Later in that posting I discovered my own sexual preference; then for the rest of my service I lived each day in fear of being discharged for being gay. Having served 'under the ban' I could never be myself or have an open relationship and spent my service masking everything I did.

Life felt like a battle, I became very depressed; a friend who joined up with me, still remembers to this day a phrase I said at a very low point, 'blue isn't a colour anymore it's a way of life'. I left the army following my notice period of 12 months, although I consider it was constructive dismissal; I was told by a friendly Officer my name was on 'suspected gay list'.

The transition from military to civilian life was difficult. I received no support after leaving, nor did I know of any that I could reach out to. I first heard of Turn to Starboard through a fellow veteran who had sailed with them before and was organising a trip for the WRAC Provost. I volunteered straight away for the Tall Ship experience not knowing how much I would gain from it! I felt apprehensive too about being accepted for who I am, worrying how to share that I had been gay during my service. I did not want to feel isolated as a veteran

My voyage on Tall Ship Irene completely surpassed all my expectations! There was no need for my worry of not being accepted, I was! It gave me time to be myself, feel able to talk in a non-judgemental environment. The experience of sailing, working together, mucking in, having fun and quiet times watching the wind in the sails made it a treasured memory.

Despite the current equality of female/male roles within the Armed Forces, people often have no idea what difficulties female soldiers had in the past. For example, serving women having to leave on marriage or when pregnant, there was no co-habiting before the rules were changed. Many ladies aborted their pregnancies to stay serving and consequently suffered terrible guilt, it affected many throughout the rest of their lives. T2S helped all of us on our trip, it gave us space to think, trust and be open with each other.

It was an amazing, healing period of time, through the connection with other female veterans. Some restored their self-esteem and confidence, and some were able to discuss issues from their Army days and move forward with their burden lightened. Others felt a sense of worth by giving support and advice.

I would love and relish the opportunity to go Tall Ship sailing with T2S again! It is the most valuable veteran experience I've had and gave me so much in the way of self-belief, pride in my service and never being afraid of being open to others about the true me. It's a wonderful charity and experience to sail with them, I certainly will be recommending T2S to other veterans I know. A unique special experience that I will remember with gratitude. Thank you for the opportunity.

"I would love and relish the opportunity to go Tall Ship sailing with T2S again! It is the most valuable veteran experience I've had and gave me so much in the way of pride in my service and never being afraid of being open to others about the true me."

Andrea Ford



Ulysses Trust

UK Cadet Force Adventurous Expeditions



Team Forces is proud to be working in partnership with The Ulysses Trust, a charity which provides funding assistance to challenging expeditions and activities involving members of the Volunteer Reserve Forces and Cadet Forces of the UK.

The Ulysses Trust provides financial assistance, encouragement, and guidance to support challenging expeditions and adventurous activities planned and undertaken by the UK's Volunteer Reserve and Cadet Forces. Young people from very different backgrounds and geographies sharing challenges and hardship together means these expeditions are among the most effective vehicles to help social mobility, cohesion, inclusion and the levelling up agenda.

Team Forces is keen to continue to support the Ulysses Trust's commitment to help address the limits that social exclusion and deprivation place on the lives of young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In 2024 funding from Team Forces helped the Ulysses Trust to support some of the 90+ adventurous training activities they funded throughout the year.

The Ulysses Trust is proud to continue its partnership with Team Forces, ensuring that all cadets, regardless of background or circumstance have the chance to participate in life changing Adventure and Challenge. These experiences foster confidence and resilience, leadership and teamwork, and benefit mental health and well-being - helping to develop confident and resilient young adults for the future.

Capt Polly Marsh DL, CEO of The Ulysses Trust



Sea Cadets - Ex Kelly Offshore 2024

The young people and adults involved on the expedition came from socially deprived areas with high unemployment. Limited young people services and many from the looked after system. They are often left behind in education. The Sea Cadets and expeditions like this give them an opportunity to excel.

It was an unforgettable journey for twelve young individuals who had the chance to embark on a life-changing expedition aboard the James Cook with the Ocean Youth Trust, thanks to the generous support of the Ulysses Trust. Coming from diverse backgrounds, including those in the local authority care system, these young people had the opportunity to sail along the Northeast coast, visiting various ports and honing essential sailing skills.

On day one aboard the James Cook, the participants learned all about the health and safety of life on a sailing vessel, this covered man overboard what to do if a crew member fell into the sea, they also found out all about the jackstay a safety line that the crew clip onto as well as valuable skills in seamanship skills for mooring, sail work, and all the emergency procedures. After this, the cadets set sail and headed for Blyth Harbour for the night.



The following days comprised of cadets taking part in watch leading which was composed of three hours of working time, three hours off rest time and three hours on standby ready to help with any duty. They took part in sail handling taking the helm of the ship and keeping in on the course, following the plan of navigation that the cadets plot using charts and compasses this took them to Amble, Grimsby, Whitby and Hull. They also navigated the challenges through sea sickness, worked together in the ships galley to prep and cook all the meals.

Beyond the practical skills, the expedition provided a rare opportunity for these young individuals to disconnect from the digital world and immerse themselves in a real-life experience. Away from the pressures of social inequalities and the influence of social media, they had the chance to bond as a team, appreciate nature, and build lasting memories. They also go through tough times like when a crew member hurts themselves and had to leave the vessel they discovered the importance of teamwork and true friendship.

Each participant took away something unique from the experience, whether it was mastering new skills, witnessing breathtaking sunrises and sunsets, or simply embracing the spirit of adventure. The impact of this expedition was profound, offering these young individuals a sense of belonging, equality, and personal growth.

“

I loved my time on the James Cook and would definitely go again if given the chance. It was an amazing experience! Thank you.”

Sea Cadet, Ex Kelly Offshore 2024

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Combined Cadet Force - Ex Venturer Matravers Schwarzsee 2024



Matravers CCF was set-up under the Cadet Expansion Programme in 2019 and our initial support for the first expedition *“truly supported the development of Matravers CCF and demonstrated that this initiative is really making a difference to the lives of young people from all backgrounds.”* ... and then COVID hit, which had a massive impact on the unit just as things were starting to take off. So The Ulysses Trust was delighted that they managed to reform and organise another overseas expedition in 2024. This expedition and the support of Team Forces means that the unit can thrive and enable many young people from this disadvantage area to benefit from these amazing adventures and the opportunities available through the cadet organisation.

From 17th – 24th August 2024, senior members of Matravers Combined Cadet Force embarked on Expedition Venturer Matravers Schwarzsee in Switzerland. Despite a chaotic start due to flight cancellations and travel complications, the cadets quickly adapted, demonstrating resilience and teamwork—an early indication of the personal growth this expedition would foster.

Upon arrival in Schwarzsee, the cadets immediately immersed themselves in their surroundings. Using Swiss maps for navigation, they explored the local environment, identifying over 20 species of alpine flowers and four coniferous tree types in just one afternoon. The experience prompted them to reflect on the natural world, sharpening their observational and analytical skills.

The first full day in the Gantrisch Naturpark provided an introduction to high-altitude trekking, navigation techniques, and the impact of changing weather conditions. With visibility fluctuating between clear skies and

complete whiteout, the cadets adapted to unpredictable mountain environments. Reaching Burgle (2,165m), they experienced the effects of altitude firsthand. Encounters with Swiss military bunkers and local wildlife enriched their understanding of the region’s geography and history.

The Gold Duke of Edinburgh’s Award (DofE) qualifying expedition began on 20th August, challenging cadets to apply their navigation and survival skills. They carefully paced their ascent, averaging 300m per hour, and met their assessor at an alpine hut before searching for Schwarzsee’s elusive beavers. Learning about new conservation laws reinforced the importance of environmental protection.

The second day saw the cadets tackle the Schwyberg ridge (1,628m - 1,645m) in low-visibility conditions, teaching them perseverance and mental resilience. Initially discouraged by the dense cloud cover, they pushed forward, gaining confidence and a deeper appreciation for navigation by terrain rather than sight. Dropping into the valley, they



When I joined cadets, I never thought I would have the opportunity to do the things I have done, let alone going to a place like Switzerland. I am grateful for the opportunity as it opened my eyes to the wonderful places that I could go. Thanks to the supportive staff and friends who come on the trip with me.



Cadet Staff Sergeant Tayla Plummer

“ It has been an incredible opportunity to do so many new things and meet several amazing people who have my best interests at heart. I have gained so many experiences like going to Switzerland that I will never forget.

Cadet Staff Sergeant Kieran Wilkinson

discovered evidence of beaver habitats, demonstrating their growing environmental awareness.

On 22nd August, the group faced a new challenge—trekking in heat. Navigating through the Brecca valley to the Col du Chamois (1,800m), they recognized how their fitness and acclimatization had improved. Observing the great yellow gentian, a plant with medicinal properties, and encountering herd guard dogs, they gained insight into Alpine ecology and local traditions.

Throughout the week, the cadets developed a deep respect for the alpine hut system, appreciating the accessibility of clean drinking water and its impact on survival planning. Their final trek on 23rd August took them through the Chesalette valley, summiting La Patta before descending via a natural spruce-lined ridgeline. Completing their expedition requirements, they celebrated their achievements with a meal at Restaurant Gypsera, receiving individual feedback on their performance.

Despite travel challenges on the return journey, the expedition was a transformational experience for all involved. The cadets grew in confidence, resilience, and teamwork, demonstrating the benefits of adventurous training. Thanks to Team Forces, this expedition showcased the world-class opportunities available through the cadet forces. With overseas excursions now firmly on the agenda, this is just the beginning for Matravers CCF—proving that hard work and commitment lead to life-changing adventures.



“ It was an amazing opportunity to do something so fulfilling with good friends and members of staff that have supported me throughout my school life. The views were incredible, and the experience will stay with me forever.

Cadet Company Sergeant Major Rebekah Slarke





GRANTS

The Team Forces Foundation regularly makes grants to a diverse portfolio of beneficiaries across the armed forces community to both serving and veteran groups as well as organisations that support the wider military family. These include:

UK Armed Forces Sports

- Biathlon
- Chess
- Cricket
- Equestrian
- Football
- Golf
- Military Jockeys
- Paragliding
- Point to Point Racing
- Polo
- Rugby
- Rowing
- Rally Team
- Shooting
- Ski Mountaineering
- Winter Sports

RAF Sports

- Hockey
- Motorsport
- Rugby League
- Squash
- Tennis

Navy Sports

- Hockey
- Motorsport
- Polo
- Rugby League
- Sailing
- Winter Sports

Army Corps and Regimental Charities

- REME
- RMAS (OUOTC)
- Royal Signals
- Yorkshire Regiment
- Army Adventurous Training Group

Military Community

- Forces Wives Challenge
- Little Troopers
- Scotty's Little Soldiers
- Ulysses Trust

Wellbeing/Adaptive Support

- Armed Forces Para-Snowsport Team
- Armed Forces Equine Charity
- Climbing Out
- Climb to Recovery
- Gwennili Trust
- Flying for Freedom
- Golf - On Course Foundation
- Mission Motorsports
- Motorcycling - True Heroes Racing
- NRA/ARA Military Adaptive Shooting
- Powerboats - Team Endeavour Racing
- Turn To Starboard

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Little Troopers is a small charity with a big heart and the support from Team Forces helps us to keep providing the support all military children deserve.

Louise Fetigan, Founder & Operations Manager, Little Troopers

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Capt Polly Marsh DL, CEO of The Ulysses Trust

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Team Forces

Team Forces improves the lived experience for the armed forces community through the power of sport, challenge and adventure. Our initiatives improve health, wellbeing and recovery by promoting excellence, equality and inclusion. We help the best get better.



teamforces.org

Team Forces Funding Ltd - 07455308

Registered charity - 1144004

Team Forces raises funds in order to deliver social impact across the armed forces community through the power of sport, challenge and adventure. Our initiatives improve health, wellbeing and recovery by promoting excellence, equality and inclusion. We help the best get better.