



Grant secures VIC future

THE work of VIC is secure for a further year thanks to a grant from the East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group.

For the third year, VIC has been granted £80,000 to maintain the core work that the charity undertakes.

Business development manager Roger Chaney, *pictured*, said: "We are now going to consolidate our processes so we measure the impact we have on the lives of the veterans that we work with.

"We have 249 members in total and we know, through experience, the positive impact VIC has had on those veterans.

"This could be helping them with issues such as mental and physical health, alcoholism, debt, housing and engaging with other specialist services.

"We have already introduced a text system to notify members of events



and activities and we now make sure the members also receive a call on a regular basis."

He stressed what was important was that the organisation was member-led and that the activities and assistance

provided was determined by members to ensure they felt fully involved.

Roger added: "We are introducing a comprehensive evaluation system to evidence the positive impact VIC has on the lives of our veterans.

"We are also putting together a library of in-depth case studies to fully demonstrate the capability of the VIC service and showcase positive outcomes."

Since VIC started in late 2012, it has extended its work beyond Rossendale to the whole of East Lancashire, Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.

Outreach and support services are held daily and activities from walks to art, fishing to social inclusion are held regularly.

The charity has secured three grants from the Ministry of Defence through the Armed Forces Community Covenant to help fund its work.

Filming at VIC Centre

VIC will feature in a film capturing how projects have used funding from the Armed Forces Community Covenant to improve veterans' lives.

Peter Carruthers, an experienced filmmaker who has previously covered Veterans issues including PTSD, secured AFCC funding for the project. He started filming in November and the project will be complete in time for June's Armed Forces Day.

He spent two days at VIC when Preston-based veterans' project Dig-In North West was also working at the centre.



Peter said: "We are making a film that looks at the impact of the AFCC funding that has been granted in the North West.

"Once complete it will be used to raise awareness of the AFCC, the benefits of it, and the impact it has had on the North West. The finished film can then be used as a model for the rest of the country. We are also looking at lessons that have been learnt along the way.

"The film will be shown

all over the country at conferences and seminars and hopefully it will also be shown on TV as I have links already with Forces TV."

He said he was particularly impressed with how different projects worked together and that they were not precious about their work.

Outreach project worker with Dig-In Clive Marshall was part of a team of four veterans at the Haslingden base creating raised beds

for VIC.

He said: "We have been asked to come here to build raised beds for the veterans to use to grow vegetables and flowers. We have designed the beds and are constructing them on site."

The work is part of a larger project in the backyard of the VIC Centre where a workshop has been built thanks to a £10,000 grant from East Lancashire CCG. It will be used to grow plants and make furniture.

RIP Gentleman James

SECOND World War veteran James Burge was given a military send off with standards and a guard of honour at his funeral.

James, 92, from Haslingden, who had served in both the Royal Navy and Army, died in January and his funeral was held on Tuesday February 3 at Accrington Crematorium.

He was a member of VIC and comrades stood and saluted as his coffin was carried into the crematorium.

Operations manager Bob Elliott said: "We were able to get the standards from the Fusiliers and the Royal Navy Association and the Last Post was played. It was a fitting send off.

"He served for 24 years having enlisted first on July 21 1941 in the Royal Navy, then enlisting in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps on September 13 1946 before his discharge on April 9 1965.

"He was well known in the area for carrying out charitable work."

Mr Burge leaves his daughter Susan, son-in-law Jim and grandson, James, twin sister Rita and Nell, nephews and nieces.

VIC member Tracey Vick, who was also James's carer, said: "He was a gentleman through and through and I have known him for

five years.

"He used to visit the library, collect books for other people and distribute to them. He used to work at Prestige in Burnley and other local businesses.

"He was always very independent."

James joined the Merchant Navy at 15 before enlisting in the Royal Navy where he fought on the Atlantic Convoys

After he was demobbed in 1946, he re-enlisted into the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and served for a further 18 years. During this time he fought in Korea and Malaya.

His commanding officer recorded in his service record:

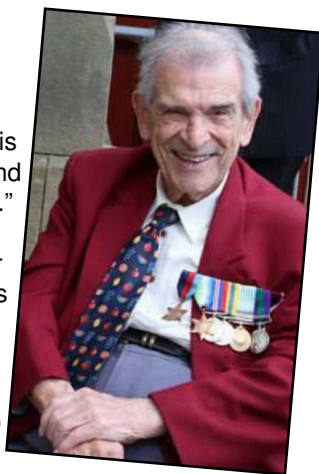
"James is an honest, trustworthy individual or moral character and good service."

"He controls subordinate staff in an efficient manner and can be relied upon to complete his tasks adequately and without supervision."

A second commanding officer described James as being an 'ammunition technician of considerable ability, sound experience and good knowledge'.

He was decorated with the 1939-45 Star, the Atlantic Star, the War Medal, Korean medal and General Service Medal for service in Malaya. He was awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal for his service in the Army

He joined VIC last year and Tracey asked her fiancé Darren Horsnell,



working on behalf of The Royal British Legion, to assess him.

James was awarded a welfare grant from British Legion and VIC members helped remove old furniture, build replacements and make his accommodation a safer place to live.

It had been hoped James would be able to give a talk to pupils at Fearn's Community Sports College, Stacksteads about his war service.

Acting Headteacher Jo Venn attended James's funeral. She said: "Unfortunately he was never able to call into school, but it was only right that we attended his funeral and went to him."



Falklands recounted

ARTS and crafts co-ordinator Darren Horsnell told pupils at Fearn's Community Sports College, Stacksteads, about his military history serving in Northern Ireland and in the Falkland Islands.

Darren said: "It was very good to talk to the pupils and I was quite impressed by some of the sensible and knowledgeable questions the pupils asked.

"It was obvious from their knowledge that they had been learning about the First and Second World Wars."



Crew Van's Capers

INTRODUCING our regular blog spot to keep you informed about where Crew Van has been this month...

- It was seen in Colne at David Fishwick's Minibus Sales where we rebuilt a wall;

- It went to Oswaldtwistle to pick up materials for the workshop and backyard project;

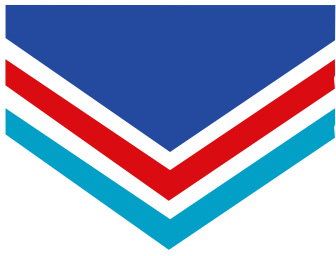
- Crew Van helped to carry a veteran's belongings to his new home;

- Members of VIC used Crew Van to attend the funeral of member James Burge;

- Crew Van helped transport members to Barley in Pendle for a day with Rossendale and Pendle Mountain Rescue Team;

- We used the Crew Van to deliver members to a walk around the reservoirs at Grane in Haslingden.

Give us a wave if you see Crew Van in your area.



Home sweet home



A VETERAN has been rehomed from a leaky cold flat into his own bungalow and is now viewing the future with renewed optimism.

When police discovered former Tank Regiment soldier Graham Riley he was in a very poorly condition in his flat; the roof leaked and rainwater seeped on to his bedding. He had become a recluse and rarely left the first-floor flat because of mobility issues.

Rossendale-based charity Veterans In Communities (VIC) was asked to help and, after a year of working with various agencies, Graham, 44, is now living in supported accommodation in Haslingden and will have his own support workers.

He is an accomplished artist as visitors to Vincenzo's in Crawshawbooth will know as

he painted a huge mural on the restaurant wall.

Graham is now a regular at the VIC Centre in Bury Road, Haslingden, where he has made new friends and has renewed his interest in art and is hoping to get more commissions.

Graham said: "VIC is the only organisation to help me since I left the army. I was 18 when I went in and served for three years. Since I left I have had lots of different jobs but they were all very low paid. My new home is five times better than where I was – I now have central heating that works and I feel a lot bet-



health.

"Graham has multiple health issues, including mental health, and various members of VIC have been involved in assisting him along with many different agencies. He was supported through the quagmire of bureaucracy to enable him to achieve a stable and healthy lifestyle."

Suzanne praised

the support Graham has received from a number of individuals and organisations; including; Lancashire's Armed Forces and Veterans' Champion, a neighbourhood officer at Green Vale Homes, LCC Care and Urgent Needs team, Accrington Used Furniture Store, British Gas, First Choice Credit Union, RAFT, The Royal British Legion and Rossendale Primary Health Care Centre staff.

Suzanne added:

"Partnership working has worked tremendously, not just ex-service organisations but local organisations have worked together to improve his life."

ter."

Outreach and community development worker Suzanne Preston said: "Graham was found by the police in a dire situation. In the last 12 months while we have been working with him he has been in various levels of crisis including homelessness and ill

Colne commission

A RETAINING wall is being built by VIC in Colne as a commission at David Fishwick's Minibus Sales.

A small team of VIC members have been hard at work completing the structure and will then finish the job off by painting the railings.



Teaming up with rescuers

VIC spent the day with Rossendale and Pendle Mountain Rescue Team learning how the crew operates.

The day was organised by VIC member Ivy Limbrick, who is also secretary of the mountain rescue team.

Operations manager Bob Elliott said: "We sent out a small recce team to an assessment day at Barley near Pendle Hill.

"We were shown the kit and equipment, the vehicles used, took

part in some exercises and got to talk to the team.

"They really gave us a day to remember. They were recruiting for new team members and VIC will be working together with them on a number of ideas we discussed."

Already a walk had been held with Ivy and another mountain rescue team member Bob along with his search and rescue dog.

Bob said: "We will now be extending our walks to include aspects of mountain rescue work. This could be first aid, searching for casualties and learning how the search and rescue dogs work."





ROSSENDALE

Outreach Services

MONDAY-FRIDAY

11am-1pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden,
BB4 5PL.

WEDNESDAY

10-12 noon

Central Methodist Church, Burnley Road,
Bacup, OL13 9AH.

Family Support

MONDAY - third week only

10am-noon

Maden Centre, Rochdale Road, Bacup,
OL13 9NZ.

WEDNESDAY

10am-1pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden,
BB4 5PL.

Singing Group

THURSDAY

6.30-8.30pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden,
BB4 5PL.

Art Group and drop-in

FRIDAY

11am-3pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden,
BB4 5PL.

Walking Group

Walks will be held on the 2nd and 4th
Thursdays. Weather permitting.

HEYWOOD, MIDDLETON AND ROCHDALE

Outreach Service

WEDNESDAYS

10am-noon

Angel Project, Langley, Middleton.

WEDNESDAY - second, third and fourth weeks only

10am-noon

Fast Forward Cafe, Champness Hall,
Drake Street, Rochdale OL16 1PB.

THURSDAY - first week only

10am-noon

One Riverside, Rochdale, OL16 1XU.

Family Support

MONDAY - second week only

10.30am-noon

Crimble Croft Community Centre, Aspinall
Street, Heywood, OL10 4HW.

Art Group and drop-in

From Jan 21 every other Wednesday

3pm-5pm

Bowlee Sports and Community Centre,
Windermere Road, Middleton M24 4LA.

Walking Group

Walks will be held on the 2nd and 4th

Thursdays combined with the

Rossendale walking group.

10am-noon

Railway Street Community Centre,
Railway Street, Nelson, BB9 9EH.

PENDLE

Outreach Service

TUESDAY

VIC – 01706 833180

Office and Business Development Manager

Roger Chaney

07800 817 941

rogerchaney@veteransincommunities.org

Operations Manager Bob Elliott

bobelliott@veteransincommunities.org

07961 554 006

Outreach and Community Development

Worker Suzanne Preston

suzannepreston@veteransincommunities.org

Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth

stevebutterworth@veteransincommunities.org

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell

darrenhorsnell@veteransincommunities.org

Volunteer Outreach Worker and Music Project

Co-ordinator: Peter Webster

peterwebster@veteransincommunities.org

Combat Stress Helpline

0800 138 1619

NHS Military Veterans Psychological Therapies Service (NW)

0161 253 6638

The Royal British Legion

0808 802 8080 (7 days a week 8am-8pm)

Rossendale Citizens' Advice Bureau

0844 499 4121 (from a landline)

0300 456 2552 (from a mobile)

The Samaritans

01706 830999

Mental Health Helpline

0500 639000 Mon to Fri 7pm - 11pm Sat

& Sun 12 noon to 12 midnight

Royal Air Forces Association

01772 426930

East Lancashire Single Point of

Access via GP or self-referral

01282 657116

VIC progress

This year VIC will be offering a more varied choice of programmes and activities to our veteran members.



These will be created by listening to what the members want to do and will be sustained over longer periods of time. Working in this way we will have a greater number of overlapping activities making it easier for members to progress.

To sustain our delivery and to increase the number of veterans that we support we are looking to attract funding from various sources, not only NHS CCG's but also from private sector organisations, financial institutions and other trusts and foundations.

If you're interested in finding out more about these activities or you have any questions please give me a call on 01706 833180 / 07800 817941.

The continued support from the East Lancs CCG is a great boost to our capability and demonstrates the confidence it has in the positive impact that VIC has on veterans lives. We will be looking to replicate and expand on our current delivery.

Roger Chaney

Want to help?

If you want to donate to support the work of Veterans In Communities please visit our website and click on the secure PayPal link

www.veteransincommunities.org

VIC supported by:

