



# Christmas cheer

**HAMPERS full of Christmas cheer brought smiles to the faces of veterans and their children at the end of last year.**

Had it not been for the very generous donations VIC received from many groups, organisations and individuals, we would not have been able to make and deliver the 33 hampers.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "We were very grateful to receive such a wealth of donations and this meant we could make more hampers than we had expected to.

"With the cash donations we gave a meat voucher for Howard's Butchers, next to the centre, to some living closer to Haslingden, and used some to

buy additional luxury items.

"We literally had people walking into the centre and handing over bags full of goodies; all the recipients were very grateful."

With the festive season often being a lonely time for ex-forces personnel, VIC opened its doors from Boxing Day to Friday 29 and 60 people called in to enjoy the comradeship and banter, food and fun.

Donations from Tesco and RAFT enabled the VIC Centre to provide emergency food parcels for anyone in need over the festive period.

Bob added: "After the break-in at the centre in November, it was good that we were able to end the year on such a positive note. Thank you everyone."

*Get your boots on*

**A GOOD way to work off any excess festive pounds is to join the VIC on a 5.5 mile walk in Ribchester on Thursday January 25.**

On Thursday Feb 8 there will be a social inclusion visit to National Coal Mining Museum at Wakefield.

A further walk – this time 7.5 miles around Barnoldswick will be held on Thursday February 22.

All trips leave the VIC Centre in Haslingden at 9.30am to book places call 01706 833180.



## Singers' amazing effort

**A SPECTACULAR £2,244.98 was raised by the VIC Singing Group over the Christmas period.**

We rounded off our carolling concerts with performances at Tesco stores in Haslingden and Bury and we were grateful for strong

collection teams to accompany the singers at both venues.

Last year the Singing Group raised more than £4,000 from supermarket performances; they also sang at many other events. The money donated helps the work of VIC.





# Finalist in national award



**A VOLUNTARY outreach worker with VIC has been selected as a finalist for a national military honour.**

The annual Soldiering On Awards selected Tony Stubbs for the Inspiration Award – last year VIC was also a finalist in the ‘working together’ category.

Tony is our outreach worker for Middleton and also runs the allotment in Langley, said: “I found out a couple of weeks ago that I had been nominated and then discovered that I had been shortlisted. I am very grateful to those who nominated me and I am very proud to have been named as a finalist.”

Tony also works as a volunteer Peer Mentor for the Military Veterans Service in the North West mentoring people with drug and alcohol problems and a media ambassador for The Royal British Legion on the

Veterans’ Gateway.

On passing his Junior Leaders’ course at 16, he completed his training in Newcastle and he was posted into the King’s Own Royal Border Regiment completing three tours in Northern Ireland and Germany.

On returning to Civvy Street, he struggled to fit in and ended up homeless, mixing with the wrong crowd and getting into a life of crime.

Four years’ ago his son Anthony went missing and tragically seven weeks later his body was discovered; he was only 16.

Tony said: “I was transferred to the Military Veterans’ Service about 18 months later and between them and VIC they put me back on the right road. I had asked for help before my son went missing, but his death gave

me the determination to sort something out.”

His own battle with alcoholism has left Tony in need of a liver transplant.

The winner of the award will be the person or group judged to have overcome significant challenges, injury or disability and whose achievements are an inspiration to others; embodying the spirit of Soldiering On.

There are six other finalists in the category.

Overall winners will be announced at a ceremony at the Park Plaza Westminster Bridge Hotel, London, on April 20.

Chief Executive Liz Hamilton said: “We are very proud that Tony’s many achievements are being recognised on a national scale and that VIC will again be represented at such a prestigious ceremony. We wish him well.”



## ‘Secret’ bunker unearthed

**AN UNUSUAL social inclusion trip to Cheshire saw VIC members exploring Hack Green Nuclear bunker.**

Parts of the secret bunker, in the middle of a field, are now open to public view. It was built during the Cold War and would have been a location for government had there been a nuclear attack.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: “It was good to see all

the equipment that would have been used during the Second World War and Cold War. There were 27 rooms, which showed how it would have looked when it was manned.

“We only saw the top two storeys at ground level, there were another three floors below.

“A big thank you to our Outdoor Activities Co-ordinator Ivy Limbrick for organising the trip.”



**VIC members Pat O’Reilly and Mark Culshaw brought their Living Museum to the January Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans’ Breakfast Club, held at Haslingden Community Link. The next club will be on Saturday February 10 and is open to all veterans of the armed forces and emergency services.**

## Amanda is new admin

**WELCOME to our new administrative assistant Amanda Walton.**

Amanda was previously an administrative assistant with a medical legal organisation and, before taking time out to bring up her three children, she was a civil engineering technician with Lancashire County Council.

She said: “For me, this job

offered an exciting challenge. My father used to be in the police and my husband is ex-forces and grew up in South Africa.

“The needs of veterans is something new to me, but I am very eager to learn and keen to help.”

In her spare time Amanda has been a volunteer Guider and Brownie leader for the past 15 years and also leads the Senior Section in Haslingden.



## Kitchen project

**SIX veterans put in two days’ hard labour to remove shop fittings from a former sportswear shop in Burnley in readiness for it being reopened as a community kitchen and cafe.**

Burnley Football in the Community is developing the premises on the first-floor balcony in the Charter Walk shopping centre and VIC’s outreach will be relocated.

A number of organisations will be partnering with the club and the premises will include a food bank, a teaching kitchen and a community café.



# 2017 – what a 5th year



## FUNDING SECURE

We started the year by securing funding for 2017–2019 from East Lancashire CCG and Heywood Middleton, and Rochdale CCG for our outreach and Social Inclusion work for a further 12 months.

Our Project Worker on the Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust project, working with the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams across Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale, started to see positive results with veterans accessing other services.

## SINGING GROUP

*The VIC Singing Group increased performances this year; in addition to the local supermarkets, residential homes and community events, in June VIC organised a Veterans and Voices concert at St Mary's Parish Church in Rawtenstall. The group also performed at Rossendale Festival of Remembrance.*

## VIP GRANT

An £8,000 grant from the Army Benevolent Soldier Charity to help fund our Veterans In Production (VIP) project using the workshop to create a range of wooden garden furniture.

## SOCIAL GRANT

*Funding from the Greggs Foundation has been used in funding some of the outdoor activities and Social Inclusion trips.*

## TRANSPORT

We provided weekly transport for Positive Start Food Group in Rossendale where unused food is re-distributed from large supermarkets to

community groups to help those who are on low incomes. During the first half of the year we also provided the transport for the ACCROSS Food Group.

## ALLOTMENTS

*Our allotments in Rossendale and Middleton will be ready to grow a range of vegetables for 2018.*

## CRAFTY CHATTERS

Our Crafty Chatters group has been busy making a good range of crafts for sale at craft fairs. Seasonal Easter and Christmas crafts have been popular.

## OUTDOOR TRIPS

*Our walks and Social Inclusion trips have been a great success.*

*In addition to bi-monthly walks we increased Social Inclusion trips including: Greater Manchester Fire and Police Museums, Leeds Armoury, Imperial War Museum North, Eden Camp, Bury Fusiliers Museum and many more.*

## YOUTH SUPPORT

We have worked with a number of young people, school leavers on the National Citizenship Scheme and some from local schools on their Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

## MORE OUTREACH

*Outreach was extended to cover Accrington.*

## SOLDIERING ON

At the beginning of the year we found out we had been nominated and we were shortlisted as a finalist in the Soldiering On Awards in the 'Working Together' category.

We were invited to the House of Lords to meet the judges and other finalists in February and in March we attended an Awards' Ceremony in London.

## RBL HONOUR

*VIC was nominated and was proud to win the 'Third Sector' category in The Royal British Legion Greater Manchester and Lancashire Team Awards.*

## KIT SPONSOR

St Mary's Football Club in Haslingden chose to support us by putting our logo on their strip for the 2017-2018 season.

## OPEN ALL HOURS

*The VIC Centre opened at Easter and Christmas and we saw an increase in attendance from 2016. Many organisations close at these times.*

## COMMUNITY

We carried out community projects including; building a shed at a local primary school, dismantling a shed for an RAF veteran's widow, tidying up a garden of an elderly Royal Navy veteran and constructing a community notice board.

## ARMED FORCES DAY

*We organised the Armed Forces Day for the second year in Haslingden, with a ceremony involving the new Mayor of Rossendale. Members also joined ceremonies across East Lancashire and Greater Manchester.*

## BRAVO 22

Three VIC members worked with Bravo 22 on 'The Art of Recovery' programme to create life-size sculptures that reflected their experiences of trauma,

these sculptures were exhibited in Manchester and London. One went on to act in a film shown in November in Newcastle.

## PUBLIC AGM

*We held our fourth AGM, for the second time in public. Accounts are available on the Charity Commission website and a copy is available on the VIC website.*

## COUNTRY SHOWS

We attended a number of country shows and fun days and one of our oldest veterans Lewis Banham was guest of honour at the last public display of the Royal Signals White Helmet Display Team where he took the final salute.

## TEA DANCE

*Our Second World War veterans were invited to an RBL Tea Dance in Bury.*

## LEWIS HONOURED

Lewis Banham was awarded two medals; the Legion d'Honneur and the Dutch Liberation Medal. Lewis has been invited back to France and Holland as part of commemorative ceremonies being held in 2018.

## KETTLES ON

*VIC launched a veterans' 'Sandbag Café' in Heywood, and VIC members launched the Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club in Haslingden.*

## REMEMBRANCE

This year saw our busiest Remembrance period to date. We were asked to be part of two school services and had members at services across Rossendale, Lancashire

and Greater Manchester and at the Manchester Airport Festival of Remembrance.

## RIDE OF RESPECT

*VIC was the chosen charity for the Ride of Respect Remembrance event on the 11th November when 1,400 motorbikes rode around the M60 in red tops.*

## BREAK-IN

The VIC Centre was broken into and around £1,000 was taken. Although it was a difficult time for members, we quickly recovered in true military style. Unfortunately much of the money taken was deposits for our annual members' Christmas meal. We were overwhelmed by the messages of support from organisations and individuals and the meal went ahead as planned. Around 60 members attended, served by Reservists from HMS Eaglet.

## ART CLASSES

*Bob Ross art sessions increased and we will be holding our 21st session at the VIC Centre in Haslingden on January 24 – cost £45.*

## BIRTHDAYS

We helped World War Two veterans Lewis Banham and Doug Hocken celebrate memorable birthdays. Lewis was 95 and Doug 90.

## IN MEMORIAM

*We sadly lost two members: Megan Edwards and Fred Wellman. Megan was 76 and was a keen supporter and fundraiser with the Singing Group. Veteran Fred, aged 86, attended the weekly art group.*





## ROSSENDALE

All activities are held at the VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL, unless otherwise stated.

**Outreach Service**

**MONDAY-FRIDAY**

10am-3pm

To book a home appointment call 01706 833180.

**MONDAY**

**Crafty Chatters**

10.30am-12.30pm

**WEDNESDAY**

**Community Arts and Crafts**

10am-noon

**Art Class**

2pm-4pm

Jubilee Court, Jubilee Road, Haslingden, BB4 4DD.

**THURSDAY**

**Rossendale Citizens' Advice (weekly)**

**by appointment only**

**Singing Group (weekly)**

6.30-8.30pm

**TUESDAY AND FRIDAY**

**Art Group and drop-in**

10.30am-3.30pm

**SECOND SATURDAY**

**Veterans' Breakfast Club**

10am-12-30pm

Bumbles' Cafe, Haslingden Community Link, Bury Road, Haslingden BB4 5PG

**Walking Group**

Walks will be held on alternate **THURSDAYS**, weather permitting. Log on to VIC Facebook page to see where the next walks will be.

**Outdoor Activities**

Log on to our website and follow the link on *Projects and Activities* to see what we have planned and how to book a place. A full leaflet is available.

**Positive Art**

Our art shop is now based at the VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL, contact 01706 833180 for details.

## HEYWOOD, MIDDLETON AND ROCHDALE

**The Sandbag Cafe and drop in TUESDAY**

10am-noon

Sandon House, Taylor Street, Heywood OL10 4EF.

**TUESDAY AND SOME FRIDAYS**

11am-3pm

Allotment, Lattig Crescent, Langley, Middleton M24 4LU.

Call Tony 07534 381723.

**THURSDAY**

9.30-10.30am Rochdale Breakfast Club, Rochdale Town Hall Bistro OL16 1AB.

10.30am-noon

**VIC Outreach**

1 Riverside, Rochdale OL16 1UB.

**THURSDAY**

11.30am-1.30pm

Lighthouse Project, Unit S6b/c Middleton Shopping Centre, Limetrees Road, Middleton M24 4EL.

**Walking Group**

Walks will be held on alternate **THURSDAYS** and are combined with Rossendale.

## HYNDBURN

**Outreach Service**

**MONDAYS OR TUESDAYS (check with VIC)**

1-3pm

Second floor Accrington Market Hall.

# VIC – 01706 833180

# Contacts

**Chief Executive Liz Hamilton**

lizhamilton@vic.org.uk

**Operations Manager Bob Elliott**

bobelliott@vic.org.uk

07961 554 006

**Admin Officer Amanda Walton**

amandawalton@vic.org.uk

**Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth**

stevebutterworth@vic.org.uk

**Project Worker Jaqui Collins**

jaquicollins@vic.org.uk

**Transformational Coach Gill Hughes**

gillhughes@vic.org.uk

**Volunteer Outreach Worker Tony Stubbs**

tonystubbs@vic.org.uk

**Volunteer Outreach Worker Carole Mills**

carolemills@vic.org.uk

**Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell**

darrenhorsnell@vic.org.uk

**Outdoor Activities Co-ordinator Ivy Limbrick**

ivylimbrick@vic.org.uk

**Singing Group Bookings Barry Hyde**

barryhyde@vic.org.uk

**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

**SSAFA**

email Lancashire@ssafo.org.uk

01772 260 462

**Rossendale Citizens' Advice**

0300 456 2552 Mon to Fri 10am-4pm

**The Samaritans**

01706 830999 Freephone 116 123

**Mental Health Helpline**

0800 915 4640 Mon to Fri 7pm - 11pm Sat & Sun 12 noon to 12 midnight

**Royal Air Forces Association**

01772 426930

**Veterans UK Free Helpline**

0808 1914 218

**East Lancashire Single Point of Access via GP or self-referral**

01282 657116

**Bolton Armed Forces Centre 4 Veterans**

www.ba4v.org 01204 776628

## PENDLE

**Outreach Service**

10am-noon

**MONDAY - first week only**

Place de Creil, near Wilkos, Nelson.

**MONDAY - second week only**

Market Place Car park, Town Square Colne.

**MONDAY - third week only**

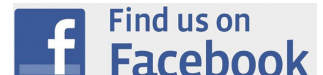
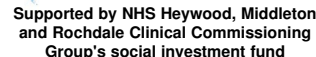
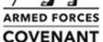
Town Square, Albert Road, Barnoldswick.

## Want to help?

To donate to support the work of Veterans In Communities please visit our website and click on the secure BT MyDonate page

www.vic.org.uk

VIC supported by:



www.facebook.com  
VIC Veterans In Communities