



Gloucestershire Older Veterans

Information Guide



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A partnership between



Between May 2017 and April 2020, Age UK Gloucestershire, in partnership with SSAFA Gloucestershire, supported almost 900 local older veterans and their carers through the Joining Forces Project. Joining Forces enabled us to gain a wide range of information about the support available to older veterans from local and national organisations.

Through this project, we learned that some people don't recognise they fall into the category of being a veteran, even when they do and therefore are unaware of the specific support and services available to them. As a local charity supporting older people, we know the relevant questions to ask in order to identify if someone is a veteran, the spouse of a veteran, or is caring for a veteran and we can ensure that we signpost people to the right services for them.

This guide provides information about help and services available, from medical and emotional support, to financial advice and social activities, all available specifically for veterans.



Who is a Veteran?

In the UK, a military veteran is defined as anyone who has drawn one day's pay from the Armed Forces. This means all personnel, male or female, who have served for one day or more, in any occupation in the Royal Air Force, Royal Navy, or the Army, including Reservists and National Service personnel, and the Merchant Navy if involved in a conflict.

General Support

Age UK Gloucestershire

Our Help Team are available to help all older people and their families by offering information, support and guidance on later life issues including benefits, blue badges, volunteering and social groups including our own Springboard groups. Contact us on the phone number below or drop in and see us at one of our regular outreach sessions:



Tel 01452 422660

HelpTeam@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk

www.ageukgloucestershire.org.uk

Alabare

Gloucestershire homes and support for Veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.



Tel: 01452 507123

veterans@alabare.co.uk

www.alabare.co.uk/home/gloucestershire-home-for-veterans2/veterans

Call in Time

Weekly telephone friendship calls are offered by Age UK which can link older veterans with other veterans or a volunteer for a friendly weekly chat on the phone.



Tel: 0800 4346105

www.ageuk.org.uk

Veterans' Gateway

An online platform putting all armed forces veterans and their families in touch with the organisations best placed to help with the information, advice and support they need – from healthcare and housing to employability, finances, personal relationships and more.



Tel: 0808 802 1212

www.veteransgateway.org.uk/app/ask

Armed Forces Pensions

Armed forces pensions are administered by Veterans UK, part of the MOD. Information on options, entitlements and pension queries should be directed to them:

Tel: 0800 085 3600

dbspensionshelp@dbspv.mod.uk

gov.uk/guidance/pensions-and-compensation-for-veterans

Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA)

RAFA offers help, support and friendship to all RAF veterans. Contact the local welfare team to find out more about support available.



Dursley and South Gloucestershire Branch

Tel: 07512657227 or 07885756789

welfare.rafadursley@gmail.com

Cheltenham Branch

Tel: 01242 529522

rafacheltenham@gmail.com

Royal British Legion

Offering advice, information and support to all veterans including via drop in sessions at Stroud District council Office and Dilke Hospital in the Forest of Dean.

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Contact Nicola Wallace
Tel: 0808 802 8080
nwallace@britishlegion.org.uk
www.britishlegion.org.uk

Seafarers Link

Free group telephone friendship calls to connect anyone with a seafaring connection who is experiencing isolation and loneliness, former Merchant Navy, Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Fishermen and WRENS, or indeed anyone else who has served or worked at sea including spouses, partners, and carers can join the calls.



Tel: 020 7224 2072
group.friendships@thesilverline.org.uk

SSAFA The Armed forces Charity

The oldest military charity and our local partner for the Joining Forces Project, can offer support to anyone who has served in the forces and their families.

ssafa | the
Armed Forces
charity

**Contact the Gloucestershire team
on to find out how they can help.**

Tel: 01452 520255

Veterans UK

Veterans UK is part of the Ministry of Defence and provides free support to veterans and their families, including a helpline, Veterans Welfare Service and injury/bereavement compensation scheme payments.



Tel: Freephone (UK only): 0808 1914 2 18
veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk

Normal service 8.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday



Medical, Disability and Mental Health Support

Action on Hearing Loss

The largest charity helping people who are confronting deafness, tinnitus and hearing loss specifically supporting older veterans with hearing loss and tinnitus through the Aged Veterans Fund.



Tel: 01983 529533
agedveterans@hearingloss.org.uk
www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Blesma

Blesma offer assistance to ex-service men and women who have suffered life changing limb loss or loss of use of a limb, an eye or loss of sight.



Tel: 020 8590 1124
chadwellhealth@blesma.org
www.blesma.org

Blind Veterans UK

Blind Veterans UK helps ex-Service men and women of every generation rebuild their lives after sight loss. Within Gloucestershire they can help with rehabilitation, training, practical advice and emotional support to older veterans living with sight loss. Contact to become a member and find out more about local support:



Tel: 0300 111 2233
supporter.services@blindveterans.org.uk
www.Blindveterans.org.uk

Combat Stress

Mental Health support for veterans - 24-hour Helpline and email support.



Tel: 0800 1381619
Text: 07537 404719
helpline@combatstress.org.uk
Combatstress.org.uk



GP

Tell your GP you are a military veteran – this will ensure you are flagged as a veteran in your NHS medical notes and you will have access to specific veterans' health services. If you have an illness or medical condition that has been caused by your time in service you may be entitled to a shorter hospital waiting time. This is part of the health commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant. Medical Military codes will be added to your NHS records.



Hearing Foundation

The UK Veterans Hearing Foundation exists to help UK Veterans of all ages, access quality hearing aids to support with hearing loss and tinnitus. The foundation can also help eligible veterans access funding for the hearing aids.



Tel: 01455 248 900
info@veteranshearing.org.uk
www.veteranshearing.org.uk/

Hip and Knee surgery service

A service for military veterans to have their hip or knee arthritis assessed, and if appropriate have joint replacement surgery at a specialist orthopaedic hospital in Oswestry Shropshire.

Referrals can be made to Lt Col Meyer via your GP. For more information:

Tel: 01691 404067
rebecca.ann.jones@rjah.nhs.uk

Hospital

Both Gloucestershire Royal and Cheltenham General Hospitals have volunteer Armed Forces Champions who can pop in and visit you on the ward and offer general advice regarding your hospital stay. The champion can act as a link between you and various external agencies and military charities. Identify yourself as an armed forces veteran to ward staff or email:

ghn-tr.armedforceschampions@nhs.net

TILS NHS

TILS NHS Veterans' Mental Health, Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service is a dedicated NHS outpatient service for veterans who are experiencing mental health difficulties. You can contact the service direct or ask your GP or a military charity to refer you. In the South West TILs can be contacted on:

Tel: 0300 365 0300
sc.veterans@nhs.net



Discounts and Offers

Blue Light Discount Card

Blue Light offers discounts online and in high street stores for armed forces veterans. Costs £4.99 for 2 years and application is on line.



www.bluelightcard.co.uk

Medals

Contact SSAFA Gloucestershire if you think you may be entitled to any service medals. Find out how to apply for medals if eligible.

Tel: 0800 0853600

dbs-medals@mod.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/apply-medal-or-veterans-badge

or contact SSAFA Gloucestershire for support with a medal application.

Tel: 01452 520255

Defence Discount Service

The official MoD discount service saving veterans money online and on the high street. Show the card in shops and restaurants to receive a discount.



Apply for a defence privilege card at
www.defencediscountservice.co.uk
contact@defencediscountservice.co.uk

Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum

Excellent Museum in Gloucester Docks illustrating the lives of Gloucestershire soldiers from the last 300 years. Offering reduced entry prices for veterans.



Tel: 01452 522682

enquiries@sogm.co.uk

www.soldiersofglos.com/visit-us/

Rail Card

A new veterans' railcard, giving a third off the cost of most rail fares, will be available from November 2020 for all armed forces veterans.

Age UK Gloucestershire Help Team or SSAFA Gloucestershire will be able to provide more information when this becomes available.

www.gov.uk/government/speeches/railcard-for-military-veterans

ID Card

A veteran Identification card, giving entitlement to specific services/discounts is due to be available for older veterans during 2020. Contact local SSAFA branch to find out more.

Tel: 01452 520255

Veterans Badge

Apply for your Armed Forces Veterans Badge, its free of charge to all those who have served, including National Service



Tel: 0800 0853600

DBS-MODMO-VetsBadge@mod.uk

www.gov.uk/apply-medal-or-veterans-badge

Social Activities

Veterans' Get Togethers

There are many regular opportunities to meet up with other veterans across Gloucestershire including at breakfast clubs, coffee mornings and activity sessions. A schedule of regular get-togethers can be found on the back page.

To find out the date and time of your nearest group meeting, contact:

Age UK Gloucestershire – Tel: 01452 422660

Or

SSAFA Gloucestershire - Tel: 01452 520255

Gloucester Rugby Federation

Veterans' Activity Group meeting 1pm – 2pm weekly on Wednesday, at Lion's Den, Kingsholm Stadium, Gloucester, GL1 3AX. For more information and details of other Gloucester Rugby groups including wheelchair rugby, contact:



nikisavory@gloucesterrugby.co.uk

Hawking for Heroes

Individually tailored falconry experiences for injured forces veterans take place in Gloucestershire – offering a unique and very special experience.



Tel: 01452 537420

enquiries@hawkingforheroes.com

Jet Age Museum

A free museum situated between Gloucester and Cheltenham celebrating Gloucestershire's rich aviation heritage from the early days of flight, through the birth of the Jet Age to the present day. Staffed only by volunteers, some of whom are veterans who flew in aircraft on display. The Jet Age Museum regularly hosts Gloucestershire's Armed Forces Day Events



Tel: 01452 260078

contact@jetagemuseum.org

jetagemuseum.org/contact-and-help/





About Us

Our ambition is to make Gloucestershire the best county in which to grow older. We want this to be the case for all people regardless of their background or circumstances.

We see ageing as something that our society should value; growing older is not just a fact of life, it is something that brings opportunities for individuals and our community as a whole.

A key part of our work is bringing about a change in people's attitudes and experiences, so that everyone shares our positive view of growing older. We're doing this because negative attitudes towards age and ageing have a damaging impact on the health and well-being of older people.

Through our projects and services, we help people to navigate later life, live independently at home for as long as they wish to and connect socially within their community.

By enabling people to make informed choices, working with others in an innovative way and by challenging unhelpful social attitudes, we can build a fairer society and a better Gloucestershire – for everyone.

For guidance on all aspects of later life from staying independent at home, to making social connections and keeping active, ask our Help Team for a copy of our Guide to Later Life in Gloucestershire, which can be referred to alongside the Veterans' Guide.

**Call our Help Team on 01452 422660
Lines are open 9.00am – 4.00pm
Monday to Friday**

Veterans' Get-togethers in Gloucestershire

Meet up for good food, good company
and good banter



Gloucester	The Toby Carvery, Cross Hands, Brockworth, Gloucester GL3 4PH	Last Saturday of the month 9.30am—11.30am	Mark Burton 07888 984552
Gloucester	Veterans' coffee morning at Park View Care Home, Trier Way, Gloucester GL1 1AN	Held monthly. Call AUKG for latest information	Age UK Gloucestershire 01452 422660
Gloucester	Toby Carvery, Over Causeway, Highnam, Gloucester GL2 8DE	Third Saturday of the month 9.30am - 11.30	Ray Taylor 07746 043666
Gloucester	Veterans' Activity Group, Lion's Den, Kingsholm Stadium, Gloucester GL1 3AX	Every Wednesday 1pm - 2pm	nikisavory@gloucesterrugby.co.uk
Tewkesbury	Royal Hop Pole Hotel, Church Street, Tewkesbury GL20 5RS	Second Saturday of the month	Peter Godwin 07747 623258 or 01684 273382
Tewkesbury	Northway Community Hub, Lee Walk, Northway, Tewkesbury GL20 8QG	Second Tuesday of the month at 10am	George Shelton 07554 129777 or 01684 276163
Stroud and Five Valleys	The Old Nelson, Stratford Lodge, Stratford Road, Stroud GL5 4AF	First Friday of the month 9.30am - 11.30	Dave Nash 07925 810415
Stroud and Five Valleys	The Bay Tree, 52 High Street, Stonehouse GL10 2NE	Third Monday of the month 9.30am - 11.30	Sean Wilson 07837 391380
Berkeley Vale	Black Shed Café, Patchbridge, Slimbridge GL2 7BP	Fourth Saturday of the month 9.30am - 11.30	Ray Taylor 07746 043666
Lydney	Taurus Crafts, The Old Park, Lydney GL15 6BU	First Saturday of the month 9.30am—11.30am	Ray Taylor 07746 043666
North Forest and Monmouth	The Robin Hood Inn, 126 Monnow Street, Monmouth NP25 3EQ	Third Saturday of the month 9.30am—11.30am	Ray Taylor 07746 043666
Cinderford	Greenhill Coffee House, 8 Market Street, Cinderford GL14 2SB	First Wednesday of the month from 9.30am	Geoff Jones 07948235830 rblcinderford@hotmail.com
Cirencester	The Beefeater, Cricklade Road, Cirencester GL7 1NR	Third Saturday of the month 9.30am—11.30am	Ray Taylor 07746 043666
Cheltenham	The Harvester, Hatherley Lane, Cheltenham GL51 6TA	Second Saturday of the month 9.30am—11.30am	Ray Taylor 07746 043666