

**Army
Benevolent
Fund**

2024/25 **ANNUAL REVIEW**



For Soldiers. For Life.

CONTENTS

03 Welcome from the
Chief Executive

04 Overview

06 Helping Army families

08 Improving mental wellbeing



20 How we help

22 Where we help:
our global footprint

24 Fundraising

26 Financial highlights



11 Training and education to
improve employability

14 Enabling independent living

16 Ensuring the provision of
suitable housing

18 Care for the elderly



WELCOME FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



The Army Benevolent Fund was established in August 1944, as the Army's national charity, to ensure the soldiers who had fought in World War Two, and their families, received the support they needed and deserved.

80 years later, the 24/25 financial year saw the Charity spending some £9.2m in benevolence, supporting over 80,000 members of the Army family in 52 countries around the world. Our youngest beneficiary was three years old; our oldest was 105. We genuinely are here for soldiers, for life.

In so doing, we are very clear as to the value of the Army to the nation; and that there is a value in service, with the vast majority of soldiers of all ranks making a meaningful contribution to society, both whilst serving and as veterans, on the basis of the values and skills they develop during their time in the Army.

But equally, the reality is a significant number of the Army family fall into need each year. These soldiers, former soldiers, and family members require our assistance such they can overcome their challenges and move forward with their lives. That brings a sharp focus to the requirement for the Army Benevolent Fund to provide that immediate support, with our benevolence grants expenditure again this year increasing by 4% overall in response to evidenced need.

At the same time, it is essential that, as the Army's national charity, we take a strategic view of how to respond over the longer-term. In this regard, the receipt this year of a highly significant and generous legacy of nearly £25m has reinforced our financial reserve such as to afford the charity the opportunity to take a genuinely considered approach to a number of issues.

+ First, ensuring we are positioned, through allocation of funds from our financial reserve and in terms of contingency planning, such as to enable the Charity to respond to a significant change in operating conditions (such as a major conflict involving the British Army) or benevolence need.

+ Second, through initiation of a formal programme of preventative measures, funded from our financial reserve, aimed at addressing the underlying causes of need and thus reducing, over the longer term, the number of the Army family who fall into need in the first place.

+ Third, a formal investment strategy review, to ensure we are positioned financially for the long-term, fulfilling the requirement to deliver support to the Army family on an enduring basis.

Our judgement is these initiatives, individually and collectively, represent the appropriate and responsible approach to positioning the Army's national charity to respond to the geopolitical and economic challenges that lie ahead, as well as acting proactively, through a deliberate programme of preventative measures, to reduce, over the long-term, the number of soldiers, veterans, and their families who fall into need of support.

Marking our 80th anniversary throughout 2024 has been important; not for its own sake, but as an opportunity to express profound thanks to our generous and loyal supporters and reflect on our continued relevance to serving and former soldiers, and their families.

As we look ahead, I reflect that the ABF's founding purpose endures: to ensure that all soldiers, veterans, and their immediate families can avoid hardship and live with independence and dignity. That is a compelling objective and one we are extremely proud to deliver on behalf of those we serve.

Major General (Ret'd) Tim Hyams CB OBE
Chief Executive

OVERVIEW

As the Army's national charity, the welfare of soldiers, veterans and their immediate families has always been at the heart of everything we do.

Our founding purpose has remained the same since 1944: to ensure that every soldier, past, present and future, can avoid hardship and live with independence and dignity.

In the past year, we have supported over 80,000 members of the Army family in 52 countries across the globe. This has been achieved via our individual grants programme, through which we have supported over 3,500 individual cases, and by providing essential funding to 93 other charities and organisations to enable them to deliver specialist services to soldiers, veterans, and their families. By supporting us, you truly do support the whole Army family.

In FY24-25, our charitable expenditure was £9.2m. As one of the largest funders in the military charity sector, our aim is to ensure a complete spectrum of support to the Army family in the areas it is needed most, such as: improving mental wellbeing; helping Army families; enabling independent living; caring for the elderly; training and education to increase employability; and securing the provision of suitable housing.

Our benevolence grants expenditure this year increased by 4% in response to evidenced need. Connected to this, we note that the demographic of the community we support is changing, and that, overall, it is getting smaller and younger. At the same time, the UK population is ageing. So, although we will need to support fewer individuals, we will need to support them for longer, and often with complex health and social care needs. This means that the long-term trend is for the cost of each case to increase.

As ever, we pride ourselves on acting immediately when help is needed and provide true through-life support, the breadth and variety of which is explained in this publication.



In FY24-25 we spent **£9.2M** supporting **80,000** members of the Army family



We have supported the British Army family in **52 COUNTRIES** all over the world



The youngest person we supported was **THREE YEARS OLD**, the eldest was **105**



Around **12% OF OUR GRANTS** expenditure benefitted the serving Army



We funded **93 OTHER CHARITIES & ORGANISATIONS** that provide support for the Army family



We spend around **£66,000 A WEEK** on grants to individuals

OUR VISION

All serving soldiers, veterans and their immediate families should have the opportunity to avoid hardship and enjoy independence and dignity.

OUR MISSION

We are the Army's national charity, giving a lifetime of support to serving soldiers, former soldiers and their immediate families when they are in need.



Supporting the Army family

We are here to help the Army family through life's challenges – whether that involves bereavement, injury, getting back to work, elderly care, and much more besides. Our youngest beneficiary in FY24-25 was three years old and our eldest was 105.

We are never judgemental and we always adopt an integrated approach to the person or family in need of support. Sometimes, an individual in need may receive an initial grant from us, delivered through their regimental or corps charity; then be referred to a specialist charity that we have funded. They may then receive support from other partner charities – with assistance from us at every stage.

Throughout, we rigorously focus on their need and allocate our support accordingly across a wide range of charity partners. We give grants to support other charities both large and small, local and international, depending on our assessment of where the need is. Our grants programme is continually evolving and we make rigorous due diligence checks on the effect of our expenditure.

Finally, and crucially, we act with speed. When we are alerted that a person or family needs help, we aim to make the relevant grant within 48 hours.

We are here for the Army family when they need us. Our support is available for soldiers at the start of their careers and continues for life – long after service is over.

OUR THREE MECHANISMS FOR PROVIDING SUPPORT

- 1** We make grants to individuals, through their regimental or corps charities.
- 2** We make grants to other charities and organisations that deliver specialist support to soldiers, veterans, and their families.
- 3** We play a key role in the military welfare ecosystem by: funding organisations that carry out Army-related casework (particularly SSAFA The Armed Forces Charity); investing in the Casework Management System (to ensure grants are reviewed and disbursed quickly); and collaborating with and providing advice and support to other military charities and organisations such as Cobseo and Veterans Scotland.



CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

HELPING ARMY FAMILIES

We are committed to supporting the immediate families of those who have served their country.

Our support can include everything from helping provide highly specialised equipment for a disabled child so they can join in with family activities and increase their quality of life, to covering funeral costs in order to ensure a veteran can be buried with dignity. We work hard to ensure Army families are empowered to overcome challenges and move forward with their lives.

As well as supporting immediate family members via our individual grants programme, we also fund numerous other charities and organisations that help Army families on our behalf. These include grants such as £210,000 towards SSAFA's caseworking services; £200,000 towards the Army Welfare Services school holiday activities programme; and £56,000 towards the Army Families Federation, which is the independent voice of all Army families.

HOW WE HELPED HENRY

Henry (pictured left) is the disabled son of an Army veteran, Lee, and his wife, Natalie. Aged four, Henry was diagnosed with Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a rare life-limiting, muscle-wasting condition. We provided a grant of £13,500 to help fund essential adaptations to the family home. Henry is now able to get outside into the garden in his wheelchair, to enjoy time with the family.



We supported **OVER 1,000** members of the Army family who were sadly bereaved. We awarded grants totalling more than £110,000 to organisations supporting the bereaved; and over £500,000 in grants to individuals.



By contributing to the cost of respite breaks, we ensured **OVER 50 INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES** could have a break in times of need.



We spent **OVER £130,000** on compassionate flight costs, predominantly for serving soldiers to see gravely ill parents or attend a parent's funeral overseas.



FUNDER SPOTLIGHT

BAE Systems

BAE Systems is the Army Benevolent Fund's longest serving corporate partner, celebrating 25 years of unwavering support in 2024. Over this quarter century, BAE Systems has contributed more than £1.2 million in funding, with its employees also actively fundraising in support of our work.

This milestone, coinciding with the ABF's 80th anniversary, highlights the charitable impact made possible by the support of industry leaders such as BAE Systems. Its commitment of £75,000 for the 2024-25 financial year is focused on supporting our family and housing activities. Together, we are ensuring support is available for soldiers, veterans, and their families.

Beyond its support for the ABF, over the last five years BAE Systems has committed over £18 million globally to supporting the armed forces community, aiding serving personnel, veterans, and the preservation of military heritage. The company also is a founding member of the Armed Forces Covenant and employs over 2,000 veterans and reservists in the UK, demonstrating its commitment to the military family.



CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

IMPROVING MENTAL WELLBEING

Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of the Army family is central to our work.

We are keen to promote and enable better mental fitness and physical wellbeing so that soldiers, veterans and their immediate families can lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

We provide wide-ranging assistance to ensure that serving and former soldiers, including those with complex mental health conditions, can access specialist treatment and support. This assistance ranges from funding a young soldier to receive counselling for childhood trauma; to enabling an older veteran to access support to help manage the symptoms of PTSD.

In addition to ensuring there is support for people in immediate crisis, we also fund programmes that improve the mental wellbeing of the Army family, such as Veterans' Growth, which you can read more about on page 10.

REBECCA'S STORY

Former Reservist, Rebecca (pictured left), was left with PTSD after her service, struggling with isolation and symptoms such as panic attacks and anxiety. With the support of Bracken, an energetic spaniel cross, who was paired with Rebecca by Service Dogs UK, which the ABF helps fund, her life is looking positive again. Rebecca's story featured in the 2024 Telegraph Charity Christmas Appeal, which the ABF was selected for, raising over £100,000.



A THIRD OF OUR FUNDING to other charities and organisations promotes the mental and physical wellbeing of the Army family.



We awarded grants to **46 CHARITIES** focusing on improving the mental and physical wellbeing of members of the Army family.



We spent **£177,000** funding two organisations – Aurora New Dawn and SafeLives – that support those affected by domestic abuse. A new, free and confidential helpline for serving personnel and their families will be piloted, as will a new national training programme to enable a comprehensive response for domestic violence survivors from serving and veteran communities across the country.



FUNDER SPOTLIGHT

National Garden Scheme

We are incredibly thankful to the National Garden Scheme for its ongoing commitment to soldiers, former soldiers, and their families. Our long-standing partnership over the past 15 years has helped members of the Army family through horticultural therapy and training, outdoor activities, and access to green spaces.

Funding from the National Garden Scheme has enabled us to support a wide variety of projects devoted to helping members of the Army community. These include grants to partner charities such as High Ground, Veterans' Growth, Brooke House, Veterans Outdoors, and Root Cause Project CIC.

These charities promote the physical and mental wellbeing of soldiers and former soldiers through horticultural activities. National Garden Scheme funding has also directly helped individuals access training courses in outdoor professions such as tree surgery and landscaping. Since 2009, the National Garden Scheme has donated £830,000 to the Army Benevolent Fund, in support of soldiers, veterans, and their families.



“ It has made a huge difference to my life, for the better. When things get a bit too much, I can get out, rather than stay in and bottle everything up. PTSD can be a very isolating condition, but here, you’re around people. It’s done far more for me than any therapy sessions.”

ROY’S STORY

Veterans’ Growth is one of several organisations the ABF funds that promote the mental health and wellbeing of soldiers, former soldiers and their families. During FY24-25, we awarded a grant of £20,000 to support 12-week social and therapeutic horticulture courses at its 5-acre site in East Sussex. National Garden Scheme funding was used to partially enable this grant.

Former soldier, Roy, was diagnosed with PTSD in 2015 and found it hard to get the right help, due to the complexities of his condition. He signed up for Veterans’ Growth’s 12-week course and says the experience was life changing, and he would definitely recommend horticulture therapy to other veterans.



CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

TRAINING AND EDUCATION TO IMPROVE EMPLOYABILITY

Most soldiers transition into civilian employment smoothly, but, for some, leaving the Army is a daunting experience. We are here to support those who are in particular need of help.

This includes supporting soldiers who have been wounded, injured or sick and have had to leave the Army as a result.

We provide bursaries for disabled veterans to attend university; and fund training schemes and workshops for service leavers to embark on rewarding new careers. Our goal is to ensure veterans have the opportunities to put their varied skills and experience to best use.

As well as providing grants to individuals, we fund a range of partner charities and organisations that provide education and employment support to the Army family. This includes our £295,000 grant to the Forces Employment Charity, and our £100,000 grant to The Poppy Factory, as well as smaller grants to organisations such as Heritage Crafts, which you can read more about on page 12.

LYNSEY'S STORY

Lynsey was medically discharged from the Army, after serving for eight years in Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Germany. She took time to adjust to civilian life, undertaking many jobs, and was at a low point when she heard about a RBLI Lifeworks course, which is funded by the ABF. In November 2024, Lynsey attended the course, which covered CV writing, interviewing and teamwork, improving her self-belief and confidence. She now is working as a Veterans' Peer Support Worker.



KATE'S STORY

The ABF awarded Heritage Crafts, the national charity for heritage crafts, with a grant to provide three training bursaries, specifically for Army veterans, as part of our focus on supporting veterans to explore rewarding new careers after leaving the Army.

In 2024, one of these bursaries was awarded to Kate (pictured above), who joined the Army at 17 and enjoyed a decade of service. Aged 30, three years after she left the Army, Kate was seeking a new direction and re-trained as a stonemason. She studied stone carving at university, living in a van in order to afford her studies. Heritage Crafts awarded Kate a training bursary, funded by the ABF, to assist her studies. This bursary assisted with Kate's final project, which she hopes will help gain future commissions; and enabled her to complete the third year of her degree.



Without the grant from the ABF I would not have been able to complete my project. I am extremely grateful for your support.”



OVER 3,000 PEOPLE were helped to increase their employability, following participation in programmes we support.



We spent **OVER £550,000** on grants to other charities that help improve the employability of members of the Army family.



We also spent **OVER £300,000** providing grants to individuals to help improve their employability.



2024/25 ANNUAL REVIEW

FUNDER SPOTLIGHT

MBDA

We are proud to recognise the continued support of longstanding corporate partner MBDA, whose commitment to the Army family remains steadfast.

A key highlight of the year was the hugely successful MBDA Charity Dinner 2024, which raised an outstanding £297,500 in support of the Army Benevolent Fund, our sister service charities, and other worthy causes. This annual event brings together guests from across the defence and corporate sectors and continues to be a key source of support for those we serve.

Through this remarkable fundraising achievement, MBDA continues to support employability grants for veterans transitioning into civilian careers. These grants have enabled former soldiers such as Jack, pictured above, to gain essential skills and qualifications, opening new doors to sustainable employment.

We are extremely grateful for MBDA's ongoing partnership, which helps ensure that members of the Army community have the opportunities and support they need to thrive beyond service.



CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

ENABLING INDEPENDENT LIVING

We aim to provide soldiers and veterans with the means to live independently, with the dignity they deserve.

For some Army veterans, injury, disability or advancing years can make it difficult to remain independent and to stay living in their own homes. We are on hand to support veterans and their families, both young and old, with home adaptations and mobility equipment that enable them to live where they are most comfortable.

Some will require significant support for the rest of their lives and we are here to ensure their needs are met over the long term.

We also award grants to charities and organisations that provide specialist services and support on our behalf. In FY24-25 this included a £42,000 grant to the Spinal Injuries Association, towards the costs of providing holistic support for veterans and soldiers living with spinal cord injury.

PETER'S STORY

Peter (pictured left) was an enthusiastic Army Cadet and joined the Army at the age of 20. Medically discharged after a knee injury in 1987, he joined the Police as a senior radio operator. Since retiring, Peter has developed PTSD and other health conditions that affect his mobility. Our grant of £1,500 towards the costs of a large electrically propelled vehicle has given him his life back.

Peter is active in the veteran community, involved with organisations such as The Not Forgotten, which the ABF also funds, assisting at its events for veterans. He says, "The new scooter has improved my mental health and physical wellbeing. I am now able to get out with my family and start to enjoy life again. I would like to thank the Army Benevolent Fund for its support in getting this scooter – it's really revolutionised my life."



We spent **OVER £250,000** on mobility equipment, helping **AROUND 300** individuals maintain their independence.



WE ASSISTED 87 wounded, injured and sick serving soldiers with individual grants.



We awarded grants to charities such as **AGE UK LANCASHIRE** and **AGE UK WALTHAM FOREST**, to help older people remain as independent as possible.



FUNDER SPOTLIGHT

Clogau

We are immensely grateful to Clogau for its generous donation of £55,000, raised through the sale of limited-edition Remembrance poppy pin badges.

The renowned Wales-based jewellers, known for creating timeless pieces containing rare Welsh gold, has previously supported the Army Benevolent Fund through sponsorship and the donation of items for fundraising events, including charity golf days.

The company's ongoing support ensures that soldiers, veterans, and their families who are in need - particularly across Wales - have the help and resources they need to avoid hardship and live with independence and dignity.

The donation was formally presented by Ben Roberts, Managing Director of Clogau, at our annual Army Carol Service (pictured above). We extend our heartfelt thanks to Ben and the Clogau team for their continued support, which will enable us to be there for soldiers, for life.

CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

ENSURING THE PROVISION OF SUITABLE HOUSING

We are committed to ensuring that soldiers, former soldiers, and their families can live in safe and comfortable homes.

The housing needs of veterans and their families are incredibly varied and we are here to support the Army family with many housing issues they may face. That might involve awarding grants for urgent repairs,

or helping an individual in financial distress to avoid eviction and homelessness.

During FY24-25 we were also delighted to support charities that specialise in assisting vulnerable and disabled veterans. These included the Stoll Foundation, which provides housing for almost 270 vulnerable and disabled veterans and their dependants (aged 18-95 years) across five housing locations in London and the South East, and which you can read about on page 17.

ELAINE'S STORY

A former Metropolitan Police officer and Army widow, Elaine (pictured left) lives at the Chiswick War Memorial Home, part of the Stoll Foundation, which the ABF proudly funds.

Elaine met her late husband, Richard, in 1985. Within three weeks, they were married, and remained so until Richard tragically passed away in 2005, as a result of head injuries sustained in a bomb blast in the early 1980s. At the time, Richard had been serving with the Royal Green Jackets in Northern Ireland; the injuries left him at risk of seizures for the rest of his life.

Since moving there in 2018, Elaine has enjoyed life at Stoll. She continues to be involved with military charities and organisations such as the Army Widows' Association, another charity the ABF helps fund. An active member of the Stoll community, Elaine regularly joins in the many social activities and goes on trips organised by the Foundation.



The staff are excellent, and they look after us well. It's made a huge difference."



OVER £1.3M was spent on grants to individuals with housing needs.

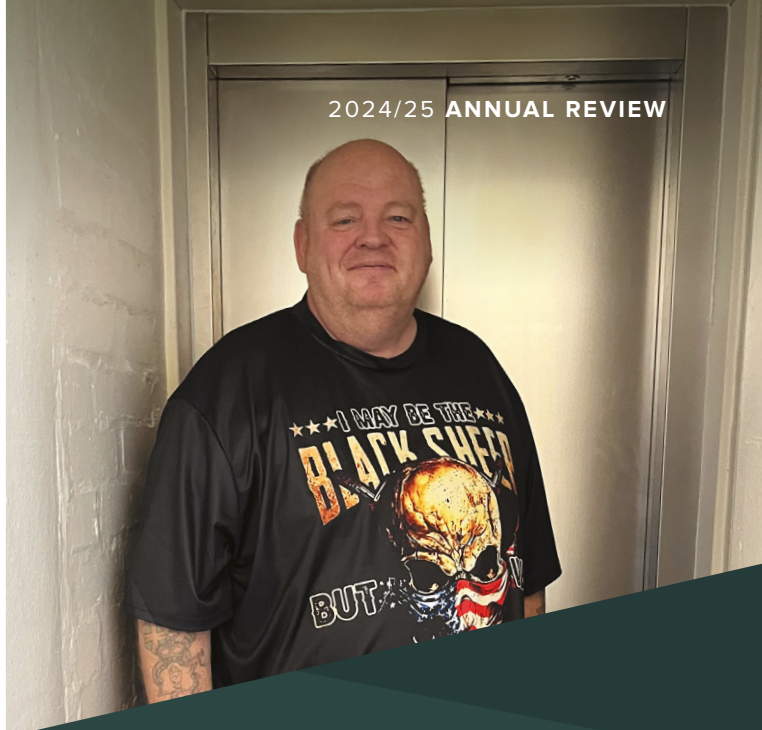


OVER £500,000 was spent on essential household furnishings and domestic appliances such as fridges, washing machines and beds.



We awarded grants totalling **MORE THAN £500,000** to other charities supporting veterans with housing needs.

2024/25 ANNUAL REVIEW



FUNDER SPOTLIGHT

Wimbledon Foundation

The Wimbledon Foundation has generously awarded funding of £150,000 to be spent over three years, supporting veterans and their families through our housing and homelessness programme. FY24-25 marks the second year of this three-year partnership; and this highly significant grant continues the Wimbledon Foundation's longstanding support for our work.

We're extremely grateful to them for helping us in our goal of ensuring that every member of the Army family has access to safe and sufficient housing. Thanks to the Foundation's support, we have been able to help Army families who were at risk of homelessness, preventing crisis situations from worsening. The funding also enabled us to fund several trusted charity partners including Help 4 Homeless Veterans, Haig Housing Trust, Scottish Veterans Residences, and Lord Leycester Hospital, which have provided specialist assistance to members of the Army family facing homelessness this past year.

Pictured above is Karl, an Army veteran who was formerly homeless and now lives at Whiteford House, part of Scottish Veterans Residences. He receives support from the dedicated staff at Scottish Veterans Residences and enjoys communal activities with fellow veterans.



CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

CARE FOR THE ELDERLY

We aim to provide support for soldiers, for life.

A cornerstone of our activity is ensuring that elderly veterans and their families have the care they need, long after service has ended.

From providing substantial support to leading care homes for veterans to providing specialist equipment to protect elderly veterans from pain, discomfort and injury – we are here to provide lifelong support for those who have served their country. Our grants to other charities in the past year have included £120,000 to Broughton House in the North West; £149,000 to Care for Veterans in Sussex; and £80,000 to the Royal Star and Garter, which you can read more about on page 19.

STAN'S STORY

Supporting veterans at the Royal Star & Garter

Since his days as an entrepreneurial Second World War evacuee, and in his career following National Service, Stan (pictured left) has liked keeping busy. Now a resident at Royal Star & Garter, he enjoys helping in the home's garden. Royal Star & Garter provides quality care and therapies for veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia. Our grant of £80,000 towards the charity's Wellbeing Programme enables daily activities, physiotherapy-led exercises, and meaningful social opportunities that promote independence and fulfilment.



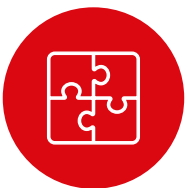
BENNY'S STORY

Supporting veterans at Erskine

After a 25-year military career, Derek "Benny" Bennett now lives in Edinburgh at a care home run by our long-standing partner, Erskine.

After 25 years of service, Benny left the Army in 1992 to spend time with his family in Wales. However, his toughest battle was yet to come. In 2018, he suffered a severe spinal cord injury that left him paralysed. Despite the odds, today Benny remains active and driven. Now in his 70s, he continues to keep fit at the Erskine home where he now lives, training for hours each day.

Erskine, which the ABF provided with a grant of £150,000 during FY24-25, is the only charity in Scotland providing care homes exclusively for veterans and their spouses, of whom 70% are living with a dementia diagnosis. The ABF's support for Erskine enables it to provide Army veterans with social opportunities and enhanced care, to improve their health and wellbeing.



We spent **£750,000** supporting organisations that help elderly veterans.



During the 80th anniversary year of D Day, we continued to help veterans who served in World War Two, funding **20** such cases and spending **OVER £40,000**.



NEARLY 30 PER CENT of the beneficiaries of our grants to individuals are aged over 65.

HOW WE HELP

Our grants programme provides a comprehensive package of support to serving and former members of the British Army and their immediate families. Our priority is our individual grants programme, which this year funded over 3,500 cases, supporting individuals and family members.



WE ARE ONE OF THE BIGGEST PROVIDERS OF GRANTS TO OTHER CHARITIES AND ORGANISATIONS IN THE MILITARY CHARITY SECTOR.

OUR SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

Who we help

We are proud to support the whole Army family. Those eligible for our help are as follows:

- + Members and former members of the Regular Army who have completed adult Basic Training (previously referred to as Phase 1 training). Exceptionally, individuals who are medically discharged as a direct result of an injury sustained during their Basic Training will also be supported.
- + Dependent spouses/civil partners, widows, widowers, children and other immediate family members.
- + Members and former members of the Army Reserve (and their dependants as outlined above), providing they have completed one year's satisfactory service, including Basic Training. Exceptionally, we will provide support for a lesser period of service if the death, injury or distress arises from any action or incident while on military duty or the soldier had deployed on a designated operation.

How we help

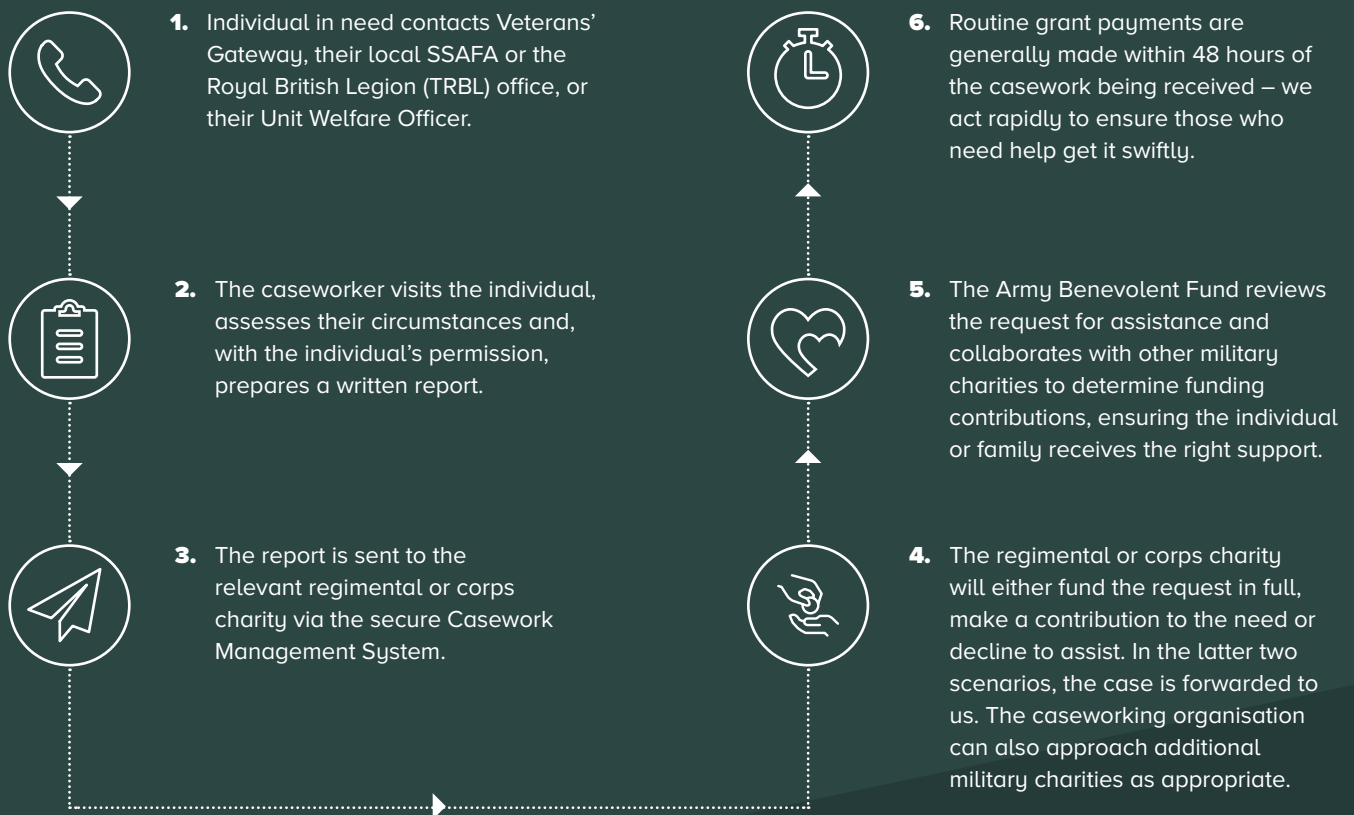
Our individual grants programme supports the regimental and corps charities to meet the immediate needs of their people. Every grant request is assessed rigorously to ensure it achieves the stated objectives and leads to required outcomes.

Underlying this is a clear understanding between the Army and the ABF that we work in tandem. The diagram on the right demonstrates a typical support pathway of an individual in need.

Collaboration is key

Our grants to individuals depend on the efforts of caseworking organisations. Therefore, in the background, and on behalf of the Army and its regimental and corps charities, we continue to fund organisations that carry out Army-related casework (such as SSAFA) and to invest in the Casework Management System. This is to ensure grants are reviewed and disbursed quickly and effectively.

TYPICAL SUPPORT PATHWAY FOR AN INDIVIDUAL IN NEED OF HELP



OUR SUPPORT FOR OTHER CHARITIES AND ORGANISATIONS

Our priority will always be our individual grants programme, but it is important to note that we are one of the biggest providers of grants to other charities and organisations in the military charity sector. Our well-established and substantial grants programme provides vital funding for other charities and organisations that support the Army family.

The range of charities and organisations that we support is extensive and covers every aspect of social care, including but not limited to care for a disabled child, marriage guidance, hospice care, addressing homelessness amongst former soldiers, managing post-traumatic stress disorder and helping disabled soldiers renew their sense of self-worth through sport.

As part of our due diligence processes we have in place established guidelines for applicant charities

and organisations. Preference is given to charities and organisations that are members of the Confederation of Service Charities (Cobseo) or Veterans Scotland.

Grant applications are considered individually by our Grants Committee, which includes external sector and subject experts, and confirmed by trustees. In assessing applications, the following are taken into consideration: the governance and trustees of the organisation, the financial viability of the organisation, the degree of need for the project requiring funding, the amount the organisation spends on administration and fundraising compared with charitable activities, and the ability of the charity to gain sufficient funding for the project from other sources.

Finally, as part of our governance procedures, charities or organisations awarded a significant grant are required to complete outcomes reports, so we can gauge the impact of the funds we provide. This year, we spent £4.3m supporting 93 such charities and organisations.

WHERE WE HELP: OUR GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

HOW WE HELPED IN CANADA

We supported an Army veteran with limited mobility, and his wife, who was disabled. The veteran was forced to change jobs due to his mobility issues, and a subsequent stay in hospital meant it was hard for him to find work again and he remained unemployed. The ABF supported the couple with funding towards an electrically propelled vehicle and priority debts.

HOW WE HELPED IN SPAIN

A veteran in Spain had PTSD and was struggling with his mental health. He was able to manage his day-to-day finances but did not have savings to fund counselling sessions. We were able to assist with funding for several counselling sessions, to enable him to cope with his symptoms.

HOW WE HELPED IN FRANCE

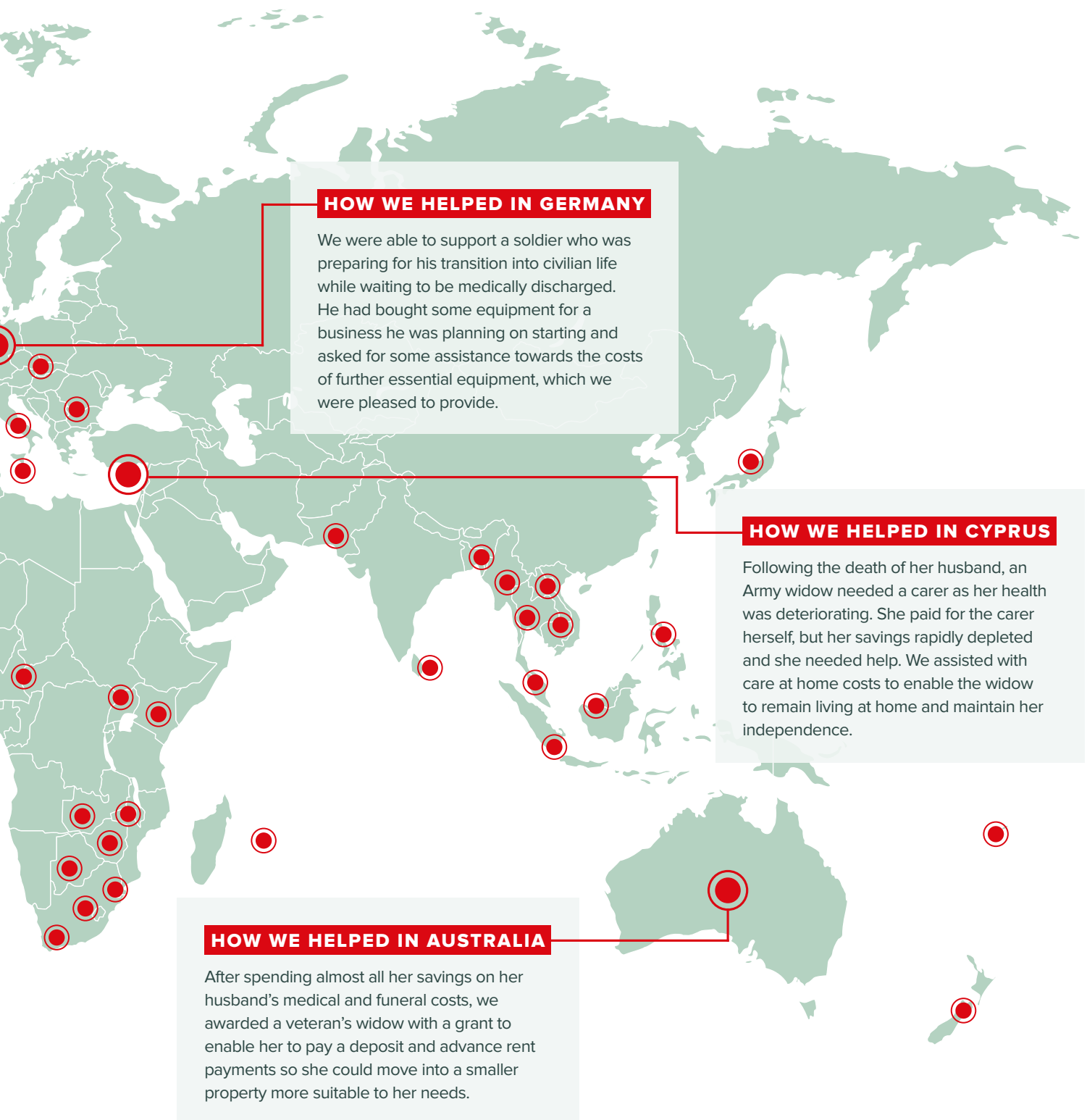
A veteran and his wife moved to France where they both worked for several years. However, when the veteran became seriously ill, they both were unable to work. All income ceased when the veteran sadly died, and we supported his widow with funding towards funeral costs, essential food and groceries.

Thanks to our supporters, we are able to help the Army family all over the world.

The Army continues to recruit extensively from across the Commonwealth and many soldiers and their families later settle overseas, often in places where they have served.

Last year, we reached 80,000 people in 52 countries through a combination of grants to individuals and other organisations. A significant proportion of our overseas work is delivered in partnership with the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League, and our grant of £177,500 went towards providing two meals a day for veterans and their spouses, many of whom are elderly and frail, living in poverty across 23 Commonwealth nations.

Here are just some of the ways our support made a difference to soldiers, former soldiers and their families around the world.



FUNDRAISING

We are extremely thankful to our generous donors who raised £34.6m in FY24-25 (£10.7m in FY23-24).

This significant increase is due to a highly generous legacy of nearly £25m; the impact of which is addressed in the Chief Executive's foreword. However, legacies are generous gifts, which can neither be anticipated nor relied upon; and, excluding that single donation, we raised less than in the previous financial year. To address this challenge, we have conducted a formal Fundraising Review, with the Board-endorsed recommendations now being taken forward into the Year 3 FY25-26 Plan, not least in terms of seeking to diversify our fundraising portfolio, and investing in growing our supporter base.

As with previous years, we remain extremely grateful for the continued support of those organisations close to the Army family; including the Army Dependents' Trust, which donated £800k this year, and the regimental and corps charities, which contributed nearly £857k over the same period.

We partner with a broad range of UK businesses, high net worth individuals, trusts and foundations, to enable our ongoing work to support soldiers, veterans, and their families.

We are extremely fortunate for the sustained support of our philanthropic donors The Edward Gostling Foundation, The Mike Gooley Trailfinders Charity, National Garden Scheme, Peacock Charitable Trust, PF Charitable Trust, The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, The Wimbledon Foundation, The Dyers' Company Charitable Trust, and our generous anonymous donors. We are also grateful for the significant support we have received this past year from The Billmeir Charitable Trust, The Ian Fleming Charitable Trust, Moondance Foundation, Princes Exchange Foundation, The Princess Anne's Charities, Scott (Eredine) Charitable Trust, and The 29th May 1961 Charity.

We also received support from corporate partners, including Ascot, Azad Ayub, Babcock International Group, BAE Systems, Clogau Gold, Corps Security, Leonardo UK, MBDA, RIFT Group, Rolls-Royce, The Thales Charitable Trust and VIVO Defence Services; this enabling our ongoing work to support soldiers, veterans and their families.

Pictured are some of the many ABF events that have taken place over the course of this financial year. The funds raised by these events constitute a major source of income for the charity and we are so grateful to the many thousands of participants whose grit and generosity enables us to be here for soldiers, for life.



1 NEARLY 1,000 PEOPLE marched the Scottish hills while taking part in the 2024 Cateran Yomp, marking 80 years since D-Day and the founding of the Army Benevolent Fund.

2 Running the TCS London Marathon for the ABF.

3 In June 2024, a team from the British Army Recruiting Group swam the English Channel and raised over **£8,000** for the ABF.



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OVERVIEW

Total income was £38.7m (FY23-24: £15.3m); an increase of £23.4m from the previous financial year. This was due to higher legacy income at £28.2m (FY23-24: £5.2m) and we continue to be deeply grateful to the individuals who have remembered us in their Wills.

Income received from donations was higher at £3.3m (FY23-24: £2.8m). Income from the Army, which comprises donations from individuals, regimental and corps charities and the Army Dependents' Trust, decreased to £1.75m (FY23-24: £1.96m). Income from trading activities was higher at £3.2m (FY23-24: £2.7m). The investment income was £2.3m (FY23-24: £2.5m).

Of the £2.3m of investment income received, £1.3m represented cash dividends and interest receivable, with the remaining £987k being represented by additional investment units, which further bolster the Charity's investment portfolio to provide rising income over time. This is set out in more detail in the investment management section.

Total expenditure for the year increased to £16m (FY23-24: £15.6m). Our charitable expenditure delivering benevolence, including individual and charitable grants to those in need was £9.2m (FY23-24 £9.1m). Costs of raising funds increased to £6.8m (FY23-24: £6.5m) as we continue to invest in donor recruitment.

Overall, the accounts for the year ended with a net income of £20.6m, which includes losses on investments of £2.2m (FY23-24: net income of £5m included gains on investments of £5.4m).

Reserves

Our reserve is based on three imperatives:

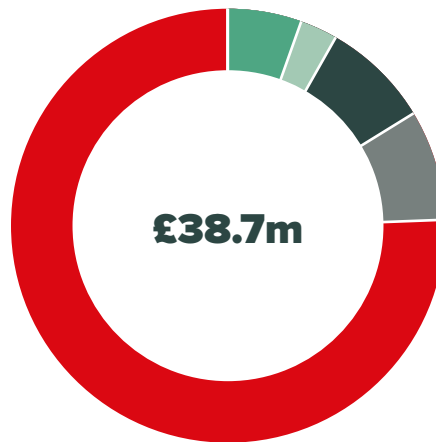
- 1** To manage on behalf of the nation a series of designated funds that support veterans who served in particular conflicts, and their immediate family members.
- 2** To provide an operational reserve in the immediacy of a 12 to 36-month period, to ensure the Charity can continue delivering benevolence to the Army family in the event of financial risks identified in the Risk Register materialising.
- 3** To provide a strategic reserve for the delivery of benevolence to the Army family in a more enduring sense, enabling the Charity to respond to a significant change in operating conditions (such as a major conflict) or benevolence need.

A significant proportion of our funds are ringfenced and administered on behalf of the nation to help veterans and families in need from conflicts such as Afghanistan and the Falklands. They will be disbursed over many years until the last eligible soldier or family member is no longer alive.

Our operational reserve ensures we can continue delivering benevolence to the Army family in the immediacy of a 12 to 36-month period, should we face a significant fall in income. The operational reserve has been established through work to place a monetary value on risk, together with sensible provision for other probable contingencies and the Charity's working capital.

We also hold a strategic reserve to ensure that we can deliver benevolence to the Army family in the long term, despite any changes that may occur in the operating environment (for example, future conflicts). Part of this picture includes meeting our responsibility for ensuring the regimental and corps charities can provide appropriate benevolence support, when called upon, in perpetuity. Essentially, the Army's national charity needs to ensure that the whole Army family's needs can be met, for as long as there is an Army.

WHERE OUR FUNDING CAME FROM



£2.3m

Income from investments

£1.7m

Donations from regimental and corps charities and individuals in Army Units

£3.2m

Other trading activities

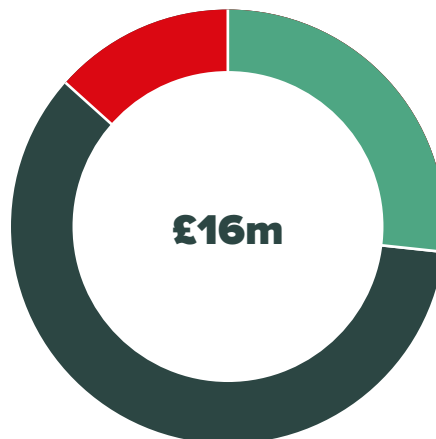
£3.3m

Donations and appeals

£28.2m

Legacies

HOW WE SPENT AND ALLOCATED MONEY



£4.2m

Other costs of raising funds

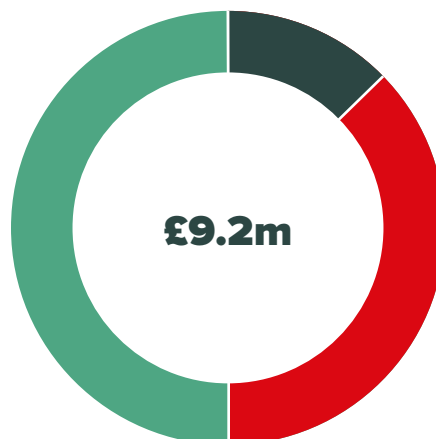
£9.2m

Charitable activities

£2.6m

Cost of trading activities

HOW WE SUPPORTED THE ARMY FAMILY



£4.3m

Grants to other charities and organisations

£1.8m

Supporting the military welfare ecosystem

£3.1m

Grants to individuals

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For Soldiers. For Life.