



THE WARRIOR



Newsletter for ESVH & the Military Community In East Sussex

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AND all other essential services, postmen, milkmen, paperboys (and ladies) waste collectors, etc., plus all volunteers across the County

Coronavirus: Vaccination Survey

As the COVID-19 pandemic rolls on, increasing attention is placed upon the role of vaccines to reduce the impact of coronavirus, especially amongst the most vulnerable.

Vaccinations have now been underway since December and during this time tens of thousands of people in East Sussex have received their first jabs.

Healthwatch East Sussex, the local independent health and care watchdog, have launched a survey to capture the direct experiences of people who have been vaccinated, and to better understand the views of those who are yet to receive their vaccination.

Responses to the survey will help them learn whether the vaccination process is meeting the needs of recipients and to identify how it could be improved for others. We also want anyone who has not been vaccinated to tell us whether or not they will accept an invitation for a jab and their reasons.

The closing date for completing the survey is midnight on 31st March 2021, and the findings will be published on the Healthwatch East Sussex website from April.

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Support Services Telephone Contact Numbers

NHS 111 Any suspicion of flu or new cough, stay at home for 7 days, ring 111 IMMEDIATELY, for advice. Some GPs have a telephone triage service as well.

ESVH 07884263824/01424 446292/Freephone 0330 1077 808

STAR Freephone 0300 303 81600

ESRA 01424 435318

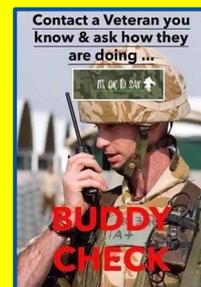
Seaview 01424 717981

Job Centre Plus Hastings 0800 169 190

Samaritans Hastings Freephone 0330 094 5717

Bexhill Caring Community 01424 215116

Hastings Covid-19 Community Support Hotline 01424 451019



East Sussex Veterans Hub 99/100 Group, 5 Harold Place. Hastings TN34 1JA
01424 446292 Email: ESVH99100@esvh99100.onmicrosoft.com

Registered with Charity Commission 1183583





Para Go Hi Tech

Paratroopers have tested out a new innovative facility built to train them for the demands of the urban battlefield.

Troops from C (Bruneval) Company, 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment, have been training in the Urban Training Facility (UTF) at Merville Barracks in Colchester, Essex, for the first time.



The facility boasts moveable walls, interactive smoke, light and sound effects and a video monitoring system for soldiers to review their performance.

In their role as the British Army's global response force, the soldiers of 16 Air Assault Brigade need to be prepared to fight in challenging urban surroundings.

Colonel Martyn Wills, Deputy Commander of 16 Air Assault Brigade, said the UTF gives soldiers "the best training possible for the urban battlefield". "These effects make training a more immersive experience, adding extra pressure to what the soldiers are doing," Col Wills said.

The facility at Merville Barracks, Colchester, has moveable walls, interactive smoke, light and sound effects and a video monitoring system for soldiers to review their performance (Picture: British Army).

"We can then take the skills that have been perfected here into more challenging training in the villages built on the Army's training areas, adding the scale of larger units operating together."

The British Army said the facility recognises "the world's population is increasingly living and working in built-up areas" and is designed to let troops enter and move through buildings, clearing the enemy as they go.

Layouts, light levels and the soundscape can be changed in the facility, allowing troops to train in simulations of a Middle Eastern shopping centre at night or an African jungle village in a heavy rainstorm.



Carrier Group Off to Greece

HMS Queen Elizabeth is expected to anchor at Souda Bay and, possibly, Piraeus, as part of British participation in the celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the Greek War of Independence.



HMS Queen Elizabeth and her Carrier Strike Group will deploy to the Pacific later this year, stopping off at many allied ports and exercising with many allied forces.

It is understood that the deployment will see the Carrier Strike Group sail in the Mediterranean Sea, the Gulf and end up in the Pacific before returning home.

The Ministry of Defence say that the Carrier Strike Group "offers Britain choice and flexibility on the global stage, reassuring our friends and allies and presents a powerful deterrent to would-be adversaries."

The group includes destroyers HMS Diamond, HMS Defender the USS The Sullivans as well as frigates HMS Northumberland and HMS Kent in addition to support vessels RFA Fort Victoria and RFA Tideforce.

The strike group is the largest and most powerful European-led maritime force in almost 20 years.



MCTC Making a Difference

The UK is one of the only countries in the world with an entire regiment of detention specialists.

Military personnel sentenced for up to two years are sent to Colchester's Military Corrective Training Centre (MCTC), but inside, it is unlike any civilian prison. At MCTC, Armed Forces provost staff work to transform detainees, getting them ready to return to service or to move into civilian life.

The centre, known by some as 'Glasshouse' or 'Colly', puts the emphasis on correction and has a low reoffending rate of 10%. Despite minimal security, with no bars and no barbed wire, no-one has tried to escape for years.



When detainees arrive, they are searched and personal items taken from them. Their pay is stopped and, like in prisons, privileges such as phone credit, money for the shop and parole can all be earned with good behaviour.

The staff wear greens, just like the detainees, and some have served sentences at MCTC themselves.

Lieutenant Colonel Lee Pearce, Commandant of the Military Corrective Training Centre said: "MCTC is unique. "Many describe it as the military prison – it's not. We are the corrective training centre. We help soldiers, sailors and airmen make change – so they can go back to the Army, Navy or Air Force... or go to transition out of service into civilian life with a realistic prospect of employment, by giving them vocational skills."

Detainees spend their time either keeping up their military-based skills or in vocational training preparing to transition out of the military.

Staff Sergeant Emma Mannion-Williams, Platoon Commander – Detention Company says, "If you're having a bad day, it doesn't matter as long as you've made your bed in the morning. "As long as you've done one good thing for that day then the only way is up, effectively."

Eighteen-year-old Detainee Under Sentence (DUS) Oliver Jelley was given 90 days at MCTC and believes he would have likely been sentenced for up to four years by a civilian court.

SSgt Mannion-Williams says: "Whatever they've done to get here, I don't really care.

"I'm here to make sure, that when they are here, they're striving to be better, they're motivating themselves, they're motivating others, they are making sure they are ticking all the boxes that they need to tick in order to either go back to society as a better person, to be an active good citizen.

"Or go back to their regiment and for their chain of command to see the improvement, see that they have the zeal and the attitude to get back into the military green lifestyle that we all joined for."

The vast majority are at MCTC for minor offences - like going absent without leave, others have committed more serious crimes.

Lieutenant Colonel Lee Pearce, highlighted why the Ministry of Defence (MOD) invests money in helping offenders.

"There's a moral obligation to look after our people; they are our core capability, everything we do in the military is about our people, but at a more macro level, it's about the investment the system has made in terms of training.

"We've invested in those individuals - why would we throw it away for what quite often is a silly mistake, is rule-breaking rather than law breaking?"

When MCTC was inspected by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons in 2004, the results were poor. Afterwards, the centre reverted from a punitive approach to a more reformatory one, producing glowing results in 2017.

Captain Robert Moffat, Officer Commanding A And D Company said: "We've moved on, it's more than just locking an individual behind a door and drilling them – it's about unpicking their offending behaviour.

"The punitive aspect of their sentence is that loss of liberty and loss of pay – we're not here to exert any more punishment per day on them during the sentence.



Probation to hire 150 former prisoners

The National Probation Service is to recruit 150 former prisoners over the next 12 months as part of a Government drive to get ex-offenders into work.

They will be employed as mentors, to persuade serving prisoners approaching their release dates not to return to crime.

The Ministry of Justice confirmed the plans after they were reported in The Times. Prisons Minister Lucy Frazer told the newspaper: "The job of probation is to turn peoples' lives around, to help support people to live fulfilling lives. And if you've got somebody who has achieved that who is your peer mentor, for instance, in probation, I think that adds something to the role. We know that mentors are incredibly valuable in supporting people into work."

In December the Minister said she was committed to hiring ex-offenders to work in probation, but at the time she had not put a figure on the number of jobs there would be.

She also urged companies to sign up to the Ban the Box campaign, which encourages employers not to include a criminal convictions tick-box on their job application forms. The campaign announced last week that since its launch in 2013, more than a million jobs had been opened up to people with past convictions.

The Government's target is for the 150 recruits to be in post by April 2022. This year, probation is being reunited as a single nationalised service following its failed part-privatisation. This will involve the merger of regional community rehabilitation companies, some of which pioneered the use of former prisoners as mentors, with the National Probation Service.

The Minister has previously praised a scheme run by Seetec in Kent, Surrey and Sussex in which ex-offenders are employed as case support workers to

help people on probation to seek work, find accommodation and access services.

Case support workers are assigned to the toughest cases, involving people who have received a final warning that they risk breaching the terms of their probation, and the scheme has been credited for helping to halve the number of breaches in the region.



RFEA Earn Seal of Distinction

RFEA announced they have once again been awarded the Call of Duty Endowment's Seal of Distinction for their work supporting UK veterans into employment.

Founded in 2013, the Seal of Distinction program is foundational to the Call of Duty Endowment's impact-driven, philanthropy model.

The award recognizes those organisations in the veteran employment space that have achieved the highest levels of effectiveness and efficiency in placing veterans into high-quality employment.

The Endowment awarded the seal to RFEA based on documented, assessed and sustained superior performance, in line with their high standards.



Peter, a former Guardsman, registered with RFEA's Ex-Forces Programme in May and assigned to one of their Endowment-funded advisors. Having been made redundant from his job supporting veterans with housing needs, he'd only been able to find short-term work and found job hunting while in lockdown to be increasingly frustrating.

After some networking advice and links to local employers, Peter successfully interviewed for a job once again supporting veterans like himself.

Peter said: "Working within veteran support means a great deal for me as I have been on the other side, needing such support. I now have a direction, focus

and career path to challenge my thoughts and passion. In turn, this has lifted the dark cloud that was starting to accumulate above me.

"I can now start to look forward to the future with the ability to support my family, work colleagues and new client group."

Thanks to funding from Call of Duty Endowment, RFEA supported over 1,000 veterans into employment last year and launched their new Military Women programme. It is due to their contributions, and those of other funders, that they were able to continue delivering their services to over 19,000 beneficiaries, despite Covid-19 restrictions.



Armed Forces Football Anticipate Post Covid Kick Off

Military football is aiming to return by May, according to the Chairman of UK Armed Forces football and the RAF Football Association.

He believed that unit or station level may be the first form of the game to come back and gave hope for a busy November of football with the centenary of the Kentish Cup and Remembrance fixtures.

The 2021 Inter Services matches have all been cancelled due to the pandemic.

Air Cdre Harper said: "Depending on when this lockdown ends and depending on when the national governing body wants to approach all levels of football, I think it's possible that some form of football will start before the end of this season, so before the end of May of this year.

"That may be unit football. It may be station football in the first instance.

"All three services will have their own priorities as to which football they want to start and frankly it's not for me as chairman of UK Armed Forces football to direct or advise them. It's up to them.

"It's entirely possible and, indeed it has been discussed, whether there will be the possibility of some representative team friendlies towards the end of this season, so the back end of April/early May perhaps.

"That's dependent on many, many different factors. "We were keen to make sure that we didn't recreate the Inter Services in some other way.

"There may be the opportunity for friendlies but it may be that the three services want to focus their restart of football, if I can call it that, at unit or station level."

Air Cdre Harper also gave hope for a busy autumn at UKAF level, with both the French and Dutch teams keen to play in the Kentish Cup in Portsmouth.

He said: "That's really good news... that both the French and Dutch guys are willing to begin to think about travelling, coming to the UK and playing those fixtures."

Air Cdre Harper added there are plans for the UKAF women's team to play against Chelsea women's academy side after a Remembrance fixture between the two sides in November last year was called off due to new coronavirus restrictions.

"We're looking at the opportunity of doing something similar in that sort of timescale for November 2021," he said.



The Kentish Cup will celebrate its centenary this year and there is a hope that matches against the Dutch and French forces may be played in the UK.

Continued from page 1

The survey may be completed in confidence as follows:

- **Online:** <https://healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/covid-19-vaccination-survey/>
- **By phone:** 0333 101 4007 (lines open Mon-Fri 10am-2pm)
- **By post:** Freepost RTTT-BYBX-KCEY, Healthwatch East Sussex, Greencoat House, 32 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 3UT
- **Download a paper survey:** Visit the relevant weblink above



Veterans National Creative Project

Blind Veterans UK have launched their National Creative Project which has been created to keep veterans connected and to prevent them from feeling isolated during the lockdown period.

The project focuses on creative activities and allows their veterans to get involved with lots of different hobbies such as gardening and painting, from the comfort and safety of their own home.



They are invited to virtual-get-togethers with other veterans who have similar interests over telephone or video call. The project consists of three integral parts which are Creative Activities, a Creative Book and Creative Hobby Circles.

Every month the veterans are encouraged to sign up to different activities in which they would like to take part. They are then sent kits and instructions with everything that they need for their chosen project. Louise Kirk-Partridge, Rehab Lead Art & Craft at Blind Veterans UK, says: "We're doing everything from woodwork to a tea towel design

project. The activities are collaborative, and we've made the kits as straightforward as possible so all can get involved. For the tea towel design project, we created kits with a bird template, collage materials and a prepaid envelope. We encourage the veterans to design a bird which they can then send back to us and we'll create a collage on a tea towel". Such collaborative activities would normally be available at the charity's training and rehabilitation centre. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, those art and craft services are no longer available. Louise says: "There is a lot of evidence that creative activities play an important role in improving health and well-being. We thought it was very important that we could continue to provide this virtually for our members especially during such a challenging time".

Another part of the charity's National Creative Project is the Creative Book which will document member, staff and volunteers' COVID-19 experiences. This will include creative writing, photography, art, craft, music and spoken word. The third part of the project is the Creative Hobby Circles which involve the veterans taking part in virtual-get-togethers with others who are taking part in the same activities. Veterans connect either by telephone or video call to learn new tips and to show others what they have been working on. Nadia Wazera, part of Health and Wellbeing Team at Blind Veterans UK, says: "One of our veterans said that they felt despondent but this call has really helped to cheer them up. From a staff perspective, it's a delight and honour to bring our veterans together over the phone, throughout the pandemic and offer a holistic service.

"This National Creative Project has brought people from all over the country together. The groups are so diverse, and veterans of all age groups are getting involved."

To find out more about Blind Veterans UK's National Creative Project, please visit: <https://www.blindveterans.org.uk/ncp>

You can keep updated on Blind Veterans UK's response to Covid-19 at [blindveterans.org.uk/coronavirus](https://www.blindveterans.org.uk/coronavirus) where you can also find out more about supporting the charity.

Steve's Special Classic Pancakes

6-8 Servings



Ingredients

- 30g butter for frying
- 150g Plain flour
- 3 Eggs
- 400ml Milk

Coverings of your choice - you can be as simple or creative, or as sweet or savoury as you like - serve with sugar, lemon juice, vanilla ice cream and whisky (chef's favourite), maple syrup, fruit, cheese, bacon, fried egg - whatever takes your fancy!

Chef says

Sieve the flour into a large mixing bowl and make a well in the flour mound. Break the eggs into the well and mix the ingredients together with a fork until all the egg has been absorbed into the mixture. Slowly pour the milk into the bowl, whisking constantly to make a smooth batter. Allow to settle in the fridge for two to three hours and start preparing your chosen fillings. When you are ready to eat put your, ideally non-stick, frying pan onto a medium heat and add a little of the butter to grease a pan. When the butter is bubbling, be careful not to let it burn, add a ladle of batter to the middle of your pan and work the batter round until the base is covered. Cook for about a minute on either side – tossing is an option! Keep your pancakes warm while you pile them up.

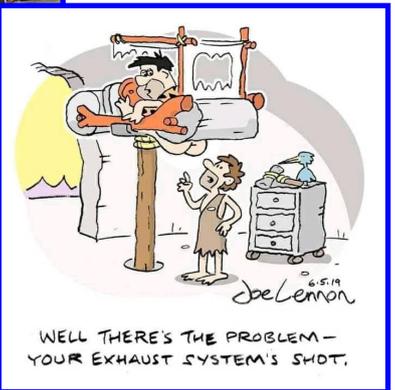
When all the batter is used and your pancakes are cooked - serve, fill, eat! We hope you enjoy.

GLASTONBURY 2021 CANCELLED



LoL

It's Friday afternoon, the RAF is currently closed. Please call again at 0900 Monday morning.



I got myself a seniors' GPS. Not only does it tell me how to get to my destination, it tells me why I wanted to go there.

