



Veterans Mentoring Service

Support for military veterans who are currently in – or are at risk of becoming involved in – the criminal justice system

sacro

Jane's Story

Jane is now in her sixties and had previously served 22 years in the Army. She contacted VMS for support after being charged with dangerous driving, an offence if convicted carrying a mandatory minimum 12-month driving ban.

Jane had been diagnosed with Complex PTSD (CPTSD) following a difficult tour in Afghanistan, but it remained untreated due to limited support services in her rural area of the Scottish Isles. She also suffered from back problems and regularly needed to drive to mainland hospital appointments. Losing her licence would have caused significant isolation and likely worsened her mental health.

At the time of the offence, Jane became paranoid that she was being followed and made a dangerous manoeuvre into oncoming traffic, almost causing a head-on collision. She explained that her CPTSD often caused anxiety and hypervigilance, which resulted in this frightening experience.

VMS referred Jane to Combat Stress for remote support and linked her with Legion Scotland peer support team, helping her build a support network.

A letter of support was provided to the court outlining the positive steps she had taken to address her CPTSD and the circumstances surrounding the incident. As a result, the case was dismissed on special circumstances.

With continued support, Jane was able to access treatment, retain her driving licence, attend important appointments, and avoid further isolation.



John's Story

John initially met VMS at a coffee morning which are held regularly across the prison estate in Scotland, which he had attended over the course of 14 months.

He was serving a long-term prison sentence following convictions of several serious offences and was preparing for release from custody.

A collaborative approach was taken to support John's transition back into the community. VMS worked closely with Offender Manager Unit, Social Work, DWP, Housing and the Royal British Legion to ensure he had the practical and emotional support required for successful reintegration back into the community.

Through regular contact, trust was built between John and VMS, and he became more confident in accepting support. A gate pick up was arranged on the day of his release, and VMS helped him attend appointments with housing and support services to secure suitable accommodation and financial stability.

His pension and benefits were arranged, and his new property, which was initially empty, was furnished through support from charities and the veterans community. Additional assistance included food bank, utility vouchers, and ongoing welfare support to reduce financial pressure during the early stages of reintegration back into the community.

With consistent multi-agency support, John settled well into the community and has moved on from his life of crime.

He developed pride in his home, transformed his garden into a productive vegetable space, and now enjoys regular walks in the countryside. The support of VMS has helped him rebuild his confidence, independence, and overall wellbeing.



Names have been changed throughout and photography is illustrative only.

Sacro's Veterans Mentoring Service (VMS) provides support for military veterans who are currently in – or are at risk of becoming involved in – the criminal justice system.

The service works closely with the veteran to put an intensive support plan in place where strategies can be developed to cope with their specific needs. The aim of the service is to enable the person to enjoy sustainable, independent living.

Veterans will be linked with a mentor with “lived experience” of the military who, through the development of a supportive relationship, will work together to promote desistance from offending and increasing the veteran’s self-esteem and confidence.

The service is offered across Scotland and is available to veterans of all genders. If you have ever served (even just one day) within the UK military (Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force) then you are eligible for assistance.

What support can the Veterans Mentoring Service provide?

The service can provide help and support with:

- > alcohol and substance use;
- > physical and mental health issues with assistance of partnership agencies;
- > support services and specialist agencies in your local area;
- > completing and understanding paperwork and making phone calls;
- > reintegration into the community;
- > education, employment or training;
- > understanding of the justice system;
- > your throughcare journey after prison.



Veterans Mentoring Service

Sacro
112 Commercial Street
Edinburgh EH6 6NF

Tel: 0131 624 7270
Email: veterans@sacro.org.uk
Web: www.sacro.org.uk

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