

ABF

THE SOLDIERS'

CHARITY

The Army's National Charity



Annual Review
2016-2017

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Cover Image

Our Cateran Yomp 2017 Ambassador, Stewart Harris (left), enjoying the company of some of the participants in this year's event.

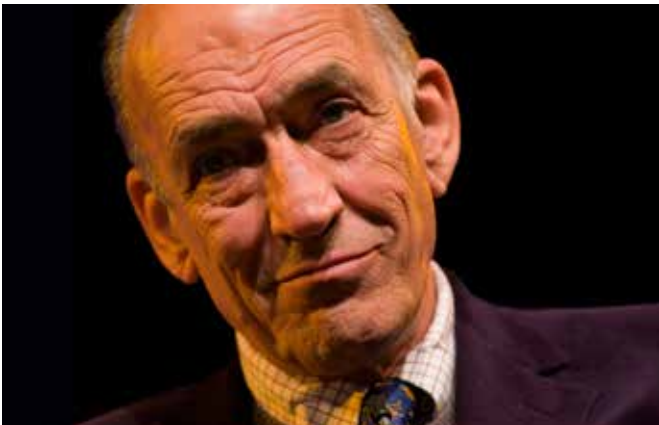
Pic credit: ©Ed Smith



The Army's National Charity

We give a lifetime of support to soldiers and veterans from the British Army, and their immediate families, when they are in need. We make grants to individuals through their Regiments and Corps and support a wide range of specialist charities that sustain the British Army 'family' both at home and around the world. We take pride in being responsive, making a difference at a critical point in peoples' lives. We have worked with veterans of every conflict since 1944, and we envisage continuing doing so for the 'long haul' - supporting all future generations of our soldiers and their dependants.

A foreword from our President



I am delighted to write the Foreword to this Annual Review which covers the period 2016-17. The Review seeks to explain what our Charity has achieved over this financial year and how - not least through the fantastic support of the many organisations and individuals who are involved with us.

This has again been a very good year. With an income approaching £20 million, we have been able to spend 9.6% more on charitable activity, which in itself is on top of a similar uplift in the previous year. Tens of thousands of serving soldiers, veterans of all ages, and their immediate families have benefitted from interventions, which cover an astonishing array of tragic or difficult circumstances. As part of this effort, 92 delivery charities across 59 countries have received grants from us, again covering an enormous array of activity - and reflecting the very wide dispersion of current Service personnel and their forbearers. In each case, we pride ourselves on delivering support in a robust, pragmatic and speedy manner - as you would expect from the Army's National Charity.

That said, it is perhaps easy to see storm clouds gather. The Army faces considerable financial and operating

pressures, despite their deployments being less in the public eye, and some of these are directly translated across to the Charity. More broadly, current political and economic uncertainty produces a number of significant financial and other challenges for the whole charity sector, as the State seeks to rebalance what it wants to achieve with what it can afford, and looks to others to pick up at least part of the burden. For our part, we are well placed to respond with a calm and pragmatic approach as we seek to deliver support both today and many years hence.

We remain firmly an 'outward looking' Charity - as much looking to assist and coordinate the plethora of military charities as to attend just to our own needs. A substantial element of staff effort, and indeed real costs, go in to this critical enabling activity - all of it focused on the needs of the Army community we support. Good governance is a key parallel attribute and again this year, we were delighted to be identified across the entire Sector as the Charity most trusted to deliver on its promises.

None of this is possible without our collaboration with the Regimental and Corps charities who deliver the underlying bedrock of welfare and benevolence support to Army personnel, and our many excellent delivery partners, both large like SSAFA and Combat Stress, or small like the many specialist or niche charities which compliment that activity. And none of this would be possible without our many donors and other supporters - and indeed our own staff. On behalf of our Charity, and the Army Family at large, thank you.

General (Ret'd) Sir Mike Jackson,
GCB CBE DSO DL,
President, ABF The Soldiers' Charity

Our Vision

That all serving and former soldiers and their dependants should have the opportunity to avoid hardship and enjoy independence and dignity.

Our Values



INTEGRITY

The Soldiers' Charity is part of the Army's and the Nation's fabric; we act accordingly.



LOYALTY

We are loyal to the Army as an institution, its people and those who support us.



COMMITMENT

We are approachable, effective and quick to respond.



RESPECT

We respect every individual and their needs.



INSPIRATION

We create opportunities and inspire others, with the emphasis on providing a 'hand-up', not a 'hand-out'.



COURAGE

We act on behalf of our beneficiaries without fear or favour, telling it as it is.

What we have achieved with your help in 2016-17

Our Charity continues to flourish with robust performance across a very broad range of activities. That said, we are acutely conscious of growing uncertainties, for the Army and the Nation at large, which inevitably impacts on a large Charity with global reach through our many partners. In particular, 'For Soldiers - For Life' cannot be a mere strapline. Just as we continue to support those affected by the Falklands campaign 35 years ago - so we must ensure that we can provide for young soldiers and their families damaged today, for many years to come.

Delivering support to those in need

Robust income obliges us to seek to do more - so we are delighted to have further increased our charitable expenditure by 9.6%. A 5.8% increase in expenditure on individual grants reflects a reduction in overall cases (as the wartime generation fades) balanced by more complex needs. In addition, a 10.4% increase in grants to our 92 delivery partners includes long-term support, such as to SSAFA, Royal Commonwealth Ex-services League (RCEL), Combat Stress and Erskine, but also funding for fresh, innovative solutions to help those in need.

Two existing charities, the DefLog VQ Trust and the Army Commandos' Benevolent Fund, have folded into us, allowing more support to be provided at lower cost - an exemplar of good behaviour in the Sector. Furthermore, an innovative £3 million project, funded by Libor, will allow the improvement of support to Army families in difficult locations - just part of 18% of our grants that have gone to the Serving community.

**A 9.6% INCREASE IN
CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE**

**A 5.8% INCREASE IN
EXPENDITURE ON
INDIVIDUAL GRANTS**

**A RECORD 92 DELIVERY
PARTNERS RECEIVED
10.4% MORE FUNDING**

Raising the necessary funds

Whilst we are the Army's National Charity, we receive no statutory funding - all our income has to be raised from individuals or organisations that support us. Most of our funding streams have outperformed. Highlights include negotiating the grant of £3 million Libor funding (over three years), for which we are very grateful to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and some £2.5 million received after careful negotiation with two charities which folded into us. Challenge events remain a particular strongpoint as do the efforts of our many volunteers and regional offices.

**£19.4 MILLION INCOME
GENERATED THIS YEAR**

**£2.5 MILLION RECEIVED FROM
TWO CHARITIES THAT
FOLDED INTO US**

**MORE THAN £12 MILLION RAISED
FROM PUBLIC DONATIONS AND
FUNDRAISING EVENTS, INCLUDING
SUPPORT FROM ACROSS THE ARMY**

Governance and enabling activity

Any reputable charity that needs to sustain activity over the long-haul must pay increasing attention to good governance and key underlying enabling activity. We continue to put substantial effort, at both Board and Executive level, into good governance, both for the Charity itself, and through careful oversight of where our money goes. A particular focus this year has been on data and supporter engagement, especially preparing for the enactment of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

We continue to support and fund a wide range of enabling activity on behalf of the Army and the sector at large. This includes acting as Landlord to the eight other organisations co-located with us to enhance efficiency and cost-effectiveness, and our substantial investment in the maintenance and improvement of the Casework Management System, which is the key enabler for delivering support to our many beneficiaries.

How we have helped those in need

We work hand-in-hand with the Army and their Regimental and Corps Associations in all that we do. We make grants to individuals through these Associations, and fund a wide range of specialist Service and non-Service charities and organisations, which support the British Army 'family' both at home and around the world.

Our key delivery partner in this regard is SSAFA - with our substantial funding they undertake the bulk of our UK casework and further disperse many of our individual grants. But RCEL overseas and many specialist organisations also do critical work on our behalf.

A unique aspect of these efforts is that we can package support for an individual or family through a combination of individual grants and help from those specialist agencies we have funded, so optimising the support they

require. Our guiding principle continues to be 'need' rather than 'want' and all applications for assistance are judged on their merits - a common sense, pragmatic approach you would expect from the Army's National Charity.

We continue to be trusted to administer substantial funds on behalf of the Nation or other organisations. This includes the gratefully received Libor funding provided by the Afghanistan Fund for the support of families of those who fought in that campaign, and the more recent income from the DefLog VQ Trust to help fund educational support to those in particular need. We achieve all this with a highly agile, and above all professional, grant-making process, where requests are considered daily and grants normally approved, and payment made, within 48 hours of casework being received.

Our three tiers of support

Support to individuals

- 4,534 grants to individuals - totalling some £3.56m.
- Further support to an estimated 7,500 people with advice or handing over to our delivery partners for support.
- Our youngest beneficiary was just 9 months old; our oldest was 105 years old.

Support to other charities

- Grants to 92 partner charities and specialist organisations - totalling £3.54m.
- These charitable grants enabled support across 59 countries worldwide.
- Examples include: The Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League, NSPCC, Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI), Poppy Factory, Erskine and many other specialist or niche organisations.
- Nine charities received funding from the newly created Afghan Fund to specifically help the families of those who fought in that campaign.

Coordination and enabling activity

- Funding vital enabling activity such as Caseworkers and the Casework Management System.
- Proactively worked to ensure better coordination and de-confliction of our collective support to those in need across the sector.
- Landlord to eight co-located military organisations in Mountbarrow House (our National office) - sharing overheads and best practice.

The impact of our funding - some examples

Nigel O'Keefe

After witnessing many horrific events in the Falklands campaign, Nigel's lifestyle went into a downward spiral. After suffering with depression, anger, nightmares, a heart attack, drifting into poor accommodation and experiencing increasingly distant relations with his family, Nigel finally asked for help.

In January 2017, our Charity provided Nigel with a grant towards kitchen equipment for his flat, which would enable him to invite his children and grandchildren to visit. He is now working on repairing his relationship with his family and says: **"my life now seems to be getting lighter, you know? Brighter. Because I was alive in a really dark world not too long ago."**



Mark Smith

Former Grenadier Guardsman Mark was injured in a live-firing exercise in 2011, losing his right leg as a result of the accident. Despite his injuries, he now holds the title of Britain's Strongest Disabled Man 2016 and 2017, and recently placed 4th in the World's Strongest Disabled Competition held at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Our Charity has provided Mark with assistance on two occasions: the first was for amputee crutches and essential home adaptations, the second time for help towards the cost of a wheelchair, which was split with the Colonel's Fund (Grenadier Guards Regimental Charity). Mark says: **"The Soldiers' Charity helps individual soldiers without wanting the glamour and publicity for it. They're just there to help you when you need it. I can now live an independent life and the wheelchair benefits my family as well as me."**

The Royal Star & Garter Homes

This year, our Charity made a grant of £74,000 to The Royal Star & Garter Homes, to support the costs involved in delivering their outstanding care services to disabled ex-Servicemen and women, such as Stephen.

Stephen was just 19 when he was wounded by a mortar bomb blast, suffering catastrophic brain injuries that left him severely disabled. Stephen has been to the home several times for a respite break and says he finds the care "excellent". His mother, Jessica, commented: **"The quality of care here is above and beyond anything we've experienced before. I love to hear him laugh - a proper belly laugh - as he does here much more often than in other settings."**



Step Together

This year, our Charity supported Step Together's Rehabilitation through Volunteering programme with a grant of £18,000. In a follow up survey, more than 80% of those that took part said they felt more motivated, confident and ready to deal with life's ups and downs.

One such individual had spiralled into depression after being medically discharged from the Army. Through meeting and talking to Step Together, he decided that he wanted to apply to volunteer as a youth mentor. He said: **"I was going through troubled times leaving the Army and I was in a dark place. Their one-to-one support gave me huge comfort and reassurance, and made me realise that my life was not at an end."**

What makes our Charity different

As the Army's National Charity we must be outward-looking, given that a substantial majority of overall cases of need continue to relate to Army personnel and their families, so we have the greatest interest in making sure the Armed Forces charity sector is well coordinated. Our efforts in this regard broadly fall into:

Enabling & Co-ordinating Activity

- Our sector demonstrates considerable collaboration and cooperation, but there is always more to do. An extensive network of advice and support continues to be provided to a large number of Service charities and other organisations, including providing senior staff as Trustees or Directors.
- Our Charity funds day-to-day operating costs of the online Casework Management System, on behalf of the Regiments and Corps, which is the bedrock of the sector's casework and distribution of individual grants. A wide-ranging upgrade programme is currently underway.

- Our close and unique relationship with the Army, and their high-level representation on our Board, helps ensure our money is directed to priority areas of need rather than at those who shout loudest.

Stewardship of Funding

- We continue to administer substantial Restricted and Designated Funds on behalf of the Nation, such as the Falklands Fund, which will continue to be dispersed until the last eligible veteran or immediate family are deceased.
- This year, we have been chosen to administer a grant of

Kate's story – a journey of support

Kate, an Army veteran with a young daughter, has been medically discharged from the Army. She is unemployed and has had to move back to live with her parents. Kate's husband, also a soldier, was killed in Afghanistan in 2013.

Kate was put in contact with the **Army Widows' Association**, in order to gain support from other Army widows who understood what she was going through.

Last year, our Charity supported the Army Widows' Association by awarding a grant of £24,000 to deliver information and guidance.

In partnership with her Corps Association, Kate is put in contact with a **SSAFA** caseworker.

Last year, our Charity provided £287,000 to fund SSAFA's Army-related casework.

Kate is also put in contact with **Step Together**, who provide voluntary opportunities to rebuild personal and professional skills, supporting the transition to civilian life.

Last year, our Charity provided Step Together with £18,000 towards their Rehabilitation through Volunteering programme.

Although starting to become more positive about her future, Kate is diagnosed with depression. Her GP refers her to **Walking With The Wounded's** Head Start programme for individual therapy.

Last year, our Charity awarded £40,000 towards Walking With The Wounded's programmes.

With the support that she has gained, Kate is ready to focus on securing employment. She is supported by an Employment Consultant from the **Regular Forces Employment Association**.

Last year, RFEA received a grant of £255,000 towards their Veterans' Employment Programme.



£3m Libor money to support disadvantaged serving families with childcare and community centre support.

- Both the DefLog VQ Trust and the Army's Commandos' Benevolent Fund have taken the difficult decision to close, but maintain their support for Army beneficiaries by transferring their residual funds to ourselves.

We will continue to offer to facilitate any moves that create further efficiencies across our sector.

- These decisions demonstrate continued confidence in our ability to steward such funds well into the future.

Governance Activity – a growing burden

- Our governance activity in support of the charitable grant-making programme continues to grow in complexity and reach.

- Our Grants Committee is constituted of Trustees, senior Army and Regimental representation, and subject matter experts to maximise effective and transparent decision-making across a complex sector.

- We use rigorous post-grant audits and formal visits to ensure our programme remains cost-effective, appropriate and focused on desired outcomes.

30 years later...

Kate now lives on her own but suffers with age-related health problems, so is no longer able to use her bathroom safely.

Our Charity, in co-ordination with her Corps Association, provides a grant of £10,000 to enable essential bathroom adaptations to be carried out.

Surviving on her pension, Kate is finding it more difficult to make ends meet. She often has to make the choice between putting the heating on and buying food.

We are able to assist by awarding Kate an annuity of £37 per week. This relieved some of the financial pressure that she was under and increased her quality of life.

Increasingly housebound, Kate would benefit from a break away from the house but, due to her care needs, she is unable to take a holiday independently. We signpost Kate to **Revitalise**, to give her the break she deserves.

We provide financial assistance to fund Revitalise respite breaks for Army veterans and their carers.

Having enjoyed the social interaction that she gained at **Revitalise**, Kate becomes increasingly lonely and isolated. This affects her mood and outlook on life.

In partnership with Kate's Corps Association, we provided a grant of £800 towards an EPV. This enabled Kate to regain some independence and social contact.

Kate is becoming increasingly frail and requires 24/7 care. Kate visits **The Royal Star & Garter Homes** and subsequently moves in, benefiting from the care and social activities on offer.

Our Charity continues to fund The Royal Star & Garter Homes to support the benevolence services offered to ex-Army residents.

This is not the end of Kate's story.

We know that life can be full of unforeseen events, so we pride ourselves on being responsive, making a difference at a critical point in people's lives, whether now, or well in to the future. Through your continued support of our Charity, we are able to provide a lifetime of support to Kate and her family, enabling her to live out the rest of her life in a safe and caring environment, with independence and dignity. **'For Soldiers – For Life'**.

Revitalise



Fundraising - how our money is generated

Our grants programme is only made possible through fundraising. We receive no funding from the public purse, and so are completely reliant on our supporters to help us deliver our grants to a wide range of beneficiaries; our thanks to all those who make this possible.

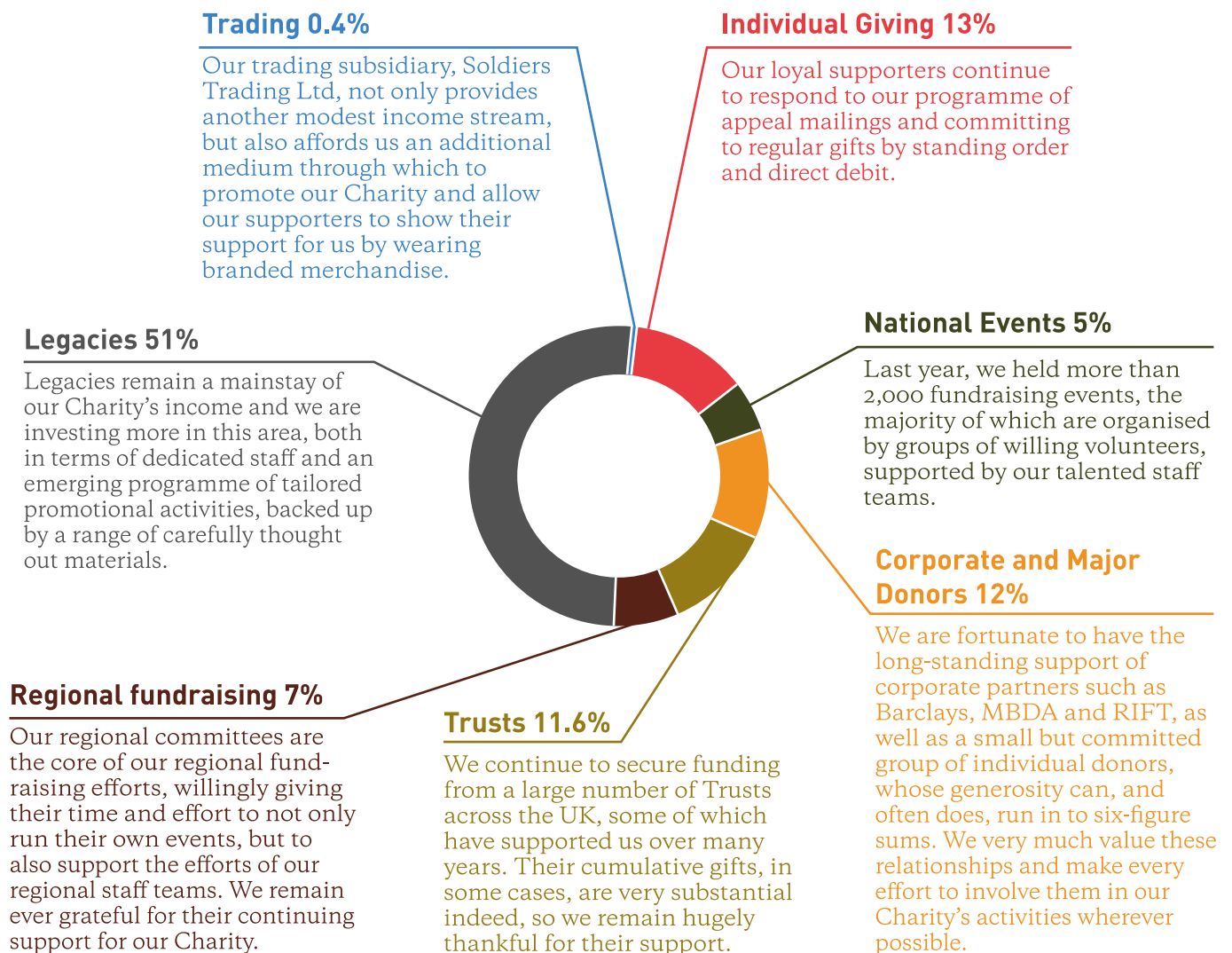
How we behave

Our Charity is subject to external governance by a number of organisations. Some we have a statutory obligation to engage with, others we hold voluntary membership of. Our relationships with these external organisations allow us to demonstrate to our supporters our commitment to ethical and legal fundraising, and our constant attention to best practice.

All fundraising is carried out under the auspices of our Charity Data Protection Policy, which reflects the current legal and regulatory requirements. In the last few years, the issue of 'good behaviour', under the umbrella of Data Protection, has become increasingly important to the public in order to maintain their charitable support.

Sources of fundraising income

The diagram below shows the varied income streams secured by our National and Regional offices. It does not include investment income and charitable donations from the Regimental and Corps charities, nor does it include this year's initial Libor grant.



The Charity that delivers

A trusted Charity

In the 2016 Third Sector Charity Brand Index Report - an annual, independent poll of the top 154 charities in the UK - we were named as the number one charity to 'Deliver on Promise' for the second year running. For the first time, we were also named the top charity for 'Using its Money Well', and came out as the second 'Most Trusted' and 'Most Relevant' charity in the UK.

This continued recognition of the effectiveness of our Charity, and the high regard in which we are held in terms of trust and integrity, reflects our dedication to ensuring all donations we receive reach those most in need.

The testimonials below show the impact of our work on our beneficiaries' lives, and what it often means to their closest friends and family:



"Thank you very much for the grant towards the cost of my mother's funeral. It meant a great deal to our family during this sad time. My father would have been very proud that the Army's charity gave support when we needed it most."

"I'm writing to say a big thank you for the work you guys do, and more personally for the help you have given me in my time of need during my resettlement phase after my 16 and a half years' service."

"The support that The Soldiers' Charity provided was so important as I made that step in to civilian life. It really made the difference between a successful transition and something more difficult."

"Your grant will help to establish permanent accommodation for my son and I, which we have never really had before. I feel this will help us bond even more than we already have, so this is more than money to me; it's the foundation for an amazing new beginning."

"I am no longer able to work due to my illness, so I am extremely grateful for your generous donation. I could not have raised the sufficient funds for the ground floor bedroom and bathroom facilities I needed without your help."



All testimonials quoted above are genuine pieces of feedback from our beneficiaries, which have been anonymised to protect their identities.

A Charity which op



Our US partner charity, The Soldiers Fund, provides grants to American and British soldiers, veterans and their immediate families, through ABF The Soldiers' Charity and US-based charities such as Make-a-Wish.



Age Concern Espania - We made a grant of £25,000 to support their work for ex-Army personnel and their families who get into particular difficulty in Spain.



Red, White & Blue Day, Belize - A local school in Belize signed up to take part in Red, White & Blue Day, our annual schools fundraising campaign, which we run in collaboration with our national charity counterparts at the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity, and the RAF Benevolent Fund.



Amongst the many individual grants we make to the contemporary Foreign & Commonwealth community, we have supported individuals and families in both the Caribbean and Pacific Islands.



Falklands Veterans Foundation (FVF) - Each year, we make an annual grant to the FVF to help with the annual running and maintenance costs of Liberty Lodge, which provides subsidised accommodation for Falklands veterans and their families visiting the Islands.



SPEAR17 - We provided vital support to the first ever British military team to successfully complete a fully unsupported traverse of Antarctica. The team have raised more than £50,000 for our Charity whilst gaining significant press coverage across broadcast, print and online media.

operates worldwide



Wheels on the Western Front - Just one example of the outstanding fundraising events undertaken by our regional offices - once again raised more than £100k for our Charity, as 49 riders valiantly took on the 352-mile cycle challenge from the UK to the battlefields of France and Belgium.



Hong Kong LEP Trust, Hong Kong - Our grant of £8,000 helped the Trust by supporting their Veterans Outreach Officer, who delivers direct benevolence and welfare support to former Locally Employed Personnel of the Hong Kong Military Service Corps.



Cyprus - Last year we awarded grants in the region of £20,000 to soldiers, veterans and their immediate families living in Cyprus.



Our Chief Executive spoke at the five-yearly Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League Conference in Malaysia attended by representatives of 42 countries - a key event as they decided on the future for the League.



We awarded a grant of £227,500 to RCEL to support their work and provide at least one meal a day for the ex-service men and women of Commonwealth countries who have, at some time, served the Crown.

Our support enables RCEL to keep people alive and preserve a level of dignity in their old age - largely, but not only, in Africa and SE Asia.



We provided over £224,000 to fund 438 individual grants to Gurkhas in the UK on behalf of the Gurkha Welfare Trust, allowing them to focus their main efforts on those Gurkhas who choose to return to Nepal.

National Events

2016-17 was another fantastic year for our National Events Team, with many of our flagship events such as the CATERAN YOMP, The Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch, and the Frontline Walk exceeding previous year's attendance and income figures.

In addition, our Fundraising Army has continued to grow and now boasts more than 250 fundraisers among its ranks. Below is a round-up of some of the key national event highlights from last year.

A big thank you to Alliance Trust

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Alliance Trust after their six-year tenure as Headline Sponsor of the CATERAN YOMP came to an end last year. Their financial support has helped to launch and develop the YOMP into the hugely successful event it is today, while also offering Alliance Trust countless employee engagement and volunteering opportunities for staff.

"The YOMP has been a catalyst to bring everybody across the company together. It has been a source of inspiration to us all and the best team-building we have ever been involved in."

Katherine Garrett-Cox, Former CEO of Alliance Trust.

To find out more about partnering with one of our events, contact us on 020 7811 3963 or email partnerships@soldierscharity.org.



The Big Curry campaign needs you!

The Big Curry is The Soldiers' Charity's spiciest, tastiest fundraising event of the year. Each October, hundreds of businesses, groups and individuals across the country unite to host their own curry-themed fun and raise funds to support our work. Register for your free Big Curry pack loaded with exciting recipes, delicious spices, and your own Big Curry collection box and beer mats.

"We worked with The Soldiers' Charity to create a bespoke Big Curry initiative in staff canteens across our major UK hubs. A proportion of every curry sold went towards their valuable work, and the tasty curry provided a great bit of variety for our employees."

David Harris
Director, Barclays Bank Plc

Register now at www.soldierscharity.org/bigcurry



Fundraising Army

The Fundraising Army is our community of intrepid fundraisers, who take on challenge events such as skydives, runs, cycles and treks around the UK to raise money for our Charity. Each enlisted member starts life as a 'Private', but can climb through the ranks to greatness by achieving fundraising milestones!

To be a part of this elite fundraising force, visit soldierscharity.org/fundraisingarmy



Frontline Walk

Last year's Frontline Walk was the biggest one yet, with more than 120 participants taking on the 100km walk across the WWI battlefields of France and Belgium. A challenging and poignant event, the route finished at the Menin Gate memorial with the emotional ceremony of the Last Post. More than £200,000 was raised from last year's event and it is an incredible opportunity to remember those soldiers who fought, while supporting the soldiers of today who need our help.



Other highlights of the year

The Patron's Lunch

On Saturday 12th June 2016, our Charity was honoured to be a part of The Queen's special birthday celebrations on The Mall in St James's Park. Our Charity was chosen as one of just 15 organisations from the 600 to which Her Majesty is Patron, to feature in the Patron's Lunch film, which was displayed on big screens throughout the day.

The event gave us a fantastic opportunity to thank a number of key supporters, beneficiaries and ambassadors of our Charity, including Lord Mayor's Big Curry Lunch sponsors Impressions of China; Bob and Sallie Semple; and Al and Pixie Hodgson.

Their Royal Highnesses, Prince William and Prince Harry, were Joint-Presidents of The Patron's Lunch, honouring the dedication shown by Her Majesty to so many charities and organisations.

Crowds line both sides of the mall; The Queen and other members of The Royal Family.



Wheels on the Western Front 2016 – Cycle to the Somme

Another hugely successful Wheels on The Western Front Cycle Challenge took place last summer, raising more than £107,000 for our Charity. Following the route of Kitchener's Army to the Somme battlefields, the route took in the major battle sites and the breathtaking, historical monuments along the way, which were brought to life by renowned BBC historian Andy Robertshaw throughout the trip.

Our huge thanks to everyone who completed the 352-mile challenge in support of our work - the fantastic sum raised will ensure we can continue to

be here for soldiers, veterans and their immediate families for many years to come.

The next Wheels on the Western Front Cycle Challenge – Ride to Victory will take place on 5th -11th August 2018. For more details, please contact westmidlands@soldierscharity.org or visit www.soldierscharity.org/wotwf



Our work in the regions

Fundraisers take on the iconic Cardiff Half Marathon

The Cardiff Half Marathon is currently the largest race in Wales and the second largest half marathon in the UK. More than 22,000 runners took part this year, thirteen of whom were representing our Charity. This included a five-man team from the Recruiting Group, based in Brecon, along with serving soldiers, Army veterans and supporters from all over Wales.

Overall they managed to raise a fantastic £2,000 for our Charity, so a big thank you for all their hard work in training and during the event itself.



Charity receives £40,000 from St George's Festival

The 2016 Lytham St Annes St George's Festival proved to be the biggest and best fundraising event yet in the eight-year history of the Festival.

Bob Gallagher, the Festival Chairman, handed over a cheque for £40,000 to The Soldiers' Charity, bringing the total raised for our Charity to well in excess of £100,000.

'Race the Runway' raises £17,000 for our Charity

On a crisp, clear day in late 2016, 'Race the Runway' took over Leuchars Army base, Scotland, with participants turning up in a wide array of supercars (and some 'super-for-the-family' cars) to test their trusty steeds over the 2.5km asphalt stretch.

Highlights of the day were seeing two of the fastest road cars in the world - the Bugatti Veyron and Porsche 918 - battle it out at the head of the leaderboard, with the Veyron eventually topping 209mph to take the crown.

The day raised a fantastic £17,000 for our Charity, and our thanks go to Mark Ryan for his absolutely invaluable support arranging the event. The final plans are being made for 2017's Race the Runway in October.

East Anglia launches 'Images on Parade'

Early 2017 saw our East Anglia team host a brand new fundraising event in their calendar: the 'Images on Parade' photography exhibition.

Held at Braxted Park, Essex, on 24-25 March, the exhibition was supported by 31 professional and amateur photographers, who donated their images free of charge. Comprising 156 fine art quality mounted prints across a range of genres - including a display of Army photography - a total of 80 prints had been sold on-line and at the exhibition by the time the auction closed on 30 April, raising a total of more than £6,000.



A big thank you!



From yomping, cycling and running, to mud-crawling, singing and 'Big-Currying', our supporters, volunteers and fundraisers invest an astounding amount of time and effort to ensure that we can continue to be here for those that need our help most. To all of you that are a part of this superhuman effort; thank you, we simply could not do it without you.

Our partnerships

We are hugely thankful for the ongoing support of a wide range of individuals, organisations, and Trusts and Foundations, all of which enable us to continue our vital work providing help to soldiers, veterans and their immediate families when they need it most.

Garfield Weston Foundation

In support of our joint venture with the RFEA, the Garfield Weston Foundation have generously donated towards our work, providing special employment training to long-term Wounded, Injured and Sick (WIS) soldiers.

Since its establishment in 1958, the Foundation has donated more than £960 million to charitable causes, becoming one of the UK's largest charitable institutions. Its support to our Charity will have a long-lasting impact on the lives of WIS veterans transitioning between the Army and civilian employment.



The MacRobert Trust

In June 2016, our Charity was awarded a generous donation by The MacRobert Trust as part of a two-year commitment and a continuation of Lady MacRobert's legacy and connection with the military. This generous donation has gone on to fund our work supporting elderly veterans living in Scotland suffering from a profound loss of independence.



Jenour Foundation – support in Wales

Our Charity is immensely fortunate to benefit from the continued support of the Jenour Foundation, with their last donation being made in March 2017. The Foundation has strong roots in Wales, where we typically support more than 200 soldiers, veterans, and their immediate family members each year. We remain truly thankful for the Foundation's long-standing commitment to our work in this area.

Pictured right: Stewart Harris, Charity beneficiary, Ambassador and BLO for Wales



Barclays Big Curry turns five

2016 marked the fifth year of the Barclays Big Curry at the Cavalry and Guards Club, which has now grown to attract more than 120 attendees. Activities included the Cookie Roulette Challenge, Heads and Tails, and an auction of military-related experiences. The event has now raised more than £100,000 towards our work; thank you Barclays!



HAC1537 goes from strength to strength

Our partnership with the Honourable Artillery Company - known as the 'HAC1537' in honour of the Regiment's founding year - has now raised more than £100,000. With a host of events taking place across the year, the inaugural City Invitational Cup in September 2016 was a particular highlight of the Partnership so far.

The special charity cricket match featured several ex-England cricketing legends (notably Mark Ramprakash and Matthew Hoggard), followed by an exclusive gala dinner, including a live Q&A hosted by Dean Wilson (Daily Mirror Cricket Correspondent), an auction conducted by Lord Jeffrey Archer, and a speech from beneficiary Stewart Harris about how our Charity had supported him.

To find out more about the Partnership, visit www.soldierscharity.org/hac



Mark Ramprakash (left) being presented with the HAC1537 trophy by our Charity's Chief of Staff, Brigadier (Ret'd) Robin Bacon.

Building Careers with BAE Systems

In December 2016, we were delighted to extend our six-year relationship with BAE Systems for another three years. Just last year, their support enabled our Charity to provide education and vocational training grants to 52 soldiers and veterans in need, so that they are given the best possible opportunity to gain long-term employment outside the Army; from plumbing and off-shore engineering to teacher training. We are immensely grateful for their long-standing commitment to providing better access to training and employment for the Army family.

To discuss how your organisation could partner with The Soldiers' Charity to fulfil your Corporate Social Purpose objectives, please contact cstrawa@soldierscharity.org.

BAE SYSTEMS

30 Years of Payroll Giving

2016 marked the 30th anniversary of Payroll Giving in the UK and, in the last financial year alone, employees from businesses across the UK supported our work with more than £165,000 of regular Payroll Giving donations. Thank you to all those organisations and individuals who donate through the scheme!

To find out more about how you, or your company, can get involved in Payroll Giving, please contact: payrollgiving@soldierscharity.org.

PAYROLL GIVING
30 YEARS
ANNIVERSARY

Continued support from the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo

The first Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (REMT) took place in 1950, with just eight events in the show programme. Since then, more than 14 million people have attended the show, with last year's audience exceeding 220,000 visitors. The Tattoo has been a hugely generous supporter of our Charity for many years and has donated more than £1.6 million to our work in the last 10 years alone. We are extremely grateful to the REMT for their continued support, and look forward to working together for many years to come.



Why our profile matters

Public relations and marketing are an essential part of our Charity's efforts to maintain awareness of our work in the public eye. Our communications activity ranges from using targeted marketing campaigns to highlight how we provide support to serving Army families, to

maximising our sponsorship of Army sport and other high-profile fundraising activities to attract media attention and develop greater recognition of our Charity's brand. Outlined below are some examples and highlights from last year:

SPEAR17

In January 2017, the South Pole Expedition Army Reserves (SPEAR17) team became the first all-British and military team in history to successfully complete a full, unsupported traverse of Antarctica. Comprising one Regular soldier and five Army Reservists, the team had originally intended just to trek to the Pole, but added an extra 400-mile leg to make it a full traverse in honour of polar adventurer Sir Henry Worsley - a close personal friend of Expedition Leader Captain Lou Rudd - who sadly died following his attempt at a solo unsupported crossing earlier in 2016.

Speaking after the expedition, Lou said: "More people have landed on the moon than have walked across the continent of Antarctica. We have followed in the footsteps of explorers like Shackleton and Scott, and my friend and fellow adventurer Henry joins those Polar greats as he tested himself to the limits of endurance. In Henry's memory, we finished

what he started, and we couldn't have achieved it without the support of The Soldiers' Charity and our many sponsors."

On the team's return to Heathrow airport, a plethora of high-profile media turned out to capture the story, with special segments on the BBC's One Show and ITV regional news broadcasts. The spike in media activity saw our Charity name appear in more than 70 broadcast, online and print media outlets in just one day. The team members are now engaged in an extensive programme of talks around the country, which will result in more national exposure for our Charity.

L-R: Team members Alex Brazier, Chris Brooke, Lou Rudd, Jamie Facer-Childs, Ollie Stoten and Alun George.



Army Families

As part of our wider work to increase our awareness within the serving Army community, we produced a targeted campaign aimed at Army families with two key objectives:

- To educate serving Army personnel and their families about our work.
- To signpost the help our Charity has provided through the ‘family’ of organisations we provide grants to each year.



The campaign consisted of the creation of specific information packs and promotional toolkits, which were distributed to five major Army bases around the UK.

Our Briefing Liaison Officers (BLOs) carried out briefings to serving units about our work, and displayed posters in Army Welfare Centres and common areas.

To complement the physical promotion, we ran a dedicated, two-week re-targeting campaign with digital display adverts across web and social media.

The campaign achieved a 37% increase in engagement (shares and comments) compared to our regular Facebook posts, and prompted more than 2,000 click throughs to our website in the first week alone.

Our Sponsorship

As well as the high-profile partnerships with the likes of SPEAR17, we continue to support a number of Army sports teams and other charitable enterprises led by ex-serving Army personnel. This activity has given our Charity an effective vehicle through which to promote awareness of our Charity’s work, and engender goodwill among key target audiences within the Serving and Veteran communities, as well as raising funds.



Team BRIT

This year, pioneering motorsport venture TeamBRIT announced a brand new headline sponsor in the form of BRIT Insurance - the global insurance provider. A high-profile Sponsors’ Launch and new car unveiling took place at Lloyds Insurance building in London, which attracted significant media presence. As a team sponsor, our Charity’s name was mentioned on every press release and was visible on all affiliated branding. The launch resulted in a PR and advertising value in excess of £7 million that week alone, with subsequent social media activity on our own Charity channels.



Army Cycling

Our continued support to the Army Cycling Union has enabled them to enter more competitions and race meets than ever before. This has allowed the team to extend their race season, as well as providing an opportunity for greater numbers of competitors and new talent to join the team.

In addition, the partnership has helped to align our Charity with one of the Army’s elite sports teams, giving us a fantastic ‘shop window’ through which to proliferate our brand and reputation to serving soldiers.



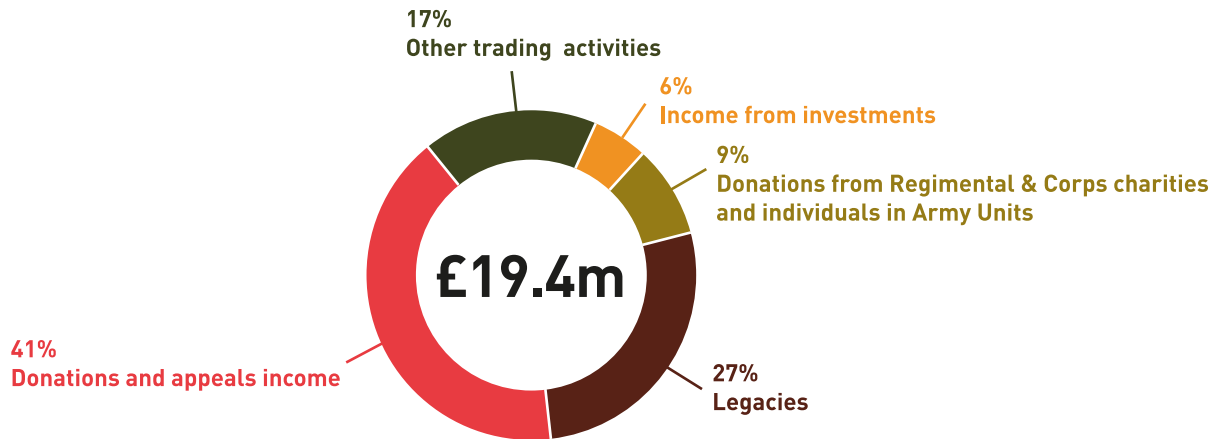
Army Cricket

In a similar vein to our sponsorship of the Army Cycling Union, our support to Army Cricket uses competitive sport to increase awareness of our name within the serving Army community.

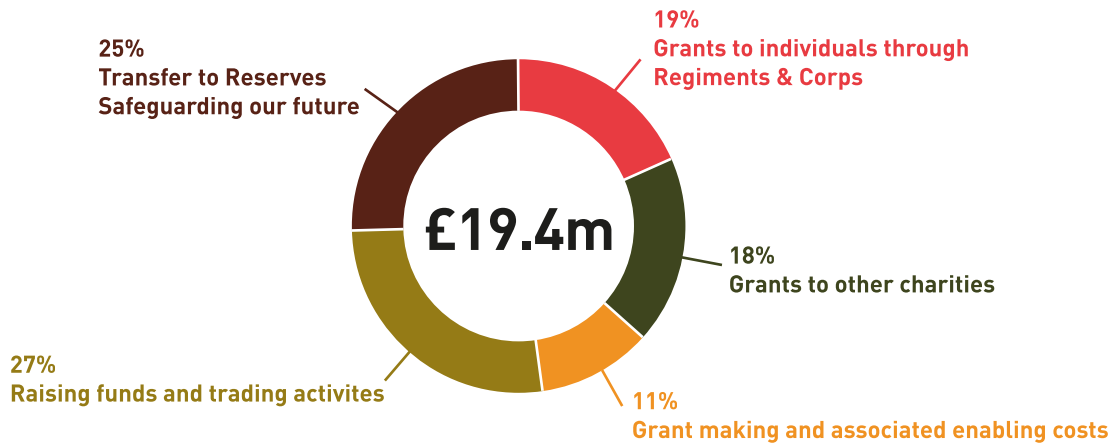
Through carrying our branding on their team kit, as well as on any literature and on its social media pages, we have increased our brand’s prominence and familiarity within a section of the Army demographic.

Financial Overview

Where our funding came from in 2016-2017



Where our money went in 2016-2017



'For Soldiers - For Life'. Safeguarding our future

As the Army's National Charity, and therefore essentially its 'Strategic Reserve' against future needs, we must be there for the long haul - especially in uncertain times such as now. Accordingly, we hold our reserves in three different forms as shown here.

DESIGNATED FUNDS

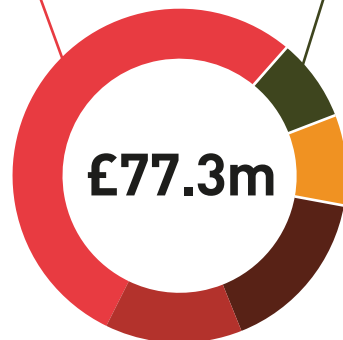
- A reserve to cover two years of our grants, grant expenditure by the Regimental and Corps charities on whom we rely for first line support, and cover for the Army Dependents Trust in the event of a period of sustained and large scale conflict.
- The Northern Ireland Special Relief Fund which we administer on behalf of the Nation.
- The Libor Fund which we administer to deliver childcare/community facilities for Army families.
- The Afghanistan fund to be distributed over many years to specifically aid the families of those who have fought in Afghanistan.
- The Relocation fund to cover our requirement to move the head office by 2021, and as importantly, continue to provide facilities for those eight military organisations currently co-located with us and others as required, reinforcing our desire to encourage joint working and sharing of overheads.

RESTRICTED FUNDS

- The Army Commandos' Benevolent Fund to support persons or dependents of persons who have served in the Army Commandos.
- The DEFLOG VQ Fund to advance education and training and to relieve unemployment.
- The Falklands Fund and the Gulf Trust which we administer on behalf of the Nation.
- The George Purse Trust Fund to support the welfare needs of ex-Army personnel and dependants.
- The Quick Reaction Fund to support wounded, injured and sick serving soldiers and their dependants.
- The Sir Jules Thorn Fund to help those seeking entrance to the Royal Hospital and Old Age Pensioners from the Army.

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

- A contingency reserve to cover one year of our non-grant making costs.



Financial Performance for 2016-17

| | 2016-17 £'000 | 2015-16 £'000 |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Income from: | | |
| Donations and appeals income | 7,972 | 12,513 |
| Legacies | 5,274 | 2,707 |
| | 13,246 | 15,220 |
| Donations from Regimental & Corps charities and individuals in Army Units | 1,735 | 2,338 |
| Income from Investments | 1,076 | 1,567 |
| Other trading activities | 3,314 | 3,718 |
| Total income | 19,371 | 22,843 |
| Expenditure on: | | |
| Grants to individuals through Regiments & Corps | 3,565 | 3,369 |
| Grants to other charities | 3,538 | 3,204 |
| | 7,103 | 6,573 |
| Grant making and associated enabling costs | 2,114 | 1,834 |
| | 9,217 | 8,407 |
| Raising funds and trading activities | 5,235 | 5,320 |
| Total expenditure | 14,452 | 13,727 |
| Net income before net gains / (losses) on investments | 4,919 | 9,116 |
| Net gains / (losses) on investments | 9,801 | (1,563) |
| Net income | 14,720 | 7,553 |
| Fund balances at 31 March 2017 | 77,296 | 62,576 |

Drawn from the Annual Report and Consolidated Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017

This year we dispersed grants and other support of around £3.80 for every £1 spent on generating income. Whilst this is again a further improved 'ratio' in comparison to previous years, and certainly reflects continuing downward pressure on costs, in reality it reflects healthy income as much as anything else. The effectiveness of any charity should rather be measured by its achieved outcomes and this report captures the sheer extent, breadth and variety of our grant making activities and the impact on those we support.

As a pure grant-making charity, our costs will always remain comparatively high: we bear the entire cost of raising funds, which we pass to our partner charities to make use of for free; we bear the costs of essential elements of Army welfare activity, including much of their casework costs and the underpinning Casework Management System; and we cross-subsidise a number of our partners. We have also again made further investments in our grant-making IT and the

associated audit processes to make sure our money is spent effectively on those in greatest need. All of this has both substantial real and opportunity costs for the Charity, but we have the greatest stake in encouraging co-ordination across the Service charities, given a substantial majority of all cases across the sector relate directly to Army personnel.

We have also again added to our Reserves – but equally we fully understand that, in this very uncertain world, we may well need to sustain substantial operating deficits in the future as we have in the recent past. And these increased Reserves need to be balanced by a 9.6% increase in charitable expenditure. All of this reflects our role as the 'safety net' for the Army as a whole and the need to play a 'long game'.

'For Soldiers – For Life' is a commitment, not a mere strapline.

Ways to donate

It is easy to show your support and donate. For more information visit soldierscharity.org/donate.



Donate online

To make a donation visit soldierscharity.org/donate



Donate by phone

Call **020 7901 8912** to make your donation by debit or credit card



Donate by post

Pop a cheque made payable to ABF The Soldiers' Charity in the post addressed to;
FREEPOST RRGY-GSB-HTZX,
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Working in co-operation with our US counterparts The Soldiers Fund – which supports both US and UK Service Personnel.

ABF The Soldiers' Charity ("the/our Charity") is an incorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales with Charity No.1146420, and in Scotland with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, with Scottish Charity Register No.SC039189. ABF The Soldiers' Charity is a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (07974609) and was incorporated on 2nd March 2012.

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