



Annual Review 2010-11

Caring for Veterans in Crisis... Now!

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Registered Charity No 1095308
Charitable Company Limited by
Guarantee No 4544532

President and Chairman Brigadier Johnny Rickett CBE
Council Hon Treasurer: Robert Clinton
Hon Surveyor: Ray Evans
Lieutenant Colonel Eric Kohn TD (retires 21 April 2011)
Margaret Mervis
Colonel Paul Cummings
Wing Commander Stuart Cairns (retired 21 October 2010)
Andrew Wallis

Chief Executive **Wing Commander Dr Hugh Milroy PhD**
Senior Visiting Research Fellow, King's College London,
Department of War Studies.

Multimedia and Publicity Glyn Strong/TTV

Drop-in Centre & HQ, London, Victoria

Colonel Geoffrey Cardozo MBE
Flight Lieutenant John Smith
Richard Greenhough
John Boyle (funded SSAFA Forces Help - Central London)
Debbie Langdon (funded by ABF/The Soldiers Charity)
Phil Rogers (funded Royal British Legion)
Bethan Harries

New Belvedere House, Veterans Aid hostel for ex-Service homeless

Manager **Pat O'Connor MBE**

Professional Support Worker Alice Mary Servina (funded Royal British Legion)
Yemie Omomowo, Anna Maria Waylen, Lesley Macdonald,
Ann James, Garry Roberts, Sandy Ulrich and Dennis Murphy.

Finance and Legal

Legal Advisors Ashurst, Solicitors

Auditors Saffery Champness, Chartered Accountants

Stockbrokers S & T Asset Management

Bankers Close Brothers Group Plc, Clydesdale Bank Plc,
HSBC Bank Plc, Lloyds TSB Bank Plc

**Trustees and
operational staff**



« The Garrison Sergeant Major (London) giving some words of encouragement to a young sailor who was one of the street-liners in the State Procession to open Parliament.

Chairman's message

I am very pleased to be introducing yet another annual report for Veterans Aid covering the year 2010/11. It goes without saying that it was a challenging period for us but I am delighted to report that we fared well.

The situation that we faced in the previous reporting year really did not change and we continued to face an economic downturn and ongoing operations in the Middle-East. However, if anything, it is the former and not the latter that has kept us busy. Of the approximately 2000 requests for assistance we took during the year, few were from those recently returned from operations or were Early Service Leavers. We still take people from all over the country, indeed the world. Ages have varied between 19 and 86!

Steadily, as more people hear about us, we have been able to become more and more involved in prevention work as well as dealing with those who find themselves on the streets. It is self-evident that stopping a Veteran from ever getting onto the streets, or making sure that they don't spend a second night on the streets, is beneficial for both the individual and for the Veteran community as a whole; particularly in terms of benevolence. Of course, this is only possible due to the support we consistently receive from our sister charities, e.g. The Royal British Legion, the Soldiers Charity, Seafarers, the RAFBF and SSAFA Central London.

New Belvedere House (NBH) continues to perform very well. We have invested heavily in the facility and in the training of our staff. The aim of this is to ensure, as far as possible that, those who "graduate" from NBH sustain their reclaimed lives. We were delighted by our Supporting People NBH inspection results from London Borough of Tower Hamlets with whom we have a very strong working relationship. We have embraced the Supporting People process as it ensures that our hostel is open to external inspection and is operated to national standards.

I know I say something like this every year, but it is clear to me that the key to our success lies squarely with the quality of the staff we employ. Despite the set-backs and trauma of the issues that they face on a daily basis, they continue to be totally committed and full of optimism about their work.

Much is said in the media about Veterans and a lack of care about their well-being. No doubt such debates will continue but when all is said and done, I am still firmly of the opinion that if you are in crisis in Britain today, you are lucky if you are a Veteran. There is a huge military family that will reach out to you in your hour of need. Veterans Aid is but one example! Finally, I must mention the retirement of our longest serving Trustee, Lt Col Eric Kohn TD, who has been with us since 1995! Our thanks go to him for all he has done.

'I am still firmly of the opinion that if you are in crisis in Britain today, you are lucky if you are a Veteran.'

Brigadier J F Rickett CBE
President and Chair

'...our success is built on having strong and effective staff who, on a daily basis, provide the unconditional support necessary for our Veterans as they struggle to reclaim their lives.'

Chief Executive's message

On a hot summer's evening, in early June 2010, I was standing in Epernay in France chatting to M. Patrice Noyelle, the man in charge of the Pol Roger champagne house. Pol Roger and most of the other great names in champagne had hosted a sponsored walk for the Worshipful Company of Vintners, over 25 kilometers, to raise money for Veterans Aid. The weekend was a wonderful success and raised £60,000 for us.

What impressed me greatly was not just how much M. Noyelle and everyone involved wanted to help us in our work, but also just how far VA had come from its humble beginnings without losing sight of what we are about every day. Of course, there have been many other activities that have made a difference to the charity and those who seek our help.

During the year, an amazing array of visitors have made their way from around the world to visit our over-crowded offices. Academics, politicians, practitioners and media representatives all came to find out what makes VA tick. Some take this further; for example, Veterans Aid's close liaison in the last 12 months with the Metropolitan Police Service Custody Directorate has seen us become involved in training and mentoring the next generation of custody sergeants/officers at the Central London Training Centre. This training is aimed at raising police custody sergeants' awareness of Veterans Aid, particularly in relation to vulnerable/homeless ex-Service personnel at point of release after custody. We are also working closely with London Ambulance Service along similar lines.

At the invitation of the Anglo-French Foundation, whose patron is HM Ambassador in Paris, we have for the 2nd year running taken 12 hostel residents on a working



CEO Dr. Hugh Milroy in the crowded office that doubles as a store-room for VA's range of branded clothing.



One of the wonderful champagne houses that provided 'pit-stops' for those doing the fundraising walk.

break to a house on the capital's southern outskirts. The foundation, a very worthy charity, was started in 1915 by the British Red Cross, fed by funds from Londoners, and aimed originally at helping injured French soldiers. It lives on today caring for disabled people who - as happens in France at the height of every summer - are all away on holiday!

We therefore have, absolutely free of charge and all to ourselves, the house, its sizeable grounds and its sporting facilities. Our men worked in the grounds - mowing, clearing dead wood etc. - and then were given a tour of Paris. The stay was rewarding for them and for our staff who accompanied them.

Far from being an exercise in escapism - a 'jolly' - our staff make full use of the location to encourage our Veterans to confront their daily problems in a calm and serene environment well away from the dirt and stress of the streets of London. Every man who went last year has now moved on - 'graduated' from our hostel to more permanent accommodation and fortified by an unforgettable experience. Finally, in conjunction with the 'Waste Not Want Not' charity operating in the City, we are now receiving surplus food every evening from the City's sandwich/lunch bars: approximate value = £25,000 per annum. We must thank Patrick Rarden without whom, this initiative simply would not have happened!

We spent much administrative time this year searching for a new HQ and this is still an ongoing task. The key being that we find the right premises in the right location! It would be great if we had got to the point where we were spending the monies raised from the sale of Whitworth House, but the process is taking longer than expected.

A significant amount of our operational time was dedicated to homelessness prevention and the relief of poverty. It seems self-evident that closing the front door to homelessness is priority for the Veteran community but the relief of poverty is challenging and complex. Our unique prevention strategy is highly developed - aimed at making sure, where possible, that swift intervention stops individuals becoming homeless in the first place or at least ensuring that they do not become hardened street dwellers. Equally, it is clear to all at VA that the relief of poverty among those who approach us for help has a wider public benefit.

This effort has been greatly enhanced by our continued efforts in the field of addiction. Our approach to this, under the guidance of our specialist, Phil Rogers, has been a major success story. Since January 2009, we have placed 105 Veterans into treatment (i.e. detox / rehab / abstinence-based day programmes). Alcohol was the primary issue for two thirds of these clients. However, a significant number were identified as polysubstance (misusing both alcohol and drugs) users. Significantly, we have also seen a rise in the number of problematic gamblers over the past year.

In terms of profile, it is clear that VA's involvement with the Department of War Studies at King's College, London, our links with Ruskin College, Oxford, and heavy involvement in the Howard League for Penal Reform's independent inquiry into former Armed Services personnel in prison have all served to demonstrate the effectiveness of our approach to social disability among Veterans to a much wider audience.

Finally, our success is built on having strong, highly trained and effective staff who, on a daily basis, provide the unconditional support necessary for our Veterans as they struggle to reclaim their lives. But that isn't where the story stops. Our serving and Veteran community supporters/partners (e.g. ESAG, SVR, the RLC and ABF/ The Soldiers Charity) provide an outstanding support network for the journey our men and women undertake. They all coalesce to demonstrate a wonderful post-modern example of effective, collegiate working. Others could learn from this joined-up approach.

'A significant amount of our operational time was dedicated to homelessness prevention and the relief of poverty.'



Wg Cdr Dr Hugh Milroy PhD
Chief Executive



The story so far

Yesterday

As long as there have been fighting forces there have been Veterans in distress.

They first became visible after the Napoleonic Wars and the painting by Sir Luke Fildes (on the cover of this publication) illustrates eloquently the plight of the soldier begging outside the workhouse from people who themselves have nothing. This picture has become a potent icon for Veterans Aid.

As fans of Bernard Cornwell's 'Sharpe' novels will know, homeless and injured soldiers were not welcomed on the streets of Britain when the conflicts they had been involved in were over - a theme developed in our own film of Kipling's 'Last of the Light Brigade'. After Tennyson's well-known celebration of the infamous 'Charge of the Light Brigade' the nation forgot its soldiers:

"They asked for a little money to keep the wolf from the door;
And the thirty million English sent twenty pounds and four!"

19th October 1938: The dining rooms at the Embankment Fellowship Centre, southeast London, opened in 1932 as a canteen and recreation room for unemployed ex-Servicemen over 45. >>



Homeless on Embankment 1930s

Our charity came into being in 1932. It was born of an act of kindness by a woman who nearly drowned in Malta's Grand Harbour. Determined to make tangible recompense for her miraculous escape, officer's wife Mrs Gilbert Huggins returned to London in pursuit of a cause.

She didn't have to look far. The Thames Embankment was littered with homeless ex-Servicemen. The Embankment Fellowship Centre (EFC) was born.

Just before WW2, in a remarkably far-sighted piece of PR, the EFC commissioned a film about its work. Made by the legendary director Michael Powell it starred two unknown actors, (Sir) Ralph Richardson and (Dame) Flora Robson. The result was 'Smith'.

The film was produced on a "cost only" basis for £400 and was formally launched in June 1939 at a House of Commons luncheon. The distribution was to be undertaken through cinemas throughout the country in September 1939 - unfortunately world events intervened and the film was mothballed.

This classic PR 'case study' gathered dust in the EFC's offices for years until a film buff searching for the 'lost' Michael Powell film contacted us. It rose like a phoenix and was shown at film festivals around the world.



Today

Today the spirit of 'Smith' is alive and well and the film can still be seen, on our website, to remind everyone that 'Veteran helping Veteran' is not a new phenomena.

Some things have changed though. A few years ago the EFC became Veterans Aid and acquired a logo - a symbol of shelter - illustrating exactly what it does.

More recently our strapline also changed, reflecting the reality of our remit: Not just to help homeless Veterans, but to support those experiencing any kind of crisis.

This 'brand' is now registered as a trademark.

Homelessness may seem like the worst thing that can happen to an individual, but the steps that lead to it are diverse and our belief is that intervention earlier along that pathway can often prevent it.

Soon after the rebrand we made a conscious decision to step out of the shadows, where EFC had worked quietly and effectively for so long. Veterans Aid leapt from obscurity to the vanguard of the post-modern charity world. The first VA film was made, about an ex-soldier called Roy, who became 'Everyman' - a symbol of all the charity stands for. 'Roy's Story' was a low budget recording but it is still yielding high returns.

Today, the publicity landscape has changed beyond all recognition from those early days when 'Smith' was commissioned. PR is a means, not an end, but if we are to function effectively in the 21st Century we must use the communication channels of our time.

Our advertising budget is small, but the viral effect of our films and networking is paying dividends. The proactive 'show and tell' approach we have adopted would not be possible without the co-operation of the people who once came to us for help and now generously operate as employees and/or ambassadors.

The story so far

A platform to reach new audiences came at Christmas through a magnificent Carol Concert at the Guards Chapel, organised by one of our staunchest young supporters and attended by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. Earlier in the year residents at New Belvedere House welcomed HRH The Duke of Kent who met and talked to many about their experiences.

Early in the New Year VA announced its 'second chance' partnership with Ruskin College and launched 'A Christmas Carol', the film now hosted on our website.

Today VA is positioned as the leading charity for Veterans in crisis in the UK. Its model is referenced worldwide. VA's prescience in identifying trends and flagging up the unforeseen consequences of events has resulted in agenda setting contributions to the media and public debate.

We still make films; not to exploit, but to illustrate - and never without the informed consent of those taking part. As a result we have attracted some remarkable sponsors whose contributions are acknowledged in this publication and on our website.

The website has also undergone a metamorphosis; it now features an online shop, links to our BFBS Blog, Facebook and YouTube sites. A faster, cleaner-looking site it may be - but it is still done largely in-house at modest cost.



The Duke of Kent at New Belvedere House



The VA website online shop



A film for VA by TTV

The story so far

Thank you

>> RUSKIN COLLEGE

"The partnership between Ruskin College and Veterans Aid has already enabled two ex-Servicemen to realise their dreams and take the first steps towards self-fulfilment"

Dr Hugh Milroy, CEO Veterans Aid



<< MITIE PROJECT MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE

Chris Mohan, Overall Winner of MITIE Project Management Challenge; one of four Veterans Aid apprentices on the way to a new career thanks to this Inspirational partnership.

>> ARTEMIS

"By supporting the 'City Charity Dinner Night' we can say thank you to our Armed Forces and raise money for these worthy causes (Veterans Aid, BLESMA and The Soldiers Charity)."

<< ABF/THE SOLDIERS CHARITY

"With help from ABF/The Soldiers Charity we were able to match funding for a patio 'makeover' at our New Belvedere House hostel; it has transformed dead space into an attractive sitting out area for our residents."

Dr Hugh Milroy



LAND REGISTRY

"Being able to help Veterans even in such a small way is rewarding. Listening to Hugh talk about the challenges Veterans Aid faces, yet hearing how help and assistance gives Veterans the opportunity to get back on track, was moving."

Jan Lloyd, Head of Facilities, Land Registry.

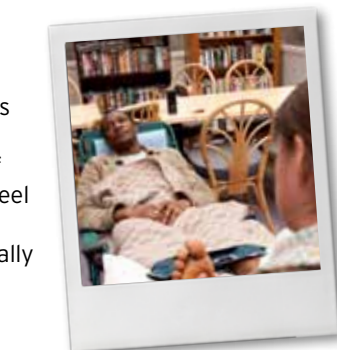
Land Registry



>> SUSAN RANDS - COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIST

"Susan treated our guys with respect and they trusted her because of that. She made them feel that they were worth bothering with. She really will be missed."

Pat O'Connor, Hostel Manager.



Tomorrow

The Armed Forces have seen significant changes since our last AGM. A series of announcements about deployment, equipment and personnel reductions have left many wondering what the future holds. If some of the more alarmist media reports are to be believed the spectres of PTSD, prison and homelessness are looming over every man and women leaving the Armed Forces!

Happily this is not our experience - nor that of the King's Centre for Military Health Research, the Howard League for Penal Reform or the CHAIN database (see extract below).

England

- In 2010, 70 street counts were carried out. They found a total of 440 people sleeping rough in England. This has decreased slightly from the 2009 total of 464, and is the lowest total count since the current methodology was introduced in 1998.
- However, for the first time the 256 authorities that did not count were asked to provide estimates of the number of people sleeping rough on any given night, and the total estimate was 807.
- The combined total of estimates and counts of rough sleepers in England in 2010 was 1,247.

London

- 17 Local Authorities in London took part in street counts in 2010. They found 241 people sleeping rough (55% of the total for the whole of England).
- The counts found the highest number of rough sleepers in the London boroughs of Westminster (147, up from 110 in 2009), City of London (29, down from 38 in 2009), and Kensington & Chelsea (13).

(Homeless Link : Survey of needs and provision 2011)

« RAF veteran 'Jack' came to us from the streets - for food, a hot drink and conversation. He's safe now.

Myths make for wonderful headlines or TV programmes but their legacies are not always helpful. New 'Veterans' charities are appearing every day - around 3,000 are already registered with the Charity Commission - and knee jerk legislation follows reportage of each new dramatic claim about 'heroes' being let down. This has two consequences - an upsurge in the number of new charities and consequent diversion of funds from established and accredited support organisations.

Perhaps because so few work at the 'operational coalface' of crisis as VA does, this has not affected us - but in time it may. In the meantime we continue to benefit from the kindness of friends and strangers. The former include mainstream supporters like the Soldiers Charity, fundraising events like the City Dinner Night and BFBS Big Salute - and small stalwarts like Womens' Institutes. New friends include the Royal Warrant Holders Association and the Land Registry - and the many anonymous donors whose cheques for £5 or less arrive through our letterbox each week.

We have outgrown our Buckingham Palace Road premises and for some time VA has been actively seeking new premises; not to replace the facility we have, but to create something infinitely better.

Our vision remains the creation of a National Veterans Centre, a dynamic, operational powerhouse that will enable us to do everything we do at the moment - but faster, better and more efficiently.

Human beings in crisis don't need to be put in boxes. They need the voice of someone who cares and understands saying 'You are safe now' - and they need to believe it. Our new centre will be a place where that emotional first aid is provided immediately; the process of 'unpacking' problems is begun and the route back to a rewarding life is plotted.

Our vision remains the creation of a National Veterans Centre, a dynamic, operational powerhouse that will enable us to do everything we do at the moment - but faster, better and more efficiently.



The Royal Warrant Holders' Association

The story so far

Thank you

Donations for general assistance to homeless veterans

151 (London) Transport Regiment	Kennedy Coup's school,	SSVC/BFBS
152 (Ulster) Transport Regiment	Francis Combe Academy	St Jude's Trust
25 Training Regiment RLC	Lloyd's Patriotic Fund	Towergate Charitable Foundation
Accenture	London District TA & Army Boxing Club	Tylers' and Brickmakers' Charitable Trust
Allied Facilities	London Scottish Regiment HQ	Waitrose, Belgravia
Anne Duchess of Westminster's Charity	London Season	Welsh Guards
Anonymous Donors	Miller Insurance Services Ltd.	Westminster Foundation
Anonymous Charitable Trusts	Mitcham Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul	Women's Institute, Ox & Bucks
Army & Navy Club	Murray Beith Murray	Company of Scientific Instrument Makers
Army Officer Selection Board, Westbury	NM Rothschild & Sons Ltd	Numerous garrison churches
BAE Systems plc, Carlton Sq.	Noon Foundation	
BAE Systems, Head Office	Noon Products (Sir Gulam Noon)	
Band Trust	Not Forgotten Association	Members of the public, relatives of homeless Veterans, friends and associates of Veterans Aid
Bulldog Trust	Prince of Wales PH, Plumstead	
Cavalry & Guards Club	Red Jacket Limited	
Chaplain General (Army), RACD and many Forces churches and chaplaincies	Renault UK Limited	
Coldstream Guards	Resident Governor of the Tower of London	
Daily Telegraph	Royal Artillery Charitable Fund	
Delmar Charitable Trust	Royal Engineers Association	
Ebury Wine Bar	Royal Hospital Chelsea, Chaplaincy	
Fidelity International	Royal Military Academy Sandhurst	
Grenadier Guards	Royal Warrant Holders Association	
Grenadier PH, Belgravia	RRF Aid Society	
Grocers' Company	Savoy Investment Management Ltd.	
Grosvenor Foundation	Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation	
Guards Museum	Smith & Williamson Investment Management	
Honourable Artillery Company		
Howden Insurance Brokers Limited		

Specific assistance on individual projects and work

Supporting People funding to hostel	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Direct assistance from Drop-in Centre	Queen Mary's Roehampton Trust
Emergency Fund for immediate operations	Dulverton Trust
Supporting VA's Alcohol & Drugs treatment work	Vintners' Company, Royal British Legion, Rufford Foundation
Assistance with rent deposits, furniture & Hostel Professional Support Worker	Royal British Legion
Assistance with tri-service cases	SSAFA Forces Help & Officers Association
Drop-in Centre Outreach work	SSAFA Forces Help (Central London)
RN and RM homeless veterans	SEAFARERS UK & RN Benevolent Trust (RNBT)
Drop-in Centre Outreach work & Army homeless veterans	The Soldiers' Charity (ABF) & Corps and Regimental Associations
RAF homeless veterans	RAFBF
Ex-Merchant Navy homeless seafarers	Merchant Navy Welfare Board
Hostel maintenance	Compton Housing Association
Hostel IT Room	United Way Worldwide
Hostel Christmas and move on items	Vitol Group/Charitable Foundation
Hostel Christmas presents	Ministry of Defence (Kate Aziz)
Hostel Computer equipment	Merchant Taylors' Company
Clothes, shoes & bedding	Hedley Foundation, Queen Mary's Clothing Guild
Training VA ex-Servicemen	Mitie Business Services Ltd
Higher Education	Ruskin College, Oxford
Horticultural therapy, Royal Hospital Chelsea	Gardening Leave Project
Emergency Accommodation funding in Victoria	Victoria Business Improvement District
Food for hostel	Waste Not Want Not Charity
Mental Health	Roger & Jean Jefcoate Trust
VA Carol Service	Philippa Windridge
Higher education & training Fund	St James's Place Foundation
Aid in kind (household goods, cutlery etc.)	Countless thoughtful individuals, businesses and organisations
Sustained help and encouragement from	Royal Hospital Chelsea, Victory Services Club, Union Jack Club, London Scottish Regiment, HQ London District

Financial Summary

Financial Summary for the year ended 30th September 2010

Income £1,146,733 (2009 : £973,672)

	2010 £	2009 £
Local Authority payments	520,761	447,979
Charges to hostel residents	31,323	42,134
Retirement home rents	-	47,312
Grants	136,280	152,285
Donations & Legacies	360,623	170,076
Fundraising & Sundry	52,748	60,040
Investment Income	44,998	53,846
	£1,146,733	£973,672

Expenditure £1,186,579 (2009 : £1,071,276)

	2010 £	2009 £
Hostel & Retirement home running costs	551,195	551,841
London Drop-in Centre	485,836	425,219
Governance costs	57,749	58,384
Fundraising & Event Costs	54,341	35,832
Development of National Centre for Homeless Veterans	37,458	-
	£1,186,579	£1,071,276

Net decrease in funds £39,846 (2009 : £97,604 decrease)

Excluding:

- unrealised gain on investments of £90,909 (2009: gain of £34,697)
- unrealised gain on revaluation of freehold premises nil (2009 : £1,184,832)
- realised gain on disposal of fixed assets nil (2009 : £791,680)

Reserves at 30th September 2010

	2010 £	
Hollenden House Endowment Reserve	1,966,810	Permanent endowment reserve
Restricted Funds	2,072,412	Funds donated for specified purposes
Designated Reserves	400,450	Funds for the development of the National Centre for Homeless Veterans
General Reserve	600,000	Represents six months operating costs
	£5,039,672	

Trustees' statement

This financial summary has been prepared to illustrate the main areas of ongoing expenditure by Veterans Aid, the principal sources of its income and the funds available.

The Board of Trustees confirms that this financial summary is taken from the draft accounts for the year and is subject to audit. The summary does not contain all the information necessary to allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of Veterans Aid. Copies of the full accounts, once the audit is complete, will be filed with the Charities Commission and may be obtained from: Veterans Aid, 40 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 0RE.

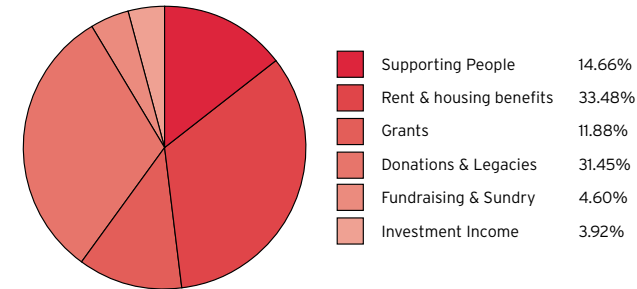
Signed



Robert Clinton, Honorary Treasurer

Statistics

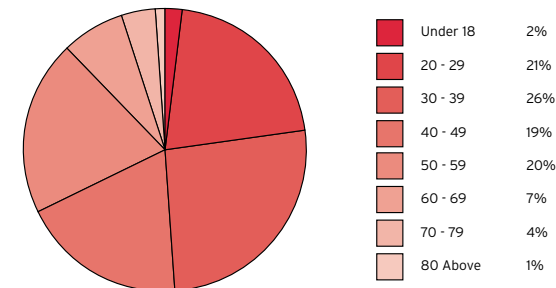
Income Breakdown



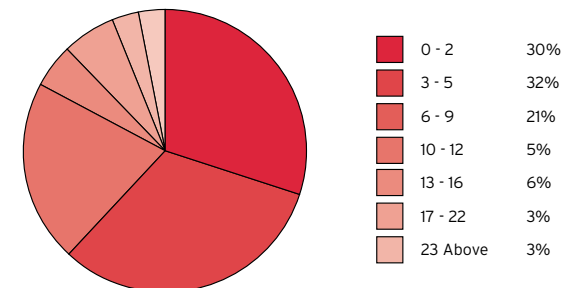
Veterans Aid has a well-balanced mix of income, with contributions from local government in the form of Supporting People and Housing Benefits paid on behalf of our hostel residents, a steady income from our investment portfolio, grants from other military charities, and growing support in donations from the commercial sector and the general public and from fundraising events.

Clients

Age Breakdown



Length of Service



Please help

If you like to make a donation by credit card or Direct Debit please visit our website:
www.veterans-aid.net



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Registered charity: 1095308
Charitable Company Limited
by guarantee no. 4544532.