**Introduction**

Veterans in Communities (VIC) is an East Lancashire based Armed Forces charity, established in 2012, that works across Rossendale, Pendle, Burnley, Hyndburn, Ribble Valley, Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.

VIC supports those who have served in any of the branches of the armed forces, blue light services and their families who have or are having difficulties with returning to ‘Civvy Street’ or miss being around like-minded people from a similar background.

Some of our ex-service personnel and their families can find leaving the services challenging. VIC is here to support them into settling back into civilian life, by working with the local communities and partners.

VIC is not exclusive to veterans, and many of our peer support activities include those who haven't served.

We offer a range of activities which are run by veterans or retired members of the emergency services. The range of activities include; walking, horticulture, allotments, social trips, helping the local community with small projects, training opportunities, outreach in local areas, art groups, craft groups, and a Singing Group. Our activities and projects have been designed and developed by VIC members who understand the needs of veterans.

It is through the shared experiences of our members and their families that individuals are able to move forward at a pace that best suits them. This ensures they continue to get support and can support each other. Our members and volunteers are an integral element of VIC. They are the backbone of what we do here at VIC.

Partnership working with other services and organisations is equally important. We strive to meet the needs of our members holistically, through engaging with other services and supporting members to access them.

We have a small staff team made up of both full-time and part-time staff, complemented by dedicated volunteers. Many of our staff and volunteers have served in the armed forces or emergency services, or have a close link with them. Volunteers take on responsibility for a range of activities including outreach, art group, Singing Group, walks programme and trips.

Further information on our range of activities and services can be found at [www.vic.org.uk](http://www.vic.org.uk)