

Social Enterprise

*Whitworth Memorial gardens
Re-building a dry stone wall*

Veterans in Communities (VIC) is an ex-services charity based in East Lancashire. Established in September 2012, VIC supports ex-service personnel, their families and members of the uniformed services who have experienced difficulties re-integrating with the community on returning to civilian life.

VIC recognises that many of our members have had breaks in their employment history; this could be through relocating to new areas, health related conditions, in receipt of unemployment benefits or just between jobs.

The military is a very physical and mentally demanding career. When they leave the armed forces they can struggle with the transition to civilian employment. This can lead into further health related conditions that if not addressed can result in long term unemployment.

Whilst serving in uniform they develop a range of skills and experiences that can benefit employers and the community they now return to:

- A can do attitude
- Able to motivate others
- Management skills
- Able to work under extreme pressures
- Planning & organisational skills
- Task orientated
- Flexibility
- Hard working
- Disciplined
- Loyalty and Integrity

- Enthusiastic
- Disciplined
- Loyalty and Integrity
- Enthusiastic
- Strong work ethic
- Team working
- Qualifications and skills not required in other civilian jobs

Many ex-service personnel and their families on leaving the armed forces will find employment into these six occupational areas:

- Engineering
- Transport & logistics
- Security
- Public health
- Civil service & emergency services
- Self-employment

Sometimes enterprising people are not so vocal about their ideas; we have to listen hard to hear them. They only talk about their ideas and dreams to people they trust – usually their friends and family. We at VIC nurture the Trust and become part of the Family for our Members.



Model of WW1 tank in Willow

Our Members may have some fears or trepidations. They may just need someone to help them get started and give them the encouragement and support to try.

Many of our Volunteers and Partners have skills and abilities that they would be willing to share.

VIC community projects are an ideal opportunity to bring together all the skills and experiences gained through service life. Through these community projects and the training they receive from training providers and the practical skills shared within VIC, there are opportunities for the individual to become self-employed and return to employment.



Removal of a shed for a local veteran

As our community based projects develop and our membership increases, there are opportunities for our members to develop their own business ideas and aspirations. With our recent project in Whitworth, some of our members have become skilled in dry stone walling and willow structures. We have plans to develop the rear of the VIC Centre into a walled garden and a small workshop.

The garden area and workshop will give us the opportunity to grow flowers and fresh vegetables, and the potential to manufacture garden furniture.

The VIC Centre has office space that can be rented to new social enterprises. VIC also works with organisations that can provide business support for new enterprise ventures.