



**See page 2 for more pictures of the VIC Centre's official opening on Armed Forces Week – June 25**

## *Join the winning team*

**AN OFFICE and business development manager is being sought for VIC.**

The person appointed will report to the VIC Executive and will work in close conjunction with the Operations Manager and assume responsibility for administrative assistance.

The post holder will be responsible for ensuring comprehensive administrative systems are in place and undertake the service, business development and fund acquisition for VIC.

This is a full-time job, 37.5 hours each week with occasional unsocial hours.

The salary is £29,000 and the successful applicant will be in post from September 1, 2014.

For more details and an application form email Jon at [jonbeilby@veteransincommunities.org](mailto:jonbeilby@veteransincommunities.org)

Closing date Wednesday July 23.

## Dig for VIC gardening project gets green light

**OUR gardening project has received nearly £10,000 to enable work to start.**

At the VIC Centre in Bury Road, Haslingden, there is a large garden area in what used to be the former pub's back yard.

Just as in the Second World War when any free land was turned over to grow crops to Dig for Victory, this scheme will help the community, along with members of VIC, to grow their own.

Manager Bob Elliott said: "We have been awarded £9,979, from the Social Prescribing Grant administered by Burnley Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Service for East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group.

"The funding is to develop the back garden at the centre; build a shed which will also be a workshop, introduce raised beds for



growing vegetables and flowers, a greenhouse and potting areas.

"The workshop will be used by our members for building garden furniture and learning woodworking skills.

"The gardening project will be available to all existing and new members. The raised beds will enable wheelchair users to be able to participate.

"This will add to our varied activity and community projects through which we are constantly developing

links with other groups and projects that facilitates opportunities for two-way referral and volunteering."

It is hoped the scheme will encourage a healthier lifestyle with participants having the opportunity to grow fresh fruit and vegetables and work will begin in the next few weeks.

VIC has more than 180 members and that number is increasing all the time. For more information call 01706 833180.





## VIPs flock to official opening

**MORE than 140 veterans, volunteers, dignitaries and supporters attended the official opening of our centre in Haslingden.**

Brigadier Chris Coles, Commander of 42 (North West) Brigade, unveiled a plaque and afterwards he wrote a personal letter to VIC Manager Bob Elliott and sent emails to staff members and volunteers: Suzanne Preston, Tony Stubbs and Peter Webster.

In it he writes: "I think you have a very good thing going there and you all add great value."

"It was a very pleasant surprise to meet Peter Webster who I cannot have met since 1993. The day was a great success and I think you showcased things well to

continue to attract the interest you need to sustain your work."

He said he was also discussing how VIC and the NHS can align more closely together in the future.

Although the veterans charity took over the centre on Armistice Day last year, extensive refurbishment had to be carried out and rooms redecorated, all of which was carried out by volunteers.

On the day, standard bearers proudly displayed the Queens Lancashire Regiment and the

Helmshore Royal British Legion standards and an Armed Forces Week flag flew from the building.

The following week Sally Naden, from BBC Radio Lancashire, interviewed several of our members in a show that was broadcast live.



## Bumper collection

IN JUST one weekend VIC collected more than £500 to ensure our work across East Lancashire can continue.

We had a stand at Heywood Armed Forces Day, and also collected in Asda in Bury and Tesco in Rawtenstall.

We got involved with Bacup and Stacksteads Carnival and this year VIC was represented in the procession and we also had a stall in the park.

Manager Bob Elliott said: "We are now wanting to build on our presence at the carnival and next year we are planning to organise family activities from our stand."

## Community art project

RESIDENTS of Jubilee Court in Haslingden are enjoying a variety of artwork thanks to the Creative Community Hub at VIC.

VIC's Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell said: "One lady wanted to do digital art painting on an iPad because she loves art but is crippled with arthritis so cannot hold brushes."

"She used her thumb to press the buttons and she is happy because she gets good results."

"We also have five or six people from Olive House in Bacup coming to the lessons."

They are held every Wednesday.





# Prince's Trust aid grave project

## OUR First World War veterans' graves project was given a boost by young volunteers.

Twelve young people from Accrington and Rossendale on a 12-week Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Prince's Trust Team programme worked in Bacup Cemetery.

John Haselden, team leader, said: "They had three possible tasks for their community project and they all selected the charity Veterans In Communities and the project Operation War Graves 100.

"As a veteran myself, I am very proud that this is the project my team selected although I did not influence their decision.

"They all worked hard and kept focused. It is a travesty that this has not been done any sooner, but good that it is being done now."

John served for 10 years in Afghanistan and Iraq with the Royal Artillery before being

medically discharged nine months ago. Help for Heroes helped him secure his temporary job with the Prince's Trust.

Many of the young people on the programme were NEETs – Not in Education Employment or Training. Some have learning difficulties and some have found school difficult.

The three-week community project saw the team using maps to locate the hidden graves, digging out the marker stones and then preparing the ground for a new memorial stone to be laid. These have all been specially made by Bacup firm Chislestone Memorials.

Operation War Graves 100 received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Now 120 concrete bases and headstones need to be laid to mark the graves of the First World War soldiers.

Anyone who can help the project can contact Peter Webber at VIC on 01706 833180



## Can we fix it?

### MEMBERS of VIC spent five hours erecting a new playhouse for a primary school.

St Mary's RC School, Haslingden, wanted a shed erecting for the children to play in.

VIC arts and Crafts co-ordinator Darren Horsnell said: "They were given a quote from a company but it was too expensive so we said we could do it for £250.

"Four VIC members carried out the job.



"The original shed had been removed but the base was still there so we had to do some digging and levelling of the ground and we laid some flags for the new shed.

"The school is happy and can now use it for storage again."

## Choir's in fine voice

### VIC Singing Group had its first public engagement at the official opening of the VIC Centre.

The group so impressed the Mayor of Rossendale Councillor Tom Aldred he invited them to be a part of the Festival of Remembrance concert in November.

VIC director, and Singing Group member, Ronnie Barker then approached the Homeground Project to see if permission could be obtained for the group to sing 'The Homeground Anthem'.

This is a poignant song



recorded as a charity single by Russell Watson to commemorate the centenary of the commencement of the First World War.

The organisation has now given its approval and the choir will receive the score soon so they can begin practising for November.

The group meets every Thursday from 6.30pm to 8.30pm.

# What's On and Where



## ROSSENDALE

### *VIC Outreach Services*

#### **MONDAY-FRIDAY**

11am-1pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden,  
BB4 5PL.

#### **MONDAY**

10-12 noon

Bacup Library, St James Square, Bacup,  
OL13 9AH

### *VIC Singing Group*

#### **THURSDAY**

6.30-8.30pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden,  
BB4 5PL.

### *VIC Art Group and drop-in*

#### **FRIDAY**

11am-3pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden,  
BB4 5PL.

### *Walking Group*

#### **THURSDAY**

Walks are arranged on the 2nd and 4th  
Thursday, weather permitting.

## HEYWOOD

### *VIC Outreach Service*

#### **WEDNESDAY**

11am-2.30pm

Heywood Sports Village, West Starkey Street,  
Heywood, OL10 4TW.

#### *Badminton*

3pm-4pm

Heywood Sports Village, West Starkey Street,  
Heywood, OL10 4TW.

Walks will be held fortnightly on **Thursdays**  
combined with the Rossendale walking group.

## BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN

### *VIC Outreach Service*

#### **TUESDAY**

10am-1pm

Darwen Town Hall, Croft Street, Darwen,  
BB3 1BQ.

## PENDLE

### *VIC Outreach Service*

#### **WEDNESDAY**

10am-1pm

Ace Centre, Cross Street, Nelson, BB9 7NN.

# Contacts

**VIC – 01706 833180**

#### **Manager Bob Elliott**

bobelliott@veteransincommunities.org  
07961 554 006

#### **Outreach and Community Development**

##### **Worker Suzanne Preston**

suzannepreston@veteransincommunities.org

##### **Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth**

stevebutterworth@veteransincommunities.org

##### **Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell**

darrenhorsnell@veteransincommunities.org

##### **War Graves Project Co-ordinator Peter Webster**

peterwebster@veteransincommunities.org

#### **Combat Stress Helpline**

0800 138 1619

#### **NHS Military Veterans Psychological Therapies Service (NW)**

0161 253 6638

#### **The Royal British Legion**

0808 802 8080 (7 days a week 8am-8pm)

#### **Rossendale Citizens' Advice Bureau**

0844 499 4121 (from a landline)

0300 456 2552 (from a mobile)

#### **The Samaritans**

01706 830999

#### **Mental Health Helpline**

0500 639000 Monday to Friday 7pm - 11pm

Saturday & Sunday 12 noon to 12 midnight

#### **Royal Air Forces Association**

01772 426930

#### **East Lancashire Single Point of Access via GP or self-referral**

01282 657116

## VIC update

**A BIG thank you to everyone who attended VIC to witness the official opening of our centre.**

We are looking forward to strengthening our team in September with a fourth paid member of staff.

Members were present for the Freedom March by the 1st Duke of Lancaster Regiment in Hyndburn and we were also invited as VIP guests to the Preston Military Show.

As part of the opening, we decided to make one of our rooms at the VIC Centre into a shop to store all our merchandise, clothing, baseball caps etc. To see what we have on offer log on to our website [www.veteransincommunities.org](http://www.veteransincommunities.org)

We also have an active Facebook presence – so please like our group and keep up to date with all our news.

Next month we will be returning to the Mill Gate Shopping Centre in Bury to have a pop-up shop displaying VIC artwork, crafts and clothing.

We will also be collecting at a charity bike ride on August 2 in the Town Square, Rawtenstall, supporting veteran Brian Pickup on his marathon 100 miles for 100 years to raise money for the Rawtenstall Remembrance Parade.

August 4 marks 100 years since the start of the First World War. Blackburn is having a Blackout at 10pm to remember those who served. Please observe.

VIC supported by:



Supported by NHS Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale Clinical Commissioning Group's social investment fund

